



MINUTES

WYTHEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2026 AT 6:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 150 EAST MONROE STREET
WYTHEVILLE, VA 24382

1. **RE: ATTENDANCE**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman David Schmidt, Vice-Chairman Keith Jones, Councilwoman Cathy Pattison, Commissioner Brad Litton, Commissioner Lisa Anderson, Commissioner Randal Hamm, Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Commissioner George Wittwer

OTHERS PRESENT:

Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Elaine HOLETON, Deputy Clerk Lauren Bedwell, Landscape Architect/Grants Administrator John Woods, Technology Specialist Lucas Nester, Johnny Kincer, Kristy Puckett, Greg Puckett, Sherry Ward, Roger Conner, Scot Farthing

RE: CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Schmidt called the meeting to order.

2. **RE: ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM**

Chairman Schmidt established that a quorum of Planning Commission members was present.

3. **RE: APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairman Schmidt advised that the first agenda item is the Approval of Agenda. He inquired if there was a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion made by Commissioner Litton, Seconded by Vice-Chairman Jones. Chairman Schmidt inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting results, by roll call vote: Voting Yea: Commissioner Anderson, Councilwoman Pattison, Chairman Schmidt, Vice-Chairman Jones, Commissioner Hamm, Jr., Commissioner Litton.

4. **RE: CONSENT AGENDA**

A. RE: MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 13, 2026

Chairman Schmidt presented the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of August 13, 2026. He inquired if there was a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion made by Commissioner Anderson, Seconded by Vice-Chairman Jones. Chairman Schmidt inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor, and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Chairman Schmidt, Vice-Chairman Jones, Councilwoman Pattison, Commissioner Litton, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Hamm, Jr.

5. **RE: PUBLIC HEARINGS**

A. RE: STAFF REPORT - FARTHING SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE PERMIT REQUEST TO ALLOW A PROFESSIONAL OFFICE BUILDING AT PROPERTY LOCATED 615 NORTH 4TH STREET

Chairman Schmidt advised that the next agenda item is a public hearing to consider the request of Mr. Scot Farthing for a Special Exception Use to Permit (SEP) to allow a professional office building at the property located at 615 North 4th Street, Tax Map Parcel #41A-18-B-4, in an R-2 Residential Zoning District. He stated that before opening the public hearing, Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Elaine Holeton would present a staff report regarding the SEP request.

Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton reviewed the details of Mr. Farthing's request for an SEP with the Planning Commissioners, and noted that this request would include professional office uses for individuals such as accountants, attorneys, engineers, surveyors, insurance agents, etc. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton explained that the entrance and exit to this site would be located on West Reservoir Street rather than North 4th Street. She advised that the design plan includes a rear-yard privacy fence, a 13-space parking lot with two (2) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible parking spaces, ADA access ramps to the building and new landscaping. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton stated that signage would consist of a six- foot by five- foot monument sign in the front yard visible from North 4th Street and a smaller four- foot by three- foot directional sign at the West Reservoir Street parking lot entrance. She advised that the surrounding properties are in an R-2 Residential Zoning District, and that public water and sewer are available. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton noted that the Town's Engineering Department has confirmed sufficient capacity for this proposed use. She remarked that Staff has advised that this project is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's vision for positive business and industry, and she explained that the Future Land Use Map designates this site as "Business." Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton inquired if the Planning Commission had any questions for her and/or the applicant and his engineer. Chairman Schmidt inquired if the Planning Commissioners had any questions.

Commissioner Litton inquired of Staff or the applicant regarding whether the proposed parking lot would be asphalt, concrete or gravel. He stated that he is aware that the parking area will have curb and gutter. Mr. Scot Farthing was recognized and stated that the parking lot would be asphalt with curb and gutter on three sides, with no curb along the creekside to allow water runoff to flow toward landscaped areas. He noted that since the lot is under 10,000 square feet, an Erosion Sediment Control Plan is not required.

Chairman Schmidt inquired of Mr. Farthing about the proposed signage and if the signs would appear as shown, as well as, if the main entrance would be relocated from North 4th Street to the West Reservoir Street side. Mr. Farthing noted that he could not guarantee that the signs would be exact, but his intent is to remodel the structure into a rustic, cabin- style professional office. He explained that he plans to enclose the existing side porch, add a covered ADA ramp and steps from the parking area and to match the signage materials to the building.

Councilwoman Pattison inquired about Mr. Farthing's proposed hours of operation and the number of employees he will have. Mr. Farthing stated that typical office hours would be from approximately 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., however, sometimes people are there earlier and/or later. He noted that client appointments are, generally, scheduled hourly between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., with only occasional higher parking demands for real estate closings. Mr. Farthing commented that they usually do not have customers after 5:00 p.m. He explained that he has between six (6) and nine (9) employees, with some of them working remotely. Mr. Farthing stated that there would be about seven (7) full-time employees at the site on a regular basis.

Councilwoman Pattison inquired of Mr. Farthing regarding if he plans to install any additional exterior lighting. Mr. Farthing stated that he would like to have a light on his business sign and limited safety lighting, such as a porch light or motion- activated light for the safety of his employees. He noted that, however, he does not plan to install a dusk- to- dawn or large parking lot lights.

Chairman Schmidt and Commissioner Litton inquired of Mr. Farthing regarding the proposed privacy fence. Mr. Farthing noted it would extend along the entire rear

property line to buffer the seven (7) adjoining residential lots. He noted that it would be designed to complement the rustic character of the remodeled building. Mr. Farthing explained that his goal is to be a good neighbor, minimize disturbance to the creek and to work with Staff to ensure the sign location does not impair sight distance at West Reservoir Street.

Councilwoman Pattison inquired of Mr. Farthing whether he had observed past flooding conditions and erosion along the adjacent creek. Mr. Farthing stated that he had not personally witnessed the flooding, however, he hopes that his engineer will be able to educate them on this issue and current erosion. He noted that he understands erosion is a natural cause and that he would be happy to accommodate and try to protect the creek to the best of his ability. Councilwoman Pattison inquired if Mr. Johnny Kincer would like to address any of these concerns. Mr. Johnny Kincer, Mr. Farthing's engineer, was recognized and stated that Landscape Architect/Grants Administrator John Woods would be assisting them in picking out their plantings to address erosion concerns and commented that their goal is to plant wetland- type, riparian plantings.

In response to questions from Chairman Schmidt and Commissioner Litton, Mr. Kincer confirmed that the 100- year floodplain extends into the front yard and over part of the parking area. He stated that asphalt is more resistant to erosion than bare ground and that landscaping should further stabilize the area. Commissioner Litton inquired if Town Engineering staff have reviewed the proposed parking lot plan, and if they prefer a sheet flow as opposed to trying to collect the runoff to prevent erosion. Mr. Kincer noted that sheet flow from the open end of the parking lot is preferred over concentrating flow to reduce erosion of the creek bank. He explained that the curb and gutter are proposed primarily to guide vehicles and not to convey stormwater. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Elaine Holeton stated that Engineering staff have reviewed the proposed concept and that they had no preference regarding drainage type.

Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton noted that Engineering staff did raise concerns regarding vehicle turning movements with only one entrance. She explained that Staff recommends leaving the applicant the flexibility for a possible second entrance from West Reservoir Street during the final design process to improve circulation and make all spaces usable. Mr. Farthing advised that a second entrance between two existing trees could function as an additional access point while maintaining the current entrance for ADA parking near the building. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton commented that the Town's Building Official, Tim Spraker, has reviewed the ADA parking and ramp layout and had no objections.

Vice-Chairman Jones inquired if Mr. Farthing would be the only tenant at this location. Mr. Farthing stated that his law firm is expected to be the sole tenant and that no major structural renovations are planned beyond enclosing the front porch, some cosmetic changes and potentially enclosing the rear patio.

Chairman Schmidt inquired of Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton regarding if she had received any comments from citizens about the application prior to this meeting. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton stated that she had not received any written comments.

RE: PUBLIC HEARING - FARTHING SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE PERMIT

Chairman Schmidt advised that the meeting constituted a public hearing (due to notice having been given) to receive comments regarding the request of Mr. Scot Farthing for a Special Exception Use Permit (SEP) to allow a professional office building at the property located at 615 North 4th Street, Tax Map Parcel #41A-18-B-4 in an R-2 Residential Zoning District. He inquired if there was anyone who wished to address the Planning Commission regarding the public hearing.

Ms. Kristy Puckett was recognized and stated that she has resided on West Reservoir Street for 17 years. She stated that she is not in favor of Mr. Farthing's request for a SEP. Ms. Puckett then expressed her concerns regarding on- street parking congestion caused by multiple residents of a neighboring home, reoccurring

vehicles often lining the street, blocking her sidewalk and partially blocking her driveway, possible hazardous conditions and previous damage of her family's vehicles. She noted that West Reservoir Street is heavily used as a bypass to avoid the Pine Street traffic signal, leading to steady, fast-moving traffic on a narrow street. Ms. Puckett voiced additional concerns about the loss of privacy, and the impact on the character of what she described as a small, quaint neighborhood. She noted that converting the front yard to a parking lot would place commercial use directly in her view. Ms. Puckett inquired regarding if allowing a business use at this location would increase Property Taxes for nearby homeowners. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton stated that, typically, zoning decisions do not change the taxation, it is the actual use itself. Discussion was held by the Planning Commission regarding traffic and parking as significant concerns and considered whether any approval could be conditioned on all business-related parking being off-street. Ms. Puckett commented that some visitors would still likely park on the street. She then continued to reiterate her concerns about safety and congestion in this area.

Mr. Greg Puckett was recognized and stated that, while he is pro-business, he would respectfully request the denial of Mr. Farthing's SEP based on traffic, safety, environmental and neighborhood-character concerns. He stated that additional office traffic on an already congested street would compound existing problems. Mr. Puckett noted that converting the yard to a parking lot and adding a privacy fence could negatively affect adjoining residences. He explained that paving in a flood-prone area would increase stormwater runoff toward North 4th Street and cautioned that once the structure is converted for commercial office use, future occupants could create additional impacts beyond the current proposal. Mr. Puckett then discussed the potential upward pressure on nearby property values, the loss of housing opportunities and urged the Planning Commission to complete traffic and environmental reviews before forwarding any recommendation to Town Council. Councilwoman Pattison inquired whether this SEP would carry over to a future owner. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton stated that the SEP would carry over with the property, however, it would restrict the property to professional office use only. Mr. Puckett noted that the future use remains uncertain and that once converted, the property is unlikely to return to residential use, which he viewed as problematic given the current need for housing. He then reiterated his wish for the Planning Commission to respectfully deny the SEP request on this basis.

Vice-Chairman Jones inquired if the entire 4th Street corridor is planned to transition to commercial use. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton stated that the 2013 Comprehensive Plan designated this corridor as "business." She noted that the Town is currently working on a new Comprehensive Plan, however a Future Land Use Map has not been finalized yet. Discussion was held regarding a nearby tax service whose SEP was recently approved within the same general location.

Vice-Chairman Jones inquired of Mr. Farthing as to the number of clients and/or cars that his legal firm would average in a day. Mr. Farthing stated that he estimated that his firm would have approximately six (6) employees on site. He stated that client appointments are generally scheduled hourly between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., typically, lasting an hour, with the potential for up to two (2) clients per hour when busy. He continued to discuss the traffic that his firm could create during business hours. Vice-Chairman Jones inquired whether Mr. Farthing currently owned this property. Mr. Farthing stated that he does not own the property, and that he has the option to purchase it contingent upon the approval of his SEP request.

Commissioner Hamm inquired about the Land Use Map from the 2013 Comprehensive Plan and where this parcel lands on the working version of that Land Use Map. Landscape Architect/Grants Administrator Woods stated that while the 2013 Future Land Use Map shows this section of 4th Street as transitioning to business, the current Comprehensive Plan update is exploring a "light business" concept intended to allow low-volume office uses while preserving neighborhood character. Commissioner Hamm noted that he is pro-business and supportive of economic development but acknowledged the Pucketts' concerns that, with a group rental next door and a proposed office use, the area could begin to feel more like downtown than a neighborhood. He referenced prior discussion on another nearby

business's parking lot and observed that approval in one case does not obligate approval in another given housing concerns. Commissioner Hamm inquired whether requesting a traffic study would be reasonable. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton advised that pursuing any traffic review or design revisions would require the Planning Commission to table the request and revisit it at a later meeting.

Ms. Sherry Ward was recognized and stated that she rents the house located behind the subject property, with a clear view from her home to North 4th Street even if a privacy fence is installed. She noted that the area is a close-knit residential neighborhood and questioned why the property could not remain residential rather than be converted to an office. Ms. Ward agreed with Ms. Puckett's comments regarding traffic, stating that vehicle speeds on West Reservoir Street are high, pedestrians frequently use the roadway and motorists routinely run the stop sign throughout the day, which she described as "awful."

Chairman Schmidt inquired if there were any other citizens present who would like to address the Planning Commission during this public hearing. There being none, he declared the public hearing closed and proceeded with the agenda.

6. RE: RECOMMENDATIONS TO TOWN COUNCIL

A. RE: RECOMMENDATION TO TOWN COUNCIL - SCOT FARTHING SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE PERMIT FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 615 NORTH 4TH STREET

Chairman Schmidt advised that the next agenda item is consideration by the Wytheville Planning Commission to make a recommendation to the Wytheville Town Council to approve/deny the request of Scot Farthing for a Special Exception Use Permit (SEP) to allow a professional office building at the property located at 615 North 4th Street, Tax Map Parcel #41A-18-B-4, in an R-2 Residential Zoning District. He stated that he would like to discuss some of the things that need to be done based on concerns that were raised by citizens during the public hearing. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton noted that she would recommend asking Mr. Farthing if he would like more time regarding this request, and if he would like to stick with the current plan he has submitted or to present another plan in the future. Chairman Schmidt inquired if Mr. Farthing would come back to the podium to discuss his opinions regarding the citizens' concerns that were shared and what his thoughts are regarding his next steps for this application.

Mr. Farthing stated that he was not exactly sure how to redesign this proposal. He stated that regarding traffic control, he feels it would be more dangerous to enter this location from North 4th Street and that he does not want to cross the creek. He noted that it would cost him too much money to try and address the traffic control and environmental concerns that were expressed. Mr. Farthing explained that he understood the concerns that were expressed by neighboring citizens due to there being more cars and traffic at this location than if it remained as a residential use. He commented that he is looking for office space, and that it is very hard to find any in this town that is more than 3,000 square feet. Mr. Farthing stated that he is not sure how to address their concerns, that he cannot control the traffic on that street and that he, personally, does not think he will add too much and will be a good neighbor. He then continued to discuss his proposed plan for this location and how he feels his operation will have minimal impact on the neighboring residents. Mr. Farthing reiterated that he does not know how to address the concerns that were address, but he would like to ask that the Planning Commission recommend granting his SEP request for a professional office building at this address. Chairman Schmidt stated that he would like to table this until the next Planning Commission meeting, so that Staff can evaluate the traffic and environmental concerns. He inquired of Mr. Farthing if waiting another month would be an issue for him. Mr. Farthing stated that he was not sure if this would be an issue, because he does not own the property, he only has it under contract. He noted that it is up to sellers if they are willing to wait and see if his SEP is approved. Mr. Farthing remarked that he is at the pleasure of the Planning Commission.

Mr. Greg Puckett inquired of Chairman Schmidt if he could come back to the podium to address the Planning Commission. Chairman Schmidt stated that would be okay.

Mr. Puckett noted that they are not anti-business. He explained that he would support tabling this issue so that the magnitude of the environmental and traffic issues can be addressed by the Town. He advised that he thinks that Mr. Farthing's proposal is fine, however, he would respectfully request that the Town address these issues and concerns because residents need to make sure they have quality of life.

Commissioner Hamm inquired of Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton regarding if the SEP would transfer under the same approval that Mr. Farthing would receive, if he receives it, and if there are any kind of restrictions associated with that in terms of hours of operation or anything that could be placed on the SEP. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton stated that the Planning Commission can recommend to the Town Council to place conditions onto the SEP that would address any impacts to the neighboring properties. She noted that if the Commission were to recommend any conditions, that she would just make sure that they are related to impact. Discussion continued regarding Mr. Farthing's SEP proposal standpoint, how to address the traffic and environmental concerns that were expressed by citizens and potentially tabling this item until the next Planning Commission meeting.

A motion was made by Chairman Schmidt and Seconded by Commissioner Litton to table making a recommendation to the Wytheville Town Council to approve/deny the request of Scot Farthing for a Special Exception Use Permit to allow a professional office building at the property located at 615 North 4th Street, Tax Map Parcel #41A-18-B-4, in an R-2 Residential Zoning District, until the Thursday, October 8, 2026, Planning Commission meeting. Chairman Schmidt inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting results, by roll call vote: Voting Yea: Commissioner Anderson, Councilwoman Pattison, Chairman Schmidt, Vice-Chairman Jones, Commissioner Hamm, Jr., Commissioner Litton.

7. RE: CITIZENS' PERIOD

Chairman Schmidt advised that the next agenda item is Citizens' Period. He stated that there were no citizens listed on the sign-in sheet who wished to address the Planning Commission during Citizens' Period, therefore, he would proceed with the agenda.

8. RE: OTHER BUSINESS

A. RE: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Chairman Schmidt advised that the next agenda item is a Comprehensive Plan Update by Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Elaine Holeton. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton stated that she would like to remind everyone to visit the project website, and she commented that it can be accessed from the Town of Wytheville website. She noted that Staff has been working with the Steering Committee on the Town's Future Land Use Map, and that she hopes a first draft of it will be presented at a future meeting. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton explained that the Steering Committee meets on the last Thursday of every month, it consists of two (2) Town Council members and two (2) Planning Commissioners and that these members can swap out if they would like. Commissioner Hamm stated that he would like to swap out with another Planning Commissioner. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton inquired if any of the Planning Commissioners would like to sit on the Steering Committee. Vice-Chairman Jones stated that he would be willing to sit on the Steering Committee again. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton noted that a series of Town Department Head and Assistant Department Head facilitation sessions had been held, and she commented that this feedback will be presented to the Commission at a future meeting. She advised that the housing survey is still live and will close on September 15, 2026. Chairman Schmidt inquired of Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton regarding how many people have participated in the housing survey. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton stated that she believes about 90 people have participated.

B. RE: CONTINUED REVIEW OF THE DRAFT LANGUAGE FOR THE PROPOSED EDITS TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE - ARTICLE 11A - BUSINESS DISTRICT B-2 DT GENERAL BUSINESS DISTRICT - DOWNTOWN

Chairman Schmidt advised that the next agenda item is the continued review of the draft language for the proposed edits to the Zoning Ordinance - Article 11A - Business District B-2 DT General Business District - Downtown by Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Elaine Holeton. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton stated that she will be reviewing Draft 9 of the proposed edits regarding Article 11A - Business District B-2 DT General Business District - Downtown. She then discussed the draft language regarding the downtown core area; showing the downtown core on the Town's Zone District map; continuing to allow single single-family dwellings; continuing to add multiple-family dwellings; allowing mixed uses; not allowing clubs and lounges downtown; artisanal uses; removing semi-trailer shipping containers and adult uses; allowing homestays without a host present; various setbacks; a 300 square foot minimum dwelling unit size for apartments downtown; and, accessory structures. Vice-Chairman Jones inquired of Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton regarding if Downtown Wytheville, Incorporated Executive Director, Todd Wolford, had any thoughts about medical use versus retail use or other commercial uses downtown. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton stated that Executive Director Wolford felt like the timing was not right to act on this topic. She noted that he agreed with a lot of the reasons that Staff and the Planning Commission landed on as to why they need to continue to be allowed for the time being. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton explained that Executive Director Wolford thought this proposed language looked good, and that she emailed him a copy of Draft 9 that morning. She commented that Staff are trying to do what is best for this zone district, and she noted that this is a hard zone district to write a standard for.

Assistant Town Manager Holeton inquired of the Planning Commissioners regarding whether they would like to review another draft of Article 11A - Business District B-2 DT General Business District - Downtown one more time before considering it complete. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to consider this section complete and to refrain from bringing it back to a future Planning Commission meeting for additional discussion.

C. RE: CONTINUED REVIEW OF NONCONFORMING USES AND STRUCTURES

Chairman Schmidt advised that the next agenda item is the continued review of Nonconforming Uses and Structures by Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Elaine Holeton. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton stated that in the interest of time, she would not be reviewing this topic in a lot of detail at this meeting. She noted that any language in this document that has a strike through is language that she would suggest removing, and that any language highlighted in yellow is language she would suggest being added. Assistant Town Manager/Planning Director Holeton commented that she wanted to bring more clarity to this section, and to add the language that reflects the State Code sections regarding natural disaster, fire events and manufactured homes. She stated that she will add this topic to the agenda for the next Planning Commission meeting for further discussion.

D. RE: MISCELLANEOUS

Chairman Schmidt stated that he would like to say good luck to Deputy Clerk Lauren Bedwell and to wish her the best, since she will not be attending the rest of the Planning Commission meetings for the year as she begins her maternity leave. The Planning Commissioners also wished Deputy Clerk Bedwell good luck and stated that they will miss her during her absence. Deputy Clerk Bedwell thanked the Planning Commission for their well wishes.

9. RE: ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be discussed, Chairman Schmidt adjourned the meeting. (7:45 p.m.)

David E. Schmidt, Chairman

Lauren E. Bedwell, Deputy Clerk