



**CITY OF COLONIAL HEIGHTS, VIRGINIA  
MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
Tuesday, April 5, 2022  
7:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. Roll Call**

Present:

Mr. Hartson  
Mrs. Schiff  
Mrs. Hamilton  
Mr. Kohan  
Mrs. Levenson-Melvin

Absent:

Mr. Kwiek  
Mr. Wade

**III. Determination of Quorum**

A Quorum was determined.

**IV. Approval of Minutes for March 1, 2022 meeting**

Mrs. Schiff made a motion to approve the minutes and Mrs. Levenson-Melvin seconded the motion with all Commissioners in favor.

**V. Approval of Agenda**

Mrs. Levenson-Melvin made a motion to approve the agenda and Mrs. Schiff seconded the motion with all Commissioners in favor.

**VI. Hearing of Citizens Generally**

No citizens spoke.

**VII. Public Hearings**

**A. PC RESOLUTION NO. 22-04 AND AN ORDINANCE NO. 22-06**

Amendments to § 286-200, 286-530.20, and 286-602 of Chapter 286, Zoning-Fence Ordinance

Mrs. Brown explained that the proposed amendments sought to add definitions for decorative, lattice, and picket fences; amend the type of fence prohibited beyond the front plane of a building; and allow the zoning administrator to modify requirements for fences, walls, and hedges in commercial districts, as appropriate.

Mrs. Schiff asked what precipitated the change. Mrs. Brown stated that two requests and two violations prompted a review of the fence ordinance.

Mr. Hartson noted that the code states that a chain-link fence is not allowed in the front yard, but chain-link fences exist throughout the city. Mrs. Brown explained that those fences were pre-existing, and thus grandfathered. He asked if a house with a chain-link fence in the front yard was sold to a new owner, would the new owner need to replace the fence. Mrs. Brown explained that the fence is still grandfathered.

Mr. Hartson asked if fences and the current ordinance were causing a code enforcement issue in the City. Mrs. Brown believed the changes would alleviate code enforcement problems as well as allow other decorative fences in the front yard that were not permitted under the current ordinance.

Mrs. Hamilton expressed concerns about allowing lattice fencing as it is flimsy, not attractive, and may require more maintenance. Mrs. Brown stated that the changes were made to align more similarly to adjacent localities' ordinances.

Mr. Hartson asked why there was no mention of materials such as composite materials, plastic, polymers, and vinyl. Mrs. Brown stated the section on "Unsightly fences" mentions plywood and sheet plastic, which would be undesirable materials.

Mrs. Schiff made a motion to approve resolution 22-04 and Mrs. Levenson-Melvin seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-1

Yes:

Mr. Hartson  
Mrs. Schiff  
Mrs. Levenson-Melvin  
Mr. Kohan

No:

Mrs. Hamilton

Motion: Passed

#### **B. PC RESOLUTION NO. 22-05 AND AN ORDINANCE NO. 22-07**

Amendment to § 286-506.04 of Chapter 286, Clarification of Preliminary Site Plan Fee

Mrs. Brown explained that the proposed amendment will correct inconsistency between the ordinance and the fee schedule. The ordinance was not previously updated when the fee schedule was updated.

Mr. Hartson clarified that the new fee was \$500 and Mrs. Brown confirmed that price.

Mrs. Schiff asked if this was in line with other localities. Mrs. Brown did not research this but felt that the fee was fair.

Mr. Hartson reasoned that the cost of labor has risen so the updated fee

reflects the time and work of staff.

Mr. Kohan made a motion to approve resolution 22-05 and Mrs. Levenson-Melvin seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0

Yes:

Mr. Hartson

Mrs. Schiff

Mrs. Hamilton

Mr. Kohan

Mrs. Levenson-Melvin

No: none

Motion: Unanimous Pass

### **C. PC RESOLUTION NO. 22-03**

City's proposed FY2023-2028 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)

Mr. Smith introduced Becky Griffin, Interim Finance Director, who was present to answer questions and review highlights of the CIP.

Mr. Kohan asked where the auxiliary parking lot for City Hall would be located. Mr. Smith explained that it would be on the city-owned parcel located at 218 Highland Avenue, which is adjacent to the current parking lot. The house on the parcel has been condemned. It will be demolished, and the lot repaved. Mr. Kohan asked if it would be connected to the existing lot. Mr. Smith stated that because of a drainage ditch separating the two parcels it would not be connected, but may have a walkway.

Mr. Hartson asked Mr. Smith to explain the priorities of the funded projects. Mr. Smith stated that the numbers represented a ranking based on the previous year's CIP by staff, and were more useful for determining the unfunded projects that would become funded.

Mr. Hartson asked about the source of funding for the Stormwater Fund. Mr. Smith said the funding came from stormwater fees.

Mrs. Hamilton stated that she believed the Pickwick Avenue stormwater drainage should be more of a priority. Mr. Hartson reasoned that drainage issues existed throughout the city. Mrs. Hamilton emphasized that as a business district, Pickwick Avenue should be looked into further. Mr. Smith stated that this project was high on the list of unfunded projects and would be put into consideration to be funded in a future CIP.

Mrs. Schiff stated that there was a stormwater project five years prior on Pickwick Avenue and Danville Avenue that failed.

Mr. Hartson asked about the Boulevard/CSX bridge improvement project. The Ettrick train station would be able to obtain federal funding from the Railway Act for its improvements and asked if the project in Colonial Heights could be

federally funded. He also asked if the bridge was a current safety issue. Mr. Todd Flippen, Director of Public Works, said that there are safety concerns underneath the bridge in regards to accessibility. He added that because the bridge has not been deemed “structurally deficient” they cannot secure federal funding.

Mr. Hartson asked if the Gateway roundabout at Temple Avenue was federally funded. Mr. Smith recalled that the project occurred prior to his employment with the City. His understanding was that it was decided not to proceed with that offer as the City would have no control over what was placed in the roundabout. Mr. Smith also said this project was recently discussed with City Council and they determined it would be turned over to the Beautification Committee to review and provide feedback. Once more research is done to determine what will go in the roundabout and a cost estimate is provided, the project’s ranking may move up on the list. He also said the irrigation and landscaping of the medians were planned for the fall season.

Mr. Kohan asked if the Cameron Foundation would be contributing to the next phase of Violet Bank Museum renovations. Mr. Smith stated that the City would be applying for funding from the Cameron Foundation.

Mr. Kohan asked where the proposed Fire Station #3 would be located. Mr. Smith stated that based on the map, the proposed location would be on a former landfill space that would need to be remediated, but at this time the location was not definite. Mr. Hoover stated that the Fire Department would like to add a third fire station on Charles Dimmock Parkway to cover the Southpark area and improve the response time.

Mrs. Hamilton proposed that sidewalk repair and replacement are needed on the south side of the City and a project of this nature should be prioritized as parts of the sidewalk are uneven and easy for people to trip. Her other project suggestion was in regards to growing safety concerns in the City. She proposed installing monitored security cameras (i.e. Closed-Circuit Television surveillance) throughout the city in areas such as the Boulevard, Temple Avenue, and Ellerslie Avenue to be proactive about rising crime. Mr. Hartson asked Mr. Fisher about the legality of such an action. Mr. Fisher stated that there was a lot of controversy over the license plate recognition software, and suspected such a project would be equally controversial.

Mrs. Levenson-Melvin made a motion to approve the CIP and Mr. Kohan seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0

Yes:

Mr. Hartson  
Mrs. Schiff  
Mrs. Hamilton  
Mr. Kohan  
Mrs. Levenson-Melvin

No: None

Motion: Unanimous Pass

## VIII. Plans of Development

### A. Preliminary Plan of Development/Site Plan – PD 22-1

#### Colonial Heights High School Addition

This proposal would allow a 6,884 square foot single-story expansion to the front of the existing High School. Ms. Emily Baker of Moseley Architects was present to speak about the project.

Mrs. Brown shared a summary of the proposal and visuals of where the expansion would be located.

Staff recommended approval subject to the applicant addressing all staff comments on a revised plan.

Mr. Kohan asked for clarification on what the Commissioners would be approving. Mrs. Brown explained that they would be approving the preliminary site plan.

Mr. Hartson asked what would be done with the existing administrative offices once the new ones are created in the addition. Ms. Baker stated that spaces were being reallocated to meet the needs of modern learning as the high school is outdated.

Mr. Kohan asked if the addition would match the existing building or if it would look more modern. Ms. Baker stated that they would be matching the existing building. He also asked if there was a utility line that they would be building over. Mrs. Baker confirmed that they are relocating the waterline and relining the sewer line.

Mr. Hartson asked if there were any parking implications due to the addition and Ms. Baker replied that there were none.

Mrs. Levenson-Melvin made a motion to approve PD 22-1 and Mrs. Hamilton seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0

Yes:

Mr. Hartson

Mrs. Schiff

Mrs. Hamilton

Mr. Kohan

Mrs. Levenson-Melvin

No: None

Motion: Unanimous Pass

## IX. Old Business

## X. New Business/Reports

### Reports

1. **Chairman-** Mr. Hartson asked if a resolution could be proposed for remote participation in Planning Commission meetings.
2. **Director of Planning and Community Development – Mrs. Brown**  
Mrs. Brown stated that there was tentatively one site plan for the May meeting.
3. **City Engineer or Designee – Director of Public Works – Mr. Flippen**  
Mr. Flippen said there is a Pre-Construction meeting for the Lakeview project on April 11<sup>th</sup>. Also, the paving project for the Boulevard was getting ready to start on the eastern side.

Mr. Kohan asked about road striping. Mr. Flippen stated he would share with staff if Commissioners had any streets in particular that needed re-striping.

### 4. Others, as necessary or appropriate

#### a. City Manager – Mr. Smith

Mr. Smith stated that the ribbon cutting for Royal Farms was proposed for mid-May. He stated that Towneplace Suites has started construction. He also emphasized that April 30<sup>th</sup> was a city-wide Cleanup Day if Commissioners were interested in participating.

#### b. City Attorney – Mr. Fisher

No report.

## XI. Adjournment

Mrs. Schiff made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mrs. Levenson-Melvin seconded the motion with all Commissioners in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.

X *Mitchell Hartson*

Mitchell Hartson  
Chairman

X *Brandi Payne*

Brandi Payne  
Secretary