



TOWN COUNCIL

Work Session

Town Hall

October 22, 2009

6:05 p.m.

At approximately 6:05 p.m. at the Town Hall, Vice Mayor Chris Bannon called to order the Work Session of Town Council. In addition to Vice Mayor Bannon, present were Councilmen Bennett, Burdiss, Elliott, Evans and Veber. Mayor Sullivan was not in attendance. Also present were Town Planner Tom Bonadeo, Chief of Police Sambo Brown and Town Clerk Libby Hume as well as four (4) members of the public.

Vice Mayor Bannon announced the business for the evening would be to discuss the Fig Street Parking issue and the Cape Charles Christian School.

Fig Street Parking

Chief Sambo Brown stated that the original change to restrict parking along Fig Street resulted from the increased traffic over the past five years mostly due to construction traffic at the Bay Creek Marina. Currently, there is not as much traffic on Fig Street so it is not a problem. If the Council decides to reverse their decision and allow parking on one or both sides of Fig Street and traffic increases again in the future, it could then pose a problem. Chief Brown stated that in view of the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) Design Guidelines, he would recommend maintaining the parking restrictions along Fig Street.

Town Planner Tom Bonadeo explained a portion of the VDOT regulations stating that the requirements vary depending on the number of daily vehicles passing along the street and the width of the street. In order to allow parking on both sides of the street, the street has to be a minimum of 36' in width from curb to curb. Chief Brown added that if the street has more than one point of access, including driveways, the design requirements for the next level of traffic must be met. Tom Bonadeo continued stating that there are a lot of streets in the small towns along the shore that do not meet the VDOT requirements. The Council discussed other streets in the Town where parking is allowed on both sides and traffic has to slow down considerably in order for two cars to pass.

The Council opened the floor for comments from the public in attendance.

Mr. Don Clarke stated that he did not believe that 2K cars travel on Fig Street on a daily basis as shown in a previous traffic study. Mr. Clarke added that if he parked two cars in his driveway, there was no room for any visitors to park. Mr. Clarke also stated that on some streets in Town, there are boats parked in front of houses that are wider than cars which cause a problem for two cars passing each other along the street.

Mrs. Mary Ann Clarke stated that she runs a business out of her home, for which she has a business license, and her customers cannot park in front of her house, have to walk through the grass and at times carry large pictures, which they may have purchased, to their cars.

Dr. Mark Clarke stated that there is no other area in Town where a resident cannot park in front of their house to unload packages or where repairmen could not park in front of the property for service calls.

Vice Mayor Bannon stated that the decision to restrict parking on Fig Street was made without obtaining citizen input or any notification to the citizens affected by this change and the citizens are upset. Vice Mayor Bannon added that by allowing parking on both sides of the street, it would slow down the traffic on the street. Councilman Burdiss agreed and stated that he felt that Randolph Avenue may be more hazardous. Vice Mayor Bannon suggested that the Town remove the no parking signs and allow parking on both sides of Fig Street and possibly revisit this issue in 2015. Vice Mayor polled the Council and their thoughts are as follows: Councilmen Veber, Elliott, Evans and Burdiss agreed to allow parking on both sides of the street and Councilman Bennett was in favor of allowing parking on one side of the street, but not necessarily both sides. It was noted that if the Council agreed to reinstate parking on Fig Street, the Town Code would have to be modified to reflect this change. Tom Bonadeo stated that this item will be added to the November agenda as an action item.

Cape Charles Christian School

Councilman Burdiss informed the Council that he has done some legal work for the group proposing the Cape Charles Christian School and added that since this was an open meeting, he would stay in the meeting but would not participate in the discussions.

Councilman Veber added that he has two grandchildren attending the school and would participate in the discussions but would not participate in the vote.

Tom Bonadeo stated that the Council has heard an unsolicited proposal to lease the old high school for reuse as a school and that a lease of the school would be the most appropriate option. The proposer has submitted a draft of the lease which has been reviewed by staff, but the proposer has requested the contents of the lease be kept confidential at this time. The lease proposes a 40-year term for a nominal fee and the tenant would pay the utilities and be responsible for repair of the building for the term of the lease. Tom Bonadeo requested input from the Council before forwarding the lease to legal counsel for their review. Councilman Bennett added that it was difficult to comment on a lease that Council has not reviewed.

There was some discussion about leasing vs. selling the property and the fact that the building was a liability, a safety hazard and deteriorating rapidly. The subjects of grant funding and tax credits were also discussed. Several of the Councilmen stated that they would prefer reviewing the lease with discussions in a closed session.

Tom Bonadeo stated that he would contact Mr. Berkley Rayfield to get a letter from their legal counsel regarding the confidential nature of this document and would forward a copy of the lease to the Council for their review. An Executive Session will be scheduled immediately prior to their November 12th Regular Meeting.

Motion made by Councilman Veber, seconded by Councilman Evans and unanimously approved to adjourn the Town Council Work Session.

Mayor Sullivan

Town Clerk