
**Planning Commission Annual Report
2016**

Town of Christiansburg

**Approved by Planning Commission January 30, 2017
Town of Christiansburg
100 East Main Street Christiansburg, VA 24073**



Town of Christiansburg, Virginia 24073

100 East Main Street ~ Telephone 540-382-6128 ~ Fax 540-382-7338

February 21, 2017

Re: Planning Commission 2016 Annual Report

Dear Town Council:

Please find attached the Planning Commission Annual Report. The Planning Commission Annual Report showcases the work of the Commission and staff of the Planning Department for 2016. This report meets the requirement of Sec. 15.2-2221 of the Code of Virginia, updating the Town Council on the operation of the Commission and the status of planning in the Town of Christiansburg. The Commission has accomplished significant tasks this year during the 17 meetings held between January through November. This Annual Report covers the work of the Planning Commission from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016.

There have been a number of notable activities in this reporting period. A few highlights are provided below:

1. *Attended the New River Valley Regional Commission's Planning Commissioner Training;*
2. *Reviewed 10 conditional use permits, a conditional use permit amendment, and a comprehensive plan amendment;*
3. *Worked with Planning Department Staff on an amendment to the sign ordinance that will be brought to Town Council in early 2017; and*
4. *Worked with Planning Department Staff and consultants on an Urban Development Areas Grant which led to the comprehensive plan amendment.*

We value our roles as members of the Planning Commission, and we appreciate both the attention the Town Council has paid to the recommendations of the Planning Commission and the opportunity we have to serve our community. As always, we welcome your comments and invite you to attend our regular monthly meetings, held six days following a Town Council meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Sincerely,

Craig Moore, Chairperson
Planning Commission

ESTABLISHED
NOVEMBER 10, 1792

INCORPORATED
JANUARY 7, 1833

MAYOR
D. MICHAEL BARBER

COUNCIL MEMBERS
SAMUEL M. BISHOP
HARRY COLLINS
R. CORD HALL
STEVE HUPPERT
HENRY SHOWALTER
BRADFORD J. "BRAD" STIPES

TOWN MANAGER
STEVE BIGGS

ASSISTANT TOWN MANAGER
RANDY WINGFIELD

ASSISTANT TO THE TOWN
MANAGER
ADAM CARPENETTI

DIRECTOR OF
FINANCE/TOWN TREASURER
VALERIE L. TWEEDIE,
CPA, CFE, CGFM

CHIEF OF POLICE
MARK SISSON

CLERK OF COUNCIL
MICHELE M. STIPES

TOWN ATTORNEY
GUYNN & WADDELL, P.C.

OVERVIEW

The Christiansburg Planning Commission is comprised of between five and fifteen citizens appointed by the Town Council. There were ten Planning Commissioners at the end of this reporting period. The Commission fulfills the role identified in Section 15.2-2210 of the Code of Virginia. The Planning Commission is the official planning body for review of the future growth and development of the Town of Christiansburg pursuant to the adopted Comprehensive Plan and Town Ordinances. The Planning Department is the lead department that supports the work of the Planning Commission by providing planning guidance and technical review. The Town Attorney serves a valuable role in advising the Planning Commission and staff on land use matters. Town citizens also provide critical contributions through input and involvement during citizen comment periods and public hearings.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATES

January 19, 2016

February 1, 2016

February 16, 2016

February 29, 2016

March 28, 2016

April 18, 2016

May 16, 2016

May 31, 2016

June 20, 2016

July 18, 2016

August 1, 2016 *

August 15, 2016

August 29, 2016 *

September 19, 2016

October 3, 2016 *

October 17, 2016

November 28, 2016

*Development Subcommittee meeting was also held.

MEMBERSHIP

Planning Commission Members and Terms

NAME	TERM EXPIRES
Matthew Beasley	February 7, 2018
Ann H. Carter	August 31, 2020
Harry Collins	Town Council Liaison
David Franusich	February 2, 2019
Richard Hil Johnson	March 24, 2019
Craig Moore, Chair	August 31, 2018
T.L. Newell	March 24, 2019
Virginia "Ginny" Peeples *	March 24, 2019
Joe Powers *	August 31, 2018
Jennifer D. Sowers, Vice-Chair	January 26, 2020

* Planning Commissioners moved out of the Town of Christiansburg during 2016 and were no longer eligible to serve on the Planning Commission in 2016. Virginia "Ginny" Peeples resigned in August. Joe Powers resigned in October.

Regular Meeting Attendance

TOWN OF CHRISTIANBURG, PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS ATTENDANCE REPORT JANUARY 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2016												
CHAIRPERSON: Craig Moore												
NAME	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Matthew Beasley	X	X	X	X	U	X	E	X	X	X	X	-
Ann H. Carter	X	X	X	E	E	X	X	E	X	X	X	-
Harry Collins	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	E	X	X	X	-
David Franusich	X	X	U	X	E	U	X	E	X	U	X	-
Richard Hil Johnson	X	X	E	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-
Craig Moore	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-
T.L. Newell	E	X	X	X	X	X	X	E	E	X	X	-
Virginia "Ginny" Peeples	X	X	X	X	E	X	X	E	X	-	-	-
Joe Powers	X	X	X	X	E	X	X	X	X	X	-	-
Jennifer D. Sowers	X	X	X	E	X	X	X	E	X	X	E	-

INDICATE: (X) PRESENT; (E) EXCUSED, (U) UNEXCUSED

Excused: notified staff of absence prior to meeting **Unexcused:** did not notify staff of absence prior to meeting

* Months with more than one meeting: May and October had 2 meetings; February and August had 3 meetings. If marked absence in table, Planning Commissioner was absent for a single meeting during that month.

Planning Commission Membership on Other Groups

OTHER GROUPS	PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER
Town Council	Harry Collins
Board of Zoning Appeals	T.L. Newell
New River Valley Planning Commission	Harry Collins
New River Valley Planning Commission	Richard Hil Johnson
Bikeway Walkway Committee	Joe Powers

TRAINING

Training Opportunities

There are outside training opportunities and staff presentations provided to Planning Commissioners to enhance each member's understanding and knowledge base in the field of planning. There are three opportunities for the Planning Commission to obtain training throughout the year.

The primary training opportunity each member is encouraged to complete is the Virginia Tech Land Use Education Program (LUEP)'s Certified Planning Commissioners' program. This program attracts participants from localities across the Commonwealth. It is a 10 week format overall and includes a two-day opening session featuring classroom instruction focusing on the principles and practices of planning, the planning process, the legal foundations for planning, planning commission duties and responsibilities, the tools of planning, and the job of the planning commissioner. The concluding session also features two days of classroom instruction. The topics covered include principles of meeting management, communication skills, decision making skills, conflict management, principles of community visioning, creative thinking and leadership principles. Between the two classroom sessions, all students are required to read several books that are included in the registration fee and complete and submit a series of open-book tests and essays. Participants are also required to attend a planning commission meeting in another locality and analyze and report on the meeting using an observation guide that is provided during the first session.

The second training opportunity is the New River Valley Regional Commission (NRVRC)'s Planning Commissioner Training. This evening event is held at the NRVRC's building each spring. The training is available to all Commissioners. Christiansburg Planning Department staff participates with other regional planners in developing the discussion topics. This year's topics were Pulaski County's Approach to Creating a Unified Development Ordinance, The Limits of Residential Zoning, and a General Assembly update on land use related legislation.

Finally, the Planning Department will organize staff presentations for regularly scheduled Planning Commission meetings to inform the Commission on a specific topic. The Town of Christiansburg staff provided presentations to the Planning Commission on House Bill 2 funding and the changes being made to proffer legislation at the state level.

Training Program Participation

TRAINING PROGRAM	PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER
Virginia Tech LUEP's Certified Planning Commissioners' Program	T.L. Newell
Virginia Tech LUEP's Certified Planning Commissioners' Program	Virginia "Ginny" Peeples
NRVRC's Planning Commissioner Training	Richard Hil Johnson
NRVRC's Planning Commissioner Training	Joe Powers
NRVRC's Planning Commissioner Training	T.L. Newell
NRVRC's Planning Commissioner Training	Jennifer D. Sowers

SUBCOMMITTEES

Membership

DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE	COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE
Joe Powers, Chair	Virginia Peeples, Chair
Matthew Beasley	David Franusich
Ann H. Carter	T.L. Newell
Jennifer D. Sowers	

Meetings

The Development Subcommittee of the Planning Commission held meetings to discuss the following topics:

DATE	TOPIC
August 1, 2016	Sign Ordinance Amendment and Beauty Salon/Barber Shop as Major Home Occupation
August 15, 2016/ October 3, 2016	Sign Ordinance Amendment: The ordinance looks to accomplish a number of goals including: (1) address the allowable timeframes for political signs and all other temporary signs; (2) compliance with the Supreme Court ruling [Reed v. Town of Gilbert, Arizona (decided June 18, 2015)] requiring signage regulations to be content neutral; (3) move sign regulations from a stand-alone chapter to the Zoning Ordinance; and (4) streamline the formatting overall by removing outdated and duplicative definitions and sections.

The Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee of the Planning Commission did not hold any meetings in 2016.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Andrew Warren, AICP, CZA, CTM
Planning Director/ Zoning Administrator

Sara Morgan, CZA
Senior Planner

Will Drake, CZO
Planner I

Planning Interns

Tabitha Proffitt

Juli Kurnos

Assistance also provided by:

Building Department

Jerry Heinline, CBO
Building Official

Engineering Department

Wayne O. Nelson, PE
Director of Engineering and Special Projects

Town Attorney

Theresa Fontana
Guyann & Waddell, P.C.

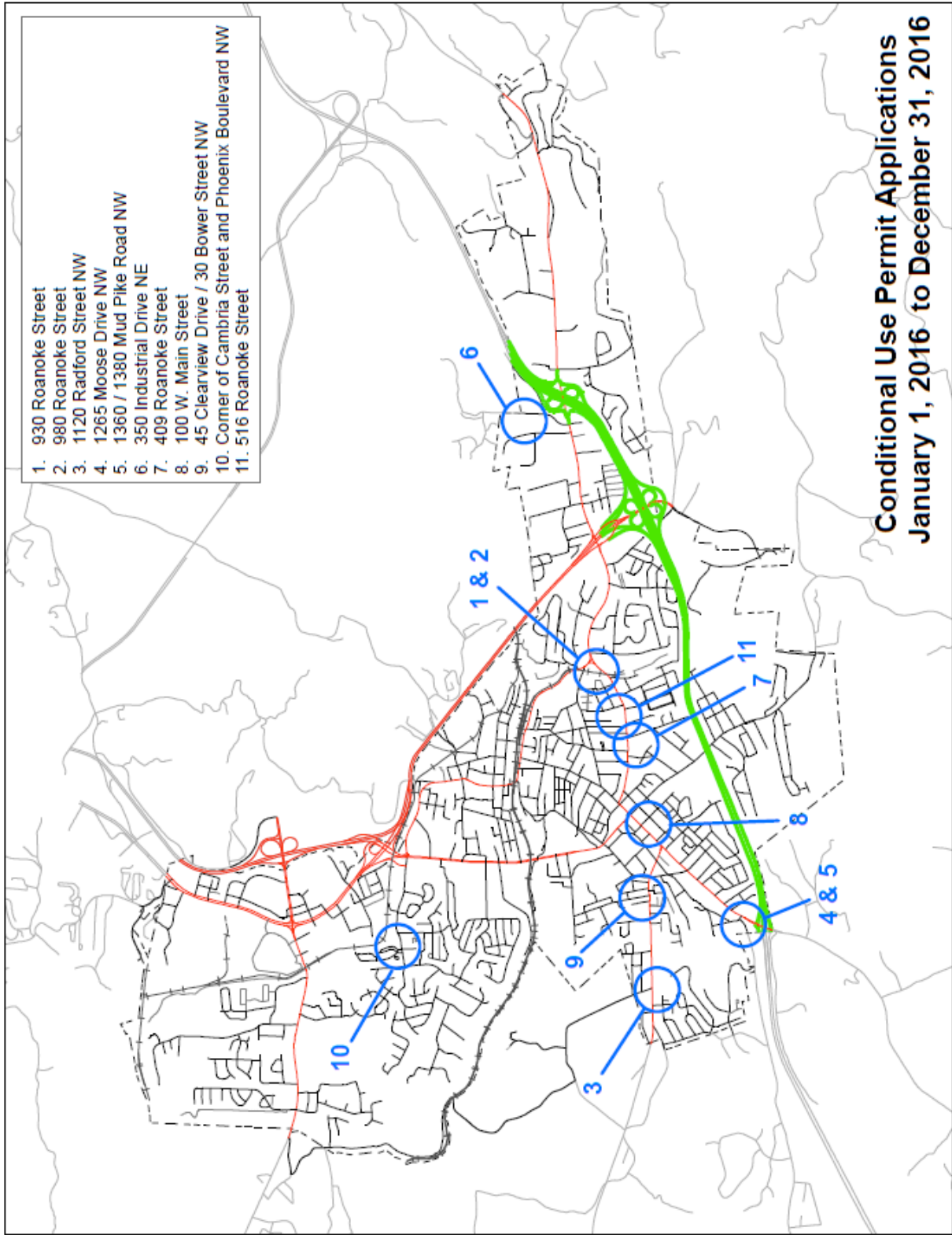
REGULATORY CASES

Conditional Use Permits

MAP #	RECOMMENDATION DATE	APPLICANT	LOCATION	REQUEST
1	February 29, 2016	J&M Enterprises, LLC	930 Roanoke Street	Automobile Upholstery
2	Withdrawn	Paul Haynes	980 Roanoke Street	Towing Service and Commercial Garage
3	March 28, 2016	Karen Kay Zimmerman	1120 Radford Street NW	Single Family Residence
4	April 18, 2016	M&M Tire Holdings, Inc.	1265 Moose Drive NW	Private Recreation Facility
5	April 18, 2016	Construction Services, LLC	1360 / 1380 Mud Pike Road NW	Welding and Metal Fabrication
6	Withdrawn	Hash Investments, LLC	350 Industrial Drive NE	Commercial Septic Service Storage
7	May 31, 2016	Curtis Properties, LLC	409 Roanoke Street	Towing Service
8	June 20, 2016	On Main Street Inc.	100 W. Main Street	Private School
9	August 29, 2016	George Gray	45 Clearview Drive / 30 Bower Street NW	Commercial Garage
10	September 19, 2016	SHAH Development, LLC	Corner of Cambria Street NW and Phoenix Boulevard NW	Amendment to CUP (PHD)
11	October 3, 2016	Chris Woolwine	516 Roanoke Street	Exterminating Services

Comprehensive Plan Amendments

RECOMMENDATION DATE	APPLICANT	REQUEST
October 17, 2016	Town of Christiansburg	Amend to incorporate four Urban Development Areas. Text changes were made to Chapter 5 Infrastructure Services, Chapter 7 Transportation, and Chapter 8 Community and Economic Development. Additionally the Future Land Use Map was amended to include the boundaries of the Urban Development Areas.



URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREAS GRANT

Procedure

The Urban Development Areas Grant is a planning grant from the Commonwealth of Virginia's Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment. The grant has allowed Planning Commission and the Planning Department to identify four areas in town suitable for growth in the next 15 years. Following the identification of these four areas, an amendment was drafted for the Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. The amendment was taken to the Planning Commission for a public hearing which resulted in a recommendation to approve the amendment. Town Council held a public hearing following this recommendation and at their following meeting they voted to adopt the amendment which pass unanimously.

Timeline

DATE	ITEM
June 1, 2015	Grant awarded to Town of Christiansburg
September 14, 2015	Consultants perform first site visit. During their visit they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with Administration, department representatives, and local engineering firms • Toured town with Town Manager and Planning Department • Presented to Planning Commission
November 16, 2015	Consultants perform second site visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented to Planning Commission
December 28, 2015	Planning Commission approves boundaries of four UDAs
June 20, 2016	Consultants perform third site visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held a public information open house at the Recreation Center • Met with Planning Commission during a workshop • Presented to Planning Commission
August 23, 2016	Consultants present UDA report to Town Council
October 17, 2016	Planning Commission Public Hearing
October 17, 2016	Planning Commission Action
November 8, 2016	Town Council Public Hearing
November 22, 2016	Town Council Action

Identified Urban Development Areas

Mall UDA. Generally the area of the New River Mall, with big box retailers and regional goods and services, is defined by the areas adjacent to North Franklin Street. Stakeholders strongly felt that targeted growth over time must address the lack of pedestrian connectivity within and between existing developments and between large street blocks that are separated by wide street corridors.

Cambria UDA. The boundary generally follows the contours of the current General Business (B-3) Zoning District. Feedback from stakeholders indicated that targeted growth should be focused along Cambria Street through the adaptive reuse or redevelopment of existing buildings and developable parcels to allow for commercial uses along the ground floor with residential above, while developing policies that protect the character of the Cambria neighborhood.

Institute UDA. Centered along N Franklin Street, and its outer edges are defined by Norfolk Southern to the south and U.S Route 460 to the north. It is the desire of stakeholders that targeted growth should reinforce the current institutional, residential and commercial uses, future passenger rail train station and promote connectivity to the Huckleberry Trail.

Downtown UDA. Defined by a roadway network that includes N. Franklin, Depot, First and Main streets. Stakeholders emphasized that targeted growth should include a mix of infill and new mixed-use development with active commercial use at the ground level to make downtown an enticing place to visit.

Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan Amendment incorporated both text and map changes. Text changes were made to three different chapters within the Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. Chapter 8 Community and Economic Development houses the majority of the urban development area text including 23 Goals and Strategies that are specific to the four urban development areas established. Chapter 5 Infrastructure Services added text to prioritize utility improvements within the urban development areas. Chapter 7 Transportation created TRN 1.2C under Transit and Multi-Modal Transportation Goals and Strategies. TRN 1.2C aims at supporting a potential transit center in the Mall UDA. Lastly the Future Land Use map was edited to include the boundaries of the urban development areas.