

The Altavista Planning Commission held a regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, April 6, 2010 at 5:30PM in the Council Chambers.

Members present - Jerry Barbee, Chairman
Bill Ferguson
Audrey Powell
Tim Wagner
John Woodson

Also present - Rosa Carter
Cheryl Dudley
Jimmy Edwards
John Eller
Joyce Henderson
Webb Henderson
Jo Kelly
Reverend Bob Phillips
Mark Thomas

The agenda was reviewed and approved as presented. A motion was made by Mrs. Powell and seconded by Mr. Ferguson. All members were in favor with none opposing.

The minutes from the PC meeting March 2, 2010 were reviewed and approved as presented. A motion was made by Mr. Wagner and seconded by Mrs. Powell. All members were in favor with none opposing.

A public hearing was opened at 5:32PM by Chairman Barbee to consider a Special Use Permit (SUP) application submitted by Reverend Bob Phillips to move The Redemption Church Center and Bob Phillip's Ministries to 1207 Franklin Avenue. The property is zoned R2 and the requested use is permitted but only through the issuance of a SUP.

Mr. Witt stated that he received an application from Reverend Bob Phillips, pastor of The Redemption Church Center currently located in Hurt at the Staunton Plaza to operate The Redemption Church Center at 1207 Franklin Avenue in Altavista. The SUP was properly advertised and twenty-two (22) notices were sent out to adjacent property owners. Mr. Witt provided an overview of the application and proposed use.

Reverend Bob Phillips

8357 Chapel Road, Spout Spring, VA and director of The Redemption Church Center, currently located in the Staunton Plaza, Hurt, VA. He stated additional space was needed because the building they are in now only has 2100 sq. ft. of space and the ministry has grown beyond this space. The plan is to operate a church and recovery ministry, to include groups and individual counseling. They have future plans for the rest of the building as they receive the funds and would like to reapply for another SUP at that time. His ministry started two years ago and he works with people that deal with alcoholism, drug abuse, depression, etc. There will also be youth programs to help teenagers deal with addictions and other issues.

Chairman Barbee asked for input from the public by persons in favor of The Redemption Church Center:

Rosa Carter

Administrator of the PCCA Headstart Program currently located in a portion of the building at 1207 Franklin Avenue stated that she had no objections for The Redemption Church Center and the Recovery Counseling Ministry occupying the other side of the building. She reported that she and the new owner had discussed his program and she felt comfortable that the programs could coexist in the same building.

Chair Barbee asked for those opposing the SUP.

Joyce Henderson

Owner of Henderson Apartments located behind 1207 Franklin Avenue said she did not agree with The Redemption Center being in close proximity of the small children of the PCCA Headstart program. She was concerned about the nature of the clientele in the rehab program.

Chairman Barbee closed the public hearing at 5:43PM and opened the matter up for discussion.

Mr. Ferguson asked Mrs. Carter if she had any of the same concerns that Mrs. Henderson had about the children being in the same building. She stated that there were no concerns because the clients would be there in the evening hours, which is after the hours the children are in the school program.

Mr. Ferguson then asked Rev. Phillips if there would be anyone living there or anyone there during the day. Rev. Phillips stated that the only time during the day that someone would be there is if there was individual counseling going on or if there is work being done to the building. He stated no one would be living on site.

Mrs. Powell asked Rev. Phillips if there was a situation where the PCCA had an evening program what arrangements would be made. He stated that Mrs. Carter would notify him when a program would be at night and they would make arrangements to have counseling on another night. Mrs. Powell stated that she asked this question because she knew of court orders where sex offenders were not to be in the vicinity of children. Reverend Phillips stated that his program has not dealt with any sex offenders. He continued that most of his clients were treated for alcoholism, drugs and depression. Mrs. Powell then asked how many clients his program had. He stated that there are 40 at times in the Monday night group.

Chairman Barbee asked Reverend Phillips if counseling was typically one-on-one. Rev. Phillips stated that there was group counseling with the men and women being in separate groups but that individual counseling was done as needed.

Mr. Wagner asked how access in and out of the building would be handled. Mrs. Carter said that there are separate exterior entrances to the PCCA Headstart portion of the building.

Mr. Woodson asked if the ministry had gone from 2 people to 30 and how long it might take to use up the 50 seats in the proposed auditorium. Reverend Phillips stated that if that were to happen they would have multiple sessions throughout the week.

Mrs. Powell asked if funding would contain any restrictions, i.e. grants. Reverend Phillips said that he looking into grants and that Federal grants do have certain conditions that could hinder them; but, he stated, there are grants that are for churches and other ministries. Mrs. Powell then asked Reverend Phillips to elaborate more on the youth programs. He said that there is a youth program component that is part of Celebrate Recovery. It is for teenagers and young kids who have gone through a divorce, are depressed, and also to help teenagers handle depression.

Mr. Ferguson asked Reverend Phillips if Celebrate Recovery was a national organization. He said that it was and that there are four such programs in this area. There is one in Forest, VA, one in Lynchburg, one in Concord, VA and one in Hurt. They are all affiliated and work together.

Mr. Woodson stated that the concerns he had were put to rest. He said he was glad to hear that the PCCA and The Redemption Center would be isolated from each other. Mr. Wagner agreed with Mr. Woodson and was glad to hear about the different hours of operations. Mrs. Powell stated that the issue of any sex offenders should be stated in the SUP- that they would not permit any known sex offender into the program. Mr. Ferguson agreed with the other PC members and said he thinks the organization would be good for the community.

A motion was made by Mr. Ferguson that the Planning Commission recommends approval of the SUP application to operate Bob Phillip's Ministries and Redemption Church International at 1207 Franklin Avenue with the following conditions:

1. Laws: Applicant shall comply with all Local, State, and Federal laws.
2. Parking: Adequate off-street parking shall be provided in the following manner: One marked space for each four seats in the main auditorium or sanctuary. Shared spaces will be permitted if the PCCA use is not at the same time as the church use. A minimum of one handicap space is required.
3. Signs: Shall meet the all town code regulations and approved by the Zoning Administrator prior to installation.
4. Lighting: All lighting shall be directional and not cast light onto any adjoining or adjacent residential lots.
5. Clientele: Applicant may not knowingly accept sex offenders as clients.
6. Access: Separate exterior access for the Redemption Center Church and the PCCA Headstart programs must be maintained. Interior accesses must be secured except where required for emergency exits.
7. Violation of the Special Use Permit: In the case of a violation by the applicant of the conditions set forth in this permit, the applicant shall be notified by the Zoning Administrator of the violation and given a reasonable time- not to exceed 30 days- to comply with the SUP. After such time expires, without compliance, the SUP will be revoked.

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Powell. All members were in favor with none opposing.

The Planning Commission provided the following justifications for the recommendation:

1. The proposed use is in accordance with the statement of intent for the R2 zoning district.
2. The proposed use is suited for the building.
3. The concerns about clientele and children at the same facility have been satisfactorily addressed by the applicant and tenant (PCCA) i.e. separate rest rooms, exterior entrances, supervision of clients, in most cases different hours of operation, and separation of the programs inside the building.
4. Based on the described growth of the ministry the additional space is warranted.
5. The blighted building will be maintained and no longer an eyesore in the neighborhood.

NOTE: On April 19th, Reverend Phillips withdrew his SUP application because he withdrew his offer to purchase the property at 1207 Franklin Avenue.

Chairman Barbee asked if there were any citizens present that would like to address the Planning Commission. Joyce Henderson addressed the PC and stated that if this application, and use, would have been proposed for Bedford Avenue the room would have been full and it would have been voted down.

Chairman Barbee reported that he, Mr. Eller, and Mr. Witt met to discuss the tree conservation ordinance. The State Code limits a localities ability to regulate trees on private property. The consensus of the PC was that it might be best is to consider this issue when the zoning ordinance is updated.

Mr. Witt said that the contract with Viewshed Consulting, LLC (Greg Baka) has been executed. Mr. Baka is working on the zoning ordinance update and has requested that the PC make recommendations to TC for steering committee members. The Steering Committee will be of 9 or 10 members and include the 5 members of the PC. The members are to forward suggestions to Mr. Witt.

Mr. Witt gave his staff report and the zoning permits issued for the month of March are as follow:

1-Mar	06-010	Earl Woodruff, 813 13th Street, Altavista, VA	Deck and 2nd story balcony on rear of home
3-Mar	09-049	Sweets' Heating and AC, 701 Broad Street	Amended permit to include signage
10-Mar	07-010	Estes Signs, Lynchburg VA	Move signs from NAPA to Car Quest 716 Main
17-Mar	08-010	Kathi Bogert, 318 10th Street	Office for Home Occupation- Cleaning Business
23-Mar	09-010	Dale Moore, 701 5th Street	Renovations for VTI at 201 Ogden Road
25-Mar	010-010	Marilyn Hall 1312 5th Street,	8'x10' deck and 4'x6' utility shed in back yard
26-Mar	011-010	Kurk Maulbeck, 1009 Broad Street	Build addition to back of home at 1004 Broad Street

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25PM

Jerry Barbee, Chairman

Dan Witt, Assistant to the Town Manager