

PRESENT: J. Curd, Vice Chairman
S. Bridge
G. Campbell
T. Jennings
L. Tate, Planner II and Secretary

ABSENT: K. Shiflett, Chairman
K. Leonard

VIRGINIA: At the Called Meeting of the Augusta County Planning Commission held on Tuesday, May 9, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Conference Room, Augusta County Government Center, Verona, Virginia.

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DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mr. Curd stated as there were four (4) members present, there was a quorum.

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ROUTE 616 DAMTOWN ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Mrs. Tate explained Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is requesting to acquire land in the Middle River Agricultural Forestal District in order to make road safety improvements on Route 616 Damtown Road. She indicated on a map the parcel that would be affected by the acquisition and stated VDOT would like to acquire 1.86 acres of the parcel for the road improvements. VDOT explored several alternatives for the improvements and chose the alternative that reduced the amount of acreage needed for the improvements.

Mrs. Tate reviewed the Staff Report with the Commissioners which provided the written findings by VDOT for the proposed request. Staff feels the proposed highway improvement would have no negative impact upon the preservation and enhancement of agriculture and forestry and agricultural and forestal resources within the district. VDOT has identified the necessity of the proposed road improvement based on crash history. From 2008 to 2016 there have been 21 crashes which include 8 injuries and 2 fatalities. The road design which achieves the needed improvements with the least amount of land conversion has been chosen.

Mrs. Tate stated the Agricultural and Forestal District Committee supported the findings submitted by VDOT and recommend approval of the written findings. The Committee also recommended that a provision for the removal of future land from agricultural and forestal districts for public projects associated with an agency of the Commonwealth be added as a condition of the districts when they are renewed so as to make the property owner aware of such provision at the time they renew their land to the district. Adding such a provision will take the advisory committee and other elected and/or appointed officials out of the process as the property owner will agree to the provision at the time of their renewal.

Mr. Jennings asked if the County reached out to the property owner regarding the road improvements and land acquisition.

Mrs. Tate stated the County did not contact the property owner. VDOT has been in contact with the owner and has provided their report to the owner. She also stated as long as the Agricultural and Forestal District Committee, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors are in support of the written findings, a public hearing is not required.

Mr. Bridge stated since the findings submitted by VDOT were approved by the Agricultural and Forestal District Committee, he moved to recommend approval of the request as written.

Mr. Jennings stated he would like to see the pros and cons from a Staff report before recommending approval of a provision for the removal of future land from agriculture and forestal districts as part of the agricultural forestal renewal conditions as it relates to public projects associated with an agency of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Bridge stated it is important to hear from the land owners regarding the removal of property from the agricultural and forestal districts for public projects. If it is approved to add the proposed provision to the agricultural and forestal district, the property owner will not have any say regarding a public project and withdrawal of their land from the district. He withdrew his previous recommendation for approval.

Mrs. Tate stated the Planning Commission is going through the process for this request as detailed and outlined in State Code. It is important to think into the future of what possible projects could come up and if the proposed provision would be beneficial to the property owner at that time.

Mr. Bridge stated the wording of "public projects" in the recommendation made by the Agricultural and Forestal District Committee is vague. Property owners are entitled to know the details of proposed projects and how a particular project will affect their property.

Mr. Bridge moved to recommend acceptance of the Agricultural and Forestal District Committee recommendation to allow VDOT to acquire the 1.86 acres for the Route 616 road improvements. He also moved to recommend the provision for the removal of

future land from agricultural and forestal districts for public projects associated with an agency of the commonwealth be added as a condition of the districts when they are renewed pursuant to State Code 15.2.4313.

Mr. Jennings stated the two recommendations should be voted on separately. Although he is not opposed to the second paragraph of the Agricultural and Forestal District Committee Recommendation, he would like more information on the provision and exactly how it will be worded.

Mrs. Tate stated the County Attorney would need to review and approve the wording for the provision as well.

Mr. Bridge withdrew his second motion.

Mr. Bridge moved to recommend approval of the first paragraph of the Agricultural and Forestal District Committee recommendation.

Mr. Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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STAFF REPORTS

A. CODE OF VIRGINIA – SECTION 15.2-2310

Mrs. Tate reviewed the items coming before the BZA at their June meeting.

The Planning Commission took no action on the BZA items.

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There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.

Chairman

Secretary