

AT A MEETING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ON MAY 14, 2008 IN THE BOARD ROOM, SECOND FLOOR, COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER, CHRISTIANSBURG, VIRGINIA:

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mr. Miller, Chair called the meeting to order and Mrs. Hopkins established the presence of a quorum.

Present:        Robert Miller, Chair  
                  Walt Haynes, Vice Chair  
                  Frank Lau, Member  
                  Steve Howard, Member  
                  David Moore, Member  
                  Steve Cochran, Member  
                  Bryan Rice, Member  
                  Malvin Wells, Member  
                  Steven Sandy, Planning Director  
                  Dari Jenkins, Planning & Zoning Administrator  
                  Amy Doss, Development Planner  
                  Meghan Dorsett, Comprehensive Planner  
                  Brea Hopkins, Zoning Technician  
                  John Muffo, Board of Supervisors Liaison

Absent:         William Seitz, Secretary

**PUBLIC ADDRESS:**

None

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

On a motion by Mr. Haynes, seconded by Mr. Howard and unanimously carried the agenda was approved as presented.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:**

On a motion by Mr. Howard, seconded by Mr. Cochran and unanimously carried the consent agenda was approved as presented.

**WORK SESSION:**

On motion by Mr. Cochran, seconded by Mr. Howard and unanimously carried the Planning Commission entered into work session.

**Private Wells and Well Drilling**

Mr. Sandy stated the concerns regarding private wells had been discussed over the last several meetings. The Reese rezoning has been tabled three times due to water concerns. The Board has requested additional information regarding private wells prior to making an action. Some local well drillers have contacted the office requesting the opportunity to speak to the planning commission regarding their profession.

Mr. Wayne Fenton, Fenton Well Drilling, stated he was certified as a master well driller by the State of VA and has been drilling wells since he was 18 years old. Due to his experience he has good knowledge of wells and water sources within the county. He discussed the benefits of wells as a water source and the range in depths and flow rates.

Mr. Rice asked if the area had adequate water supply why wells failed in the county.

Mr. Fenton stated most wells that fail are shallow, older wells. Water is a renewable resource; however, like oil, it can be depleted especially during drought. Recharge is another cause of failure. Large paved lots can decrease the amount absorbed into the groundwater.

Mr. Rice stated a well had recently failed in the Ridges subdivision and asked if the cause was known.

Mr. Fenton stated he was aware of the issue and it was determined a piece of her water conditioning equipment failed causing a lack of water but it was recharged in a matter of hours. Generally treatment is not required unless there is a need to remove excessive minerals such as lime or iron.

Mr. Haynes asked if larger acreage would allow more water access.

Mr. Fenton stated it would depend on the topography of the land. The higher in elevation you are the deeper you will have to drill. In a valley you are more apt to get a larger flow of water. He noted the flow varies throughout the county. The size of the lot does not have much affect due to the geological factors of the property. One lot may have great flow; whereas, the lot next door may not have any flow.

Mr. Mellon, Mellon Well Drilling, discussed how the geologic structure of an area impacts water sources. The porosity and permeability of rock will affect the water supply. As you drill a well you drill into cracks in the rock. It is a miracle if you hit the same type of rock every time. For every foot you drill there will be 1.5 gallons of water storage capability. 1 gallon a minute of water would yield 1440 gallons per day. This should be a sufficient water supply unless irrigation is performed daily.

Mr. Eric Rorrer, Rorrer Well Drilling, stated it is normal to never intentionally drill past the point that the water flow can serve the home. Public water well supply is very different. The code requires 500ft. separation between public water wells. If public wells are closer than required, they have to be tested simultaneously. This is due to the high volume (100+ gallons per minute) of flow coming from the wells.

Ms. Dorsett asked how slope would affect water supply in an area.

Mr. Fenton stated slope determines the amount of time water has to percolate through soil. That explains the reason you have deeper wells with less flow if you drill on a ridge.

Mr. Rice stated he had spoken to Bob Fronk, PSA director and the average water usage per day was 175-200 gallons. Christiansburg confirmed the same amount. What happens to the water in a private supply when it completes the cycle.

Mr. Rorrer stated that was one of the benefits of having a well. All the water is displaced back to the site and recharged in the system. This is not accomplished by a public water system.

Mr. Haynes, Haynes Well Drilling, stated he was not aware one lot in County that could not get a well. The river water comes from groundwater. The river would be depleted before the groundwater is depleted. The New River Valley area has tremendous amounts of water because there is an enormous recharge area.

Mr. Rice stated the concerns were that residents would be asking the Public Service Authority to take over supplying water to the subdivision. Viewland subdivision had to be taken over by the PSA a few years ago.

Mr. Fenton stated Viewland subdivision had a lot of individual wells that were in existence prior to the subdivision. The community well used to serve the subdivision was strained from the beginning because there were too many houses on one well.

Mr. Fenton discussed the qualifications by the State of Virginia and the process for a residential well and regulations.

#### Village of Elliston Future Land Use Map Revisions

Mr. Sandy stated the future land use map would be discussed over the next few months due to the recent change for the new elementary school, to provide conformity with the other village plans and designations and to further define the village expansion areas. New floodplain maps will also require some significant changes in the area. The potential intermodal site will also affect the plan. Any changes will require a public hearing.

Ms. Dorsett discussed the mixed use designations applied to the Village plan.

On motion by Mr. Cochran, seconded by Mr. Howard and unanimously carried the Planning Commission closed the work session.

#### **LIAISON REPORTS:**

##### Board of Supervisors

Mr. Muffo stated that an impartial hydrogeologist has been contacted to research and discuss the private well issue. The HS Tejas is back before the Board of Supervisors for consideration.

Mr. Sandy stated the Board had an extensive discussion on the maintenance agreement and the developer has stated a condition could be placed limiting the lot size to a minimum of 20 acres. There are still some concerns and issues. The developer also agreed to construct a landing for a helicopter.

##### Blacksburg Planning Commission

Mr. Haynes stated a public hearing is scheduled for next month for a new automotive center.

##### Christiansburg Planning Commission

Mr. Rice stated the Christiansburg Planning Commission was looking at guidelines for their historical district. It was mentioned that Montgomery County does not have any guidelines.

##### Public Service Authority – Malvin Wells

Mr. Wells stated the agreement with Radford Arsenal was being discussed because the PSA has been notified that water cannot be served during winter months.

##### Parks & Recreation- Steve Howard

Mr. Howard reported that the Parks & Recreation director discussed demolition of the old office structure. Renovations to the pool are underway and it will be opened on schedule. There was discussion regarding a landing to access the Roanoke River. The ball field at Bethel is near completion. Parks & Recreation is seeking funding for bleachers.

Radford Planning Commission

Mr. Cochran stated the commission was working on the comprehensive plan.

Transportation Safety Committee- Malvin Wells

Mr. Wells stated the committee discussed trash pickup using the jail personnel.

Planning Director's Report- Steve Sandy

Mr. Sandy reported he had scheduled a meeting with the Agriculture & Forestal district to discuss Agri-business and other business. A request has been sent to the City of Radford asking them to notify the Planning Commission when they discuss the 177 corridor during their comprehensive plan revision.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.