Overview

The Blacksburg Planning Commission is composed of between five and fifteen citizens appointed by the Town Council. There were eight 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 Blacksburg pursuant to the adopted Comprehensive Plan and Town Ordinances. A number of Town Departments support the work of the Planning Commission by providing planning guidance and technical review. The Town Clerk of Council records minutes of the monthly Planning Commission meetings. The Town Attorney serves a valuable role in advising staff and the Planning Commission on land use matters. Town citizens also contribute through their service on Planning Commission subcommittees and their attendance at neighborhood meetings, public input sessions, and public hearings.

In November 2017, the Planning Commission held its annual retreat to foster camaraderie within the group, to discuss membership expectations and to consider how the Planning Commission might assist Town Council in its goals. We have been holding the annual retreat since 2009 and have found that it serves the Commission well to evaluate where we are as a Commission and where we would like to go in the future.

This Annual Report covers the work of the Planning Commission from January 1, 2017, to December 31, 2017. We have provided a summary of our membership, committees, meeting dates, and activities, as well as more detailed information on the development applications reviewed by the Planning Commission.
Blacksburg Planning Commission
Members and Terms
January 1, 2017- December 31, 2017

Jerry Ford, Jr.  
J. B. Jones, Jr.  
Melissa “Mel” Jones, Secretary  
Andrew Kassoff, Vice Chair  
Paul Lancaster,  
Don Langrehr, Chair  
Elizabeth “Gregg” Moneyhun  
Cecile Newcomb  

June 28, 2016 – December 31, 2017  
April 14, 1998 – June 30, 2018  
June 22, 2010 – June 30, 2018  
November 14, 2000 – December 6, 2017  
June 26, 2012 – June 30, 2020  
June 24, 2008 – June 30, 2020  
January 10, 2012 – December 31, 2017

Planning Commission Subcommittees
(As of December 2017)

Zoning Ordinance Review
Tim Colley  
Andy Kassoff  
Mel Jones  
Meredith Jones  
Don Langrehr  
Gregg Moneyhun  
Georgia Anne Snyder-Falkingham  
Greg Tew

Comprehensive Plan Working Group
J.B. Jones  
Paul Lancaster  
Jerry Ford Jr.  
Bryce Johnson  
Janine Kniola  
Mike Lawless  
Rick Roth  
Emily Templeton  
Brian Templeton  
Hannah Vogel  
Latanya Walker
Planning and Building Department
Anne McClung, AICP
Planning and Building Director

Planning Division

Kali Casper, AICP, CZO
Comprehensive Planner

Kinsey O’Shea, AICP
Development Administrator/Planner

Paul Patterson, AICP, CZA
Zoning Administrator/Senior Planner

Greg Dudash, PMO, CZO
Property Maintenance Official

Maeve Gould
Planner

Kasey Thomsen
Office Manager/Planning Technician

Erika Newberry
Administrative Assistant

Ashton Funkhouser-Anway
Administrative Assistant

Hillary Moore
Zoning Inspector

Lisa Browning
Zoning Inspector

Planning Interns
Dinah Girma
Jeena Sajimon
Faruk Hesenjan

Building Division

Cathy Cook, CBO, PMO
Building Official

Sam Sapienza, CBO, CRCI
Building Inspector

Don Ford, CBO
Building Inspector

Bobbi Jo Burnett
Building Permit Technician

Trish Basham
Building Permit Technician

Mike Kendrick
Building Inspector
Assistance also provided by:

Engineering & GIS Department
Randy Formica, PE
Engineering & GIS Director

Town Clerk
Donna Boone-Caldwell, MMC

Town Attorney
Lawrence Spencer

Linda Burnsed, Paralegal
## Blacksburg Planning Commission Meeting Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Hearing Dates</th>
<th>Work Session Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 3, 2017</td>
<td>January 17, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 7, 2017</td>
<td>February 21, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 7, 2017</td>
<td>March 21, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 4, 2017</td>
<td>April 18, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2, 2017</td>
<td>April 20, 2017*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 6, 2017</td>
<td>May 16, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 28, 2017***</td>
<td>June 13, 2017**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 6, 2017</td>
<td>June 20, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1, 2017</td>
<td>July 18, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 5, 2017</td>
<td>August 15, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 3, 2017</td>
<td>September 19, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 7, 2017</td>
<td>October 17, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 5, 2017</td>
<td>November 21, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November 28, 2017****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>December 19, 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*New River Valley Planning Commissioners Annual Training
**Joint Work Session with Town Council
*** Joint meeting with Montgomery County Planning Commission
****Planning Commission Annual Retreat
ACTIVITIES

Blacksburg Planning Commission Regional Coordination
The Blacksburg Planning Commission and the Montgomery County Planning Commission continue to share information on their respective activities through member liaisons. Typically, the County Planning Commission assigns an individual each year to keep track of the development activities within the Town. For the Town, Blacksburg Planning Commissioners rotate service as a liaison to the Montgomery County Planning Commission meetings each month. The Commissioner liaison for a particular month provides a brief report of the activities at the Montgomery County meeting at each Planning Commission meeting.

The Commissioners attended the New River Valley Regional Commissioner sponsored Annual Training for Planning Commissioners in April of 2017. The spring training session was entitled “Implementing Legislative Changes” with discussion on topics regarding recent changes in proffer laws, sign ordinance court rulings and an update on wireless facility siting.
Comprehensive Plan

Blacksburg 2046, the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, was written in 1996, and establishes a fifty-year vision for how Blacksburg should grow and develop. In accordance with Virginia State Code, review of comprehensive plans is required by a locality every five years. On October 11, 2016, Town Council adopted the new update for the town’s Comprehensive Plan, which replaced the previously adopted 2014 version. Blacksburg 2046 is available at [www.blacksburg.gov](http://www.blacksburg.gov), with hard copies at the Blacksburg Planning Department.

In 2017 the Town staff began the 5-Year Update of the Comprehensive Plan in January with educational outreach meetings and continued public outreach efforts throughout the spring and summer months. The Long Range Planning Committee was expanded with this 5-year update to become a larger group and became the Comprehensive Plan Update Working Group. The Working Group began reviewing proposed text and map changes in August 2017 and continued working through the end of 2017. The revised Comprehensive Plan is expected to be adopted by the Planning Commission in fall 2018.

Comprehensive Plan Update Working Group

Comprehensive Plan related matters are typically reviewed by the Long Range Planning Committee, comprised of Planning Commissioners and citizens. This group reviews and makes recommendations to the full Planning Commission on potential changes to the Comprehensive Plan. In the year following a major update of the plan, the Long Range Planning Committee does not meet as the staff spends that year on finalizing the plan document along with education and outreach. The Long Range Planning Committee was expanded in 2017 to become the Comprehensive Plan Update Working Group to address the need for a larger group to review the 5-year update to the Comprehensive Plan. The Working Group began reviewing proposed text and map changes in August 2017 and continued working through the end of 2017. The revised Comprehensive Plan is expected to be adopted Fall 2018.

Zoning Ordinance Review Committee

The Zoning Review Committee (ZORC) reviews and makes recommendations to the full Planning Commission on all potential changes to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. This year the ZORC committee worked on two Zoning Ordinance Amendments. The first amendment, adopted by Ordinance #1816, created an accessory apartment permit program. The second amendment, adopted by Ordinance #1845 added a definition of an Event Center use, and permitted the use in the Industrial and Research and Development Zoning District with applicable use and design standards.


Review of Development Applications and Ordinance Amendments

A number of different development applications were filed during the calendar year 2017 and most were heard by the Planning Commission in calendar year 2017. The requests included two special exception request, five Conditional Use Permits, nine Rezoning requests, and two Zoning Ordinance text Amendments. In most cases, the Planning Commission serves as a recommending body, making recommendations to Town Council with Town Council taking final action. In some instances, however, the Planning Commission takes final action, such as in the review of Major Subdivisions. No Major Subdivisions were filed in 2017. The Planning Commission also reviews requests to amend the Agriculture and Forestal District (AFD), and applications to enter or withdraw from the AFD. However, in 2017, no actions were taken as there were no requests for addition to, or withdrawal from the AFD. A summary of the development applications reviewed is provided on the following pages.

Planning Commission Actions: 2017

Special Exception (SE) Requests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SE Number</th>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Request</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Planning Commission Recommendation</th>
<th>Town Council Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SE 17-0001</td>
<td>James Taylor, Balzer &amp; Associates on behalf of Main at Dowdy, LLC</td>
<td>To allow parking in front of the front building line</td>
<td>110 Dowdy Drive</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>Approved, July 11, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE 17-0002</td>
<td>Home 2 Home Suites</td>
<td>To allow parking in front of the building line</td>
<td>500 feet from Country Club Drive</td>
<td>Approved August 1, 2017</td>
<td>Approved, September 12, 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please see map next page)
Special Exception Applications
January 1, 2017
December 31, 2017

1. SE 17-0001 110 Dowdy Drive
2. SE 17-0002 500 feet from Country Club Drive
## Planning Commission Actions: 2017
### Conditional Use Permit Applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CUP Number</th>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Request</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Planning Commission Recommendation</th>
<th>Town Council Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CUP 17-0001</td>
<td>Steve Semones, Balzer and Associates on behalf of Ratcliff Corner, LLC</td>
<td>Five townhouses in an R-5 Transitional Residential Zoning District</td>
<td>115 Givens Lane</td>
<td>Approved, May 2, 2017</td>
<td>Approved, June 13, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUP17-0002</td>
<td>Steve Elliott on behalf of James and Alice Noonkester</td>
<td>General Office in the R-5 Transitional Residential Zoning District</td>
<td>1726 North Main Street</td>
<td>Approved, June 6, 2017</td>
<td>Approved, July 11, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUP17-0003</td>
<td>Greg Campbell on behalf of Clay Street Office LLC</td>
<td>General Office in the Old Town Residential Zoning District</td>
<td>320 Clay St SW</td>
<td>Approved, June 6, 2017</td>
<td>Approved, June 13, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUP17-0004</td>
<td>Stateson Homes and Education Media Company at Virginia Tech Inc.</td>
<td>General Office use on ground floor in DC Downtown Commercial Zoning District</td>
<td>618 North Main Street</td>
<td>Approved, August 1, 2017</td>
<td>Approved, August 8, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUP17-0005</td>
<td>Julie Willard</td>
<td>Townhome use on 0.3 acres in the R-5 Transitional Residential Zoning District</td>
<td>202 Marlington Street</td>
<td>Approved, September 5, 2017</td>
<td>Approved, October 10, 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please see map next page)
Conditional Use Permit Applications
January 1, 2017
December 31, 2017

1. CUP 17-0001 115 Givens Lane
2. CUP 17-0002 1726 North Main Street
3. CUP 17-0003 320 Clay Street SW
4. CUP 17-0004 618 North Main Street
5. CUP 17-0005 202 Marlington Street
## Rezoning and Right-of-Way Vacation Applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rezone/ Ordinance Number</th>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Request</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Planning Commission Recommendation</th>
<th>Town Council Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORD 1828 RZN 17-0001</td>
<td>Broadstreet Partners, LLC (Craig Stipes)</td>
<td>0.939 acres General Commercial and Transitional Residential to Planned Residential (PR)</td>
<td>908 Progress Street</td>
<td>Approved, March 7, 2017</td>
<td>Approved, April 11, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RZN 17-0002</td>
<td>Whipple South, LLC (Justin Boyle)</td>
<td>3.096 Acres Planned Residential District (PRD) to PRD with amended proffers for two-family dwellings</td>
<td>1509 &amp; 1602 Whipple Drive</td>
<td>Approved, June 6, 2017</td>
<td>Approved, July 11, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RZN 17-0003</td>
<td>ACC OP Development, LLC (Daniel Perry) and Warren Street Partners, LLC (Chuck Carroll)</td>
<td>3.818 Acres PRD with conditions and RM-27 Low Density Multiunit Residential District to PRD with amended conditions</td>
<td>500 Warren Street, and 600 Green Street</td>
<td>On hold per applicant</td>
<td>On hold per applicant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORD 1840 RZN 17-0004</td>
<td>H2R Engineering and April DeMotts on behalf of Paul Scott Roop Trust</td>
<td>2.22 Acres R-4 Low Density Residential to PRD</td>
<td>509 Broce Drive</td>
<td>Approved, October 3, 2017</td>
<td>Approved, November 14, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORD 1844 RZN 17-0005</td>
<td>Virginia Blue Ridge, LLC on behalf of SDP Southpark, LLC</td>
<td>1.289 acres from Office Zoning District to GC General Commercial</td>
<td>111 Southpark Drive</td>
<td>Approved, November 7, 2017</td>
<td>Approved, December 12, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Number</td>
<td>Applicant</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Districts Transformed</td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Final Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>RZN 17-0006</td>
<td>Midtown Development Partners</td>
<td>22 acres overall. 8.87 acres from R-4 Low Density Residential to DC Downtown Commercial, and 13.84 acres from R-4 Low Density Residential to PR Planned Residential</td>
<td>501 South Main Street, 203 E Heart Street, and 402 Clay Street Southeast</td>
<td>On hold per applicant</td>
<td>On hold per applicant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORD 1854 RZN 17-0007</td>
<td>Draper Aden Associates (Blaise Keesee)</td>
<td>5.98 acres from R-4 Low Density Residential Zoning District to PRD</td>
<td>801 and 803 Airport Road</td>
<td>No Recommendation, February 6, 2018</td>
<td>Denied, March 13, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RZN 17-0008</td>
<td>Mike Beck on behalf of Hearthstone LLC</td>
<td>3.729 acres from RM-48 Medium Density Multi-unit Residential Zoning District to PRD</td>
<td>116, 120 Hearthstone Drive</td>
<td>Approved, January 2, 2018</td>
<td>Approved, February 13, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RZN 17-0009</td>
<td>Habitat for Humanity of the New River Valley for Blacksburg Presbyterian Church Trustees</td>
<td>0.69 acres from R-5 Transitional Residential Zoning District to PRD for 7 income-restricted townhomes</td>
<td>712 Church Street SE</td>
<td>Approved, February 6, 2018</td>
<td>Approved, March 13, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROW 17-0001</td>
<td>ACC OP Development, LLC (Daniel Perry) and Warren Street Partners, LLC (Chuck Carroll)</td>
<td>Vacate approximately 0.4 acres of Town owned right-of-way</td>
<td>500 Warren Street</td>
<td>On hold per applicant</td>
<td>On hold per applicant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please see map next page)
Rezoning and Right-of-Way Vacation Requests
January 1, 2017
December 31, 2017

1. RZN 17-0001 908 Progress Street
2. RZN 17-0002 1506 & 1602 Whipple Drive
3. RZN 17-0003 500 Warren Street and 800 Green Street
4. RZN 17-0004 509 Broce Drive
5. RZN 17-0005 111 Southpark Drive
6. RZN 17-0006 501 South Main Street, 203 Eheart Street, and 402 Clay Street SE
7. RZN 17-0007 801 & 803 Airport Road
8. RZN 17-0008 116 & 120 Hearthstone Drive
9. RZN 17-0009 712 Church Street Southeast
10. ROW 17-0001 500 Warren Street

Town of Blacksburg
Engineering & GIS
February 19, 2018
## Zoning Ordinance Amendments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORD Number</th>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Request</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Planning Commission Recommendation</th>
<th>Town Council Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORD 1816 ZOA 32</td>
<td>Town of Blacksburg</td>
<td>Ordinance to amend zoning ordinance to establish an accessory apartment permit program</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Approved, March 7, 2017</td>
<td>Approved April 11, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORD 1845 ZOA 37</td>
<td>Town of Blacksburg</td>
<td>To create a definition of an Event Center use and add as a permitted use in the Industrial and Research and Development districts</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Approved November 7, 2017</td>
<td>Approved, December 12, 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Variance Applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORD Number</th>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Request</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Planning Commission Recommendation</th>
<th>Town Council Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VAR-0001</td>
<td>Town of Blacksburg</td>
<td>To reduce 15 ft. public utility easements in certain project areas</td>
<td>701 Lee Street</td>
<td>Denied, December 5, 2017</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2018 Planning Commission Goals

1. **Continue Zoning Ordinance Amendments in 2018 as directed by the Town Council which may include:**
   a. Amendment to clarify the standards for residential components of mixed use developments in the General Commercial district and create the option for a freestanding residential component;
   b. Amendments to the R-4 residential district to revise Floor Area Ratio, allow averaging of front yard setbacks, and address concerns about front yard parking and paving issues that have a detrimental effects townwide and most particularly within the Historic District;
   c. Amendment to Signs regulations for compliance with recent Supreme Court case and to incorporate revisions recommended by staff;
   d. Other Zoning Ordinance Amendments as may be directed by Town Council through referring resolutions to the Planning Commission; and
   e. Support amendments that better align the Zoning Ordinance with the Comprehensive Plan

2. **Complete five year update of the Comprehensive Plan to include:**
   a. Consideration of the impact of University growth on the Town;
   b. Engaging in visioning for the downtown area;
   c. Evaluating student housing redevelopment options;
   d. Considering other changes to aid in implementation of the 2015 downtown housing study; and
   e. Expanding the density bonus for desired infill areas. The density bonus may be to further sustainability goals or advance the provision of more affordable housing.

3. **Consider ways to increase public outreach by the Planning Commission to the community on land use related topics.**

4. **Continue work on sustainability initiatives that reflect the sustainability intentions and commitments in the Town’s Comprehensive Plan working with the Town’s Sustainability Manager. Prepare a set of suggested guidelines for sustainable development that includes examples of best practices. Coordinate efforts of the Planning Commission with Town Council and share outcomes with the development community.**

5. **Participate in any implementation of the Old Blacksburg Middle School Master Plan with a focus on future development that will fully maintain the integrity of the key design elements of the OBMS Master Plan. Acknowledge that conditions have changed since the plan was adopted but that key development principles still apply.**

6. **Request joint meetings with Town Council on a semi-annual basis to promote a common understanding of Town goals. Meet with Town committees and other regional committees as opportunities arise. Continue cooperation with the NRV Regional Commission (NRVRC) as well as...**
with other jurisdictions in development review and reporting such as the ongoing coordination with the Montgomery County Planning Commission.

7. Continue to offer new Planning Commissioners training through PlanVirginia and annual training through the NRVRC. Continue to explore opportunities for mini-training sessions at Planning Commission Work Sessions and Planning Commission Subcommittee meetings.

8. Conduct an annual Planning Commission Retreat Meeting that includes a discussion of:
   a. Land use issues and trends; and
   b. Other items as determined by the Commission.