

AT A MEETING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ON APRIL 12, 2023 IN THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING ROOM, SECOND FLOOR, COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER, CHRISTIANSBURG, VIRGINIA:

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Workman called the meeting to order at 7:00.

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Secretary Foster called the roll to determine a quorum.

Present: Adam Workman, Chair  
Bryan Rice, Vice-Chair  
Bill Foster, Secretary  
Scott Kroll  
Lonnie Linkous  
Robert Miller  
Andrea Sharpe-Robinson  
Trey Wolz  
Sarah Bohn, Board of Supervisors Liaison

Absent: Pamela Simpkins

Staff: Brea Hopkins, Planning Director  
Jude Cochran, Planning and Zoning Administrator  
Justin D. Sanders, Senior Planner  
Destiny Taylor, Planning Coordinator

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

On a motion by Mr. Miller, and seconded by Mr. Foster, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the agenda.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

On a motion by Mr. Miller, and seconded by Mr. Rice, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the consent agenda.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

**SUP-2023-668-** A request by the **Montgomery County Board of Supervisors** for a Special Use Permit (SUP) on property owned by the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors to allow a lighted park. The proposed Special Use Permit would allow the installation of lighting at Auburn Park. The proposed lighting plan consists of twenty-one (21) 60-foot light poles, one (1) 70-foot light pole, and eight (8) 80-foot light poles on the athletic fields currently under development. A total of one hundred forty-four (144) individual LED downcast lighting fixtures would be installed on the poles, with fixtures installed at a height of 16 feet and/or at the maximum pole height. The property is located at 3595 Riner Road (St. Rt. 8), and is located approximately 0.1 miles North of the intersection of Riner Road (Route 8) and Turnberry Ln. The property is further identified as Tax Map 119-A 23 (Parcel ID: 019113), 45.683 acres, zoned Agricultural (A-1) in the Riner Magisterial District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Resource Stewardship in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Cochran presented the request and gave background information for the application. Aerial maps were presented.

Mr. Cochran explained that the request is to add lighting to the park and that there would be minimal light spillage on adjacent properties and roadways. He added that a similar SUP application for Creed Fields Park was approved in 2022. Mr. Cochran stated that the proposed lighting would allow for evening games. Staff has received no opposition from Schools or VDOT.

All adjoining property owners were notified in accordance with Montgomery County code and code of Virginia. Staff received one inquiry seeking clarification. Public Hearing signs were placed at the site.

Ms. Sharpe-Robinson asked if this park lighting accommodates future adjoining subdivision development. Ms. Hopkins responded that the lighting will only be in open spaces bordering the ball fields and would not be close to property lines with the adjoining subdivision currently being developed.

Mr. Miller asked if the lights would only be used during game time, to which Mr. Cochran confirmed they would not be used outside of game time.

Mr. Foster inquired about when discussion about lighting at the park began. Ms. Hopkins explained that discussion began last year when recreation funding was received. Creed Fields Park was originally built without lighting and later had to be dug up for lighting to be added.

Mr. Miller asked if there was an estimated completion time, to which Ms. Hopkins said that there is no estimated completion time but that Parks and Recreation would like it to be completed as soon as possible to meet recreational demand.

Mr. Miller inquired about the possibility of an indoor facility. Ms. Hopkins stated that there are no plans for an indoor facility at this point but that it might be possible in the future.

Mr. Workman asked Mr. Cochran how the lighting for Auburn Park would compare to Creed Fields Park. Mr. Cochran responded that there would be fewer lights at Auburn Park.

Chair Workman opened the public hearing at 7:16 pm.

Michael E. Smith of 3500 Dairy Rd., Christiansburg inquired about the possibility of putting in a privacy fence and stated that he had neighbors inquire if he would participate in sharing the cost of one with them.

Robert S. Bell of 3490 Dairy Rd., Christiansburg requested a copy of the slideshow presented about Auburn Park lighting to which Mrs. Hopkins directed him to come to the Planning and GIS Office.

Bruce Board of Riner Rd., Christiansburg asked for clarification of the operating hours of the park lighting. Mr. Cochran explained the lights would only be used during game times and would be turned off by 10:00pm. Mr. Board inquired about the size of the fields. Supervisor Bohn explained that they would be designed for Parks and Recreation per sport regulations.

Having no additional speakers, the public hearing was closed at 7:22pm.

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Foster, and approved (8-0); recommending approval of the request by the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors for a Special Use Permit, with conditions, to allow the installation of lighting at Auburn Park property further identified as Tax Map 119-A 23 (Parcel ID: 019113) at 3595 Riner Road.

1. Lighting shall be installed in general conformance with the plans submitted by Musco Lighting, dated March 20, 2023
2. Lighting installed on the property shall be designed to prevent glare onto adjacent properties and comply with "Dark Sky Friendly" standards.

## **PUBLIC ADDRESS**

Chair Workman opened this portion of the meeting at 7:24 pm. Having no speakers, the public address portion of the meeting was closed.

## **WORK SESSION**

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, and seconded by Mr. Rice to enter Work Session.

Commission members discussed the need for revisions to the Bylaws and the steps they would like to take to update them. It was proposed that the process would consist of be a rough draft and then a final revised version of the new Bylaws for approval

A motion was made by Mr. Kroll and seconded by Mr. Miller to close the Work Session.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Solar Updates to Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance

Ms. Hopkins discussed the need for policy regarding solar in the Comprehensive Plan. It was agreed that a subcommittee would begin to meet regarding policy for solar projects at the beginning of May. Mr. Miller, Mr. Rice, Mr. Foster and Mr. Linkous will all be on the committee.

### Planning Department Vision, Mission, & Values Statements

Ms. Hopkins gave a brief overview of the updates to the Planning and GIS Mission, Vision and Values. The Direct Reports Team used key statements from the Board of Supervisor's Mission, Vision and Values to create department statements.

## **LIAISON REPORTS**

Board of Supervisors – Supervisor Bohn updated the Commission on the VDOT plan to fill pot holes and clear brush throughout the County. The BOS approved the rezoning request for Mr. Lytton and would like to see a decrease in the cost to citizens. The BOS will meet with County Administration regarding the advertised tax rate being reduced from 0.73 cents to revenue neutral rate of 0.70 cents. Montgomery County Public Schools has asked the Board for support on their grant application that would require the Board to keep the same level of support for schools over the next 10 years. The Board was unable to approve because it would be a requirement moving forward and the county funding is still being affected by Blacksburg High Schools roof collapse.

The Shawsville Rescue Squad is closing due to a lack of volunteers. County Emergency Services staff with help with coverage of the Shawsville area.

Public Service Authority – The Board approved up to \$100k in additional funding for the sprinkler system in East Montgomery Elementary. Progress is being made with the water systems the State had the County take over.

Blacksburg Planning Commission – No report.

Christiansburg Planning Commission – No report.

Radford Planning Commission – No report.

Tourism Council – No report.

Parks and Recreation – The Parks and Recreation Department is excited about the addition of Auburn Park.

Planning Director's Report- Ms. Hopkins stated that\_VDOT has requested a list of potential Smart Scale projects for the sixth round. VDOT will only be able to provide staff support for one project. Projects presented were along Riner Road and the Merrimac Road and Prices Fork Road. An OIPI study has been requested for Route 114 to get some safety improvements in the area.

The APA Virginia Conference will be held in Roanoke, Ms. Hopkins has submitted several award nominations.

Ms. Hopkins summarized training opportunities that Staff has recently attended including a solar workshop, FEMA flood training and the National Planning Conference.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no additional business, Chair Workman adjourned the meeting at 8:42 p.m.