

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2025

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The Town of Orange Planning Commission held a work session meeting at 6:00 p.m., in the Town of Orange Community Meeting Room. Planning Commission members present were: Chairman Benjamin Sherman, Vice-Chair Page Sullenberger, Commissioners Rita Carroll, and Jeffrey Crane. Staff members present were Director of Community Development Deborah Sturm, ICMA-CM, AICP and Deputy Town Clerk Kimberly Strawser, CZA, CMC. Mayor J. Harrison Cluff was also present.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Sherman called the meeting to order. The Deputy Town Clerk called roll and noted that there was a quorum present.

CONSIDERATION OF PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF MAY 12, 2025

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Sullenberger, seconded by Commissioner Crane, to approve the meeting minutes of May 12, 2025, as presented. On vote, Chairman Sherman – aye, Vice-Chair Sullenberger – aye, Commissioner Carroll – aye, and Commissioner Crane – aye. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF FY2026-FY2031 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

The Director of Community Development reported that the Capital Improvements Plan must be updated annually. The Director of Community Development stated that the plan before the Commission included street reconstruction projects that were required to be in the localities Capital Improvement Plans by VDOT in order to be eligible for the revenue share funding. The Director of Community Development stated further that a more comprehensive review would take place later in the year.

Mr. Kent Higginbotham appeared before the Commission to express his concerns about stormwater that affects his property on Waugh Blvd. Mr. Higginbotham reported that the water comes from Route 20, then across Waugh Blvd., and dumps onto his property and causes flooding. Chairman Sherman stated that this is something that could be put into the Capital Improvements Plan when the more comprehensive review is done.

After discussion, a motion was made by Vice-Chair Sullenberger, seconded by Commissioner Crane, to approve the DRAFT revised FY2026-FY2031 Capital Improvements Plan as presented. On vote, Chairman Sherman – aye, Vice-Chair Sullenberger – aye, Commissioner Carroll – aye, and Commissioner Crane – aye. Motion carried.

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DISCUSSION REGARDING ZONING OF PORTION OF TAX MAP #T43-47

The Director of Community Development reported that the 6.207-acre portion of Orange County tax map number T43-47 was annexed into the Town of Orange in 2002. The Director of Community Development stated that when the annexation process was completed, the 6.207-acre portion was not assigned a zoning classification that was required by the Town's Zoning Ordinance section 4-20.30. The Director of Community Development stated that since the property was annexed it has remained unzoned and untaxed. The Director of Community Development stated further it was the Town's desire to assign a zoning classification to the property.

The Director of Community Development reported that a letter had been sent to the property owners to offer them an opportunity to provide input on the zoning of the property. The Director of Community Development stated that the property owner wanted the property to be zoned Traditional Residential – High. The Director of Community Development stated that staff had provided maps showing the location of the property and the zoning classification of the adjoining properties within the town limits. The Director of Community Development stated further that the adjoining property in the Town limits was zoned Town Activity Center and that zoning of the portion of the property that in Orange County was zoned agricultural. The Director of Community Development reported that the Future Land Use map shows the zoning as Civic.

The Director of Community Development stated that Mr. Higginbotham pointed out to her prior to the meeting that the Comprehensive Plan, Planning Sector for this property was Prospect which would allow for residential use.

The Director of Community Development stated that staff was seeking input from the Commission as to how the property should be zoned and requested that the Commission schedule a public hearing to receive public comment on the property zoning once the zoning classification was set.

Mr. Kent Higginbotham appeared before the Commission and stated when they went to pay the taxes for this parcel there was no record of the parcel and it was not zoned. Mr. Higginbotham stated that there was no urgency to have the property zoned and they were only using the property for a hayfield at this time. Mr. Higginbotham stated that in the planning sector – Prospect characteristics references residential, apartments and commercial uses. Mr. Higginbotham stated further that there is a right-of-way that is 60 feet on the school property and that these 6 acres was adjacent to that. Mr. Higginbotham stated that he thinks there should be a discussion within the Town as to what the highest and best use should be. Mr. Higginbotham invited the members of the Commission and staff to come take a look at the property.

The Director of Community Development stated that she agreed with Mr. Higginbotham that there could be more potential use for the property, however the 6.207 acre parcel that is in the Town needs to be zoned in order for it to be taxed. The Director of Community Development

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stated after the zoning of the 6.207 parcel was done then the Town and Mr. Higginbotham could discuss the “bigger picture” for whole property. The Director of Community Development stated further that the zoning classification needed to be assigned before the next tax bills go out in December. The Director of Community Development stated that when a property was boundary adjusted it was assigned a classification that was similar to what the zoning was in the county. The Director of Community Development stated further that the zoning of the parcel in the county was Agricultural and the similar zoning in the Town would be Rural Residential. The Director of Community stated her recommendation would be for the Commission to consider the Rural Residential zoning classification until the property owners come back with a rezoning application and a development proposal.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission to table further discussion and consideration to their next meeting, July 28, 2025.

DISCUSSION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SURVEY AND COMMUNITY MEETING NOTICE

The Director of Community Development stated that enclosed in their package was a draft Community Survey and Community Meeting notice for the Comprehensive Plan update for their consideration and discussion. The Director of Community Development stated further that staff was seeking input from the Commission on the questions noted in the survey, as well as the meeting dates and the theme combination suggested for the community meetings.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission to send out the Community Survey to town citizens for their input. The Commission requested that staff work on locations and times for the Community Meeting series and further discussion will be held at their next meeting.

NEXT MEETING

Monday, July 28, 2025, regular meeting at 6 p.m.

With no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Kimberly Strawser, CZA, CMC
Deputy Town Clerk

Chairman Benjamin Sherman