

**Buckingham County  
Planning Commission  
January 25, 2021**

At a regular meeting of the Buckingham County Planning Commission held on Monday, January 25, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Peter Francisco meeting room, located within the Buckingham County Administration Complex, the following members were present: John Bickford; James D. Crews; Patrick Bowe; Alice T. Gormus; Steve Dorrier; Ashley Shumaker; Joyce Gooden and Board of Supervisors' representative Danny Allen. Also present were Nicci Edmondston, Zoning Administrator, and E.M. Wright, Jr., County Attorney.

**Re: Call to Order, Quorum Present, Invocation, and Pledge of Allegiance**

Zoning Administrator Nicci Edmondston called the meeting to order. Ashley Shumaker gave the invocation, John Bickford led the Pledge of Allegiance and it was said by all who were in attendance. Zoning Administrator Nicci Edmondston certified there was a quorum- eight of eight members were present. The meeting could continue.

Edmondston: The next item on the agenda is to consider the vote for the seating of the chairman of the Planning Commission.

Bickford: I like to make a motion that Pat Bowe be our chairman for this coming year.

Allen: Second.

Edmondston: We have a motion and a second on the floor and now we will vote. Is there any discussion? If not...

Bickford: I close the nominations.

Edmondston: So nominations are closed, no discussion, and if you would vote by raising your right hand. Okay. And Dabney, Mr. Crews. Can you hear us today?

Crews: Yes, I hear you.

Edmondston: There was a nomination from the floor by Mr. Bickford to nominate Pat Bowe as the chairman for 2021 and a second by Danny Allen. We're taking a vote now the nominations have been closed. So we'd like to get your vote for this motion.

Crews: Yes.

Edmondston: Thank you, sir. The Motion carries. Congratulations, Mr. Bowe. Another year in the office of the seat of chairman. The agenda is all yours.

**Commissioner Bickford moved, Supervisor Allen seconded and was unanimously carried by the Commission to appoint Pat Bowe as chairman for 2021.**

Bowe: Do we have nomination for vice chair?

Allen: I nominate John Bickford.

Gormus: I'll second that.

Bowe: We have a first and a second. Let's vote. Dabney?

Crews: Yes.

**Supervisor Allen moved, Commissioner Gormus seconded and was unanimously carried by the Commission to appoint John Bickford as vice-chairman for 2021.**

Bowe: Thank you like to recognize Joyce Gooden as our newest member. Happy to have you aboard Joyce. I would like to thank everybody for their confidence. I would assume it is. I'll try to do my best to keep y'all out of jail.

Gormus: We appreciate that.

Bowe: And thank you for the last year's work. I know it hasn't all been easy. Its been time consuming and a little hectic at times. But I appreciate the effort put into it and we will try it again this year. Adoption of the agenda?

Allen: So moved.

Bickford: Second.

Bowe: All in favor?

Crews: Yes.

**Supervisor Allen moved, Commissioner Bickford seconded and was unanimously carried by the Commission to approve the agenda.**

Bowe: Thank you. Approval of minutes December 21.

Bickford: Moved to approve as presented.

Allen: Second.

Bowe: Vote. All in favor.

Crews: Yes.

**Commissioner Bickford moved, Supervisor Allen seconded and was unanimously carried by the Commission to approve the minutes as presented.**

Bowe: Unanimous. December 28 regular meeting.

Bickford: Move to approve as presented.

Allen: Second.

Bowe: We have a first and a second. Let's vote. All in favor.

Crews: Yes.

**Commissioner Bickford moved, Supervisor Allen seconded and was unanimously carried by the Commission to approve the minutes as presented.**

Bowe: Thank you Dabney. Approval of the 2021 bylaws and rules of procedure we have an amendment that we would like to add. Nicci do you want to read that?

Edmondston: Sure I can read it, Mr. Chairman. The amendment would be as an amendment to the bylaws as it refers to code of conduct for meetings. And it would state “individuals are expected to respect the rights, privacy, safety and dignity of all persons, exercise appropriate consideration, and respect in their speech and actions. Refrain from harassing speech and other harassing behavior. If at any time you feel that this code of conduct has been violated, please inform the chairman or vice chairman. Those who have been found to be in violation can be removed from the meeting and may be prohibited from participation in future events. If you do not feel comfortable informing the chairman or vice chairman, you may notify the zoning administrator or county administrator.”

Bickford: Would just be as another bullet point or condition in the bylaws?

Edmondston: It would be a condition within your bylaws and it could be read at every meeting.

Bickford: I think that would be appropriate just so people get an understanding that what we're trying to accomplish here and reminder before each meeting.

Bowe: Do I have a motion on the approval of the bylaws.

Allen: Are we going to add the other one? Talking about the speakers. I know we have part of it didn't know if we had all of that.

Bowe: Do you want to have a discussion on that?

Allen: On the sheet we have it says Planning Commission has adopted into...

Edmondston: Oh, Mr. Allen, that that was adopted two to three years ago.

Allen: I thought it was I don't know if all it was.

Edmondston: Yes, sir.

Allen: I just want to make sure.

Edmondston: I apologize.

Allen: Don't worry. I just want to make sure it's right before we move on. All right. Good enough. I make a motion that we accept it with the new amendment to the bylaws.

Bickford: Second.

Bowe: First and seconded any discussion? Let's vote All in favor.

Crews: Yes.

**Supervisor Allen moved, Commissioner Bickford seconded and was unanimously carried by the Commission to approve 2021 bylaws and procedures with changes.**

Bowe: Thank you. Dabney. Unanimous. Public comment?

Edmondston: Mr. Chairman, we do not have anyone signed up this evening in person, but we do have one comment received today. Prior to the deadline. Would it be appropriate to read the second statement here?

Bowe: Yes, sir.

Bowe: The Planning Commission would like to remind all speakers that they have a First Amendment right to speak. However, speakers do not have indemnification. If the statements are made with actual or constructive knowledge that they are false, or with reckless disregard for whether they are false. We ask all speakers to keep to what they know to be the truth. And by signing up for comment, you are acknowledging your understanding and agreement with the above.

Chad Oba: Yes, hello, my name is Chad Oba and I'm in district six and I'd like to make a public comment to be played tonight at the Planning Commission meeting. This is in regards to the recent public hearing that addressed commercial prospecting. As a by right use and A1, an M1, and M2 I think I got that correct. During that hearing, I was pretty surprised at the lack of consideration for the 40 comments. Well, most of these comments there were some that were considered obviously there were a couple from mining industry, folks. But there were there were 40 comments, and the majority of them were not in favor of going forward with this. And I realized that you have a tough job. And you know, you have to balance the people and their concerns and your own judgment and consideration of what is right for the county. And it has to be a frustrating process for everyone. for you as a representative and for us, the people, but there must it has to be a balancing act, where the views and concerns of your constituents are important and are to be considered. And there's just important principles and doing both. And recently in this public hearing, I did not feel as so the people were heard at all. There were a lot of really good comments from retired mining experts, respected medical people, experts in the field of gold mining, and the environmentalists, and others simply from your constituents who just are expressing great concern for what would happen to their land, their health, their water, their history here. And immediately after, there was no discussion or consideration for any of these opinions. This new information was totally ignored. And this did not to me represent a democratic procedure. There was no actual real hearing going on. It was as if you didn't hear us at all. So I, I just have to speak out and say something about that it was just do as you want and ignore the people's voices. But I just would also like to assure you that we're still here. We're still going to take part, we still are hopeful that you will hear us and going forward, I hope that we all can do better to work together for the better of this whole community. And that means everyone. Thank you. Respectfully.

Bowe: That the only one Nicci?

Edmondston: Yes, sir. That's all for public comment.

Bowe: Close the public comment section. Old business.

Edmondston: Yes, sir. This evening. We are holding a public hearing for case 20 ZMA 281. The landowner is JD Corporation of Virginia and the applicant is Dez Raj. This property is located at tax map 95-32 contains approximately an acre at 3407. South Constitution route Dillwyn it is at the intersection of State Route 649, which is Slate River Mill Road and route 20. This property currently is known as the route 20. Market. It is currently zoned A1 and the request before you is asking you of course to recommend this public hearing that we're holding for the rezoning from A1 to B1 for the purpose of business expansion. Mr. Raj wants to expand his business and construct a 4000 square foot facility that will house a convenience store and food and specialty grilling shop. When an existing grandfathered use will be expanding or enlarging further Buckingham County zoning ordinance the usage must be brought into compliance. Mr. Raj would not be able to apply for a special use permit in an A1 because this new facility will be larger than the specifications on page 11 of the zoning ordinance which states convenience

general store maximum 2000 square feet and no more than four petroleum pumps. This location is approximately nine miles south of the centenary Scottsville growth corridors outlined in the comprehensive plan. Mr. Raj has included v dots determination and understands that further v. That review may be needed along with a site plan for construction all subject to any final decision. Mr. Raj is here with us this evening to address any questions that you may have. And we may have a public comment for the public hearing. We do not have anyone signed up in person for public comment for this hearing. But we have received one comment during the day prior to the deadline.

Edward Hanes: This is Edwin Hanes, Maysville district I own the property near the route 20 market property I own the hay field. I am in favor of the market having an upgrade however, I would like to see a chain link fence put on the boundary line. So that trash will not be coming out into the Hayfield and sense the construction is going to be so close to the property line. Some people may even try to park in my hay field so I am requesting that by A chain link fence or something similar be required on a property line to keep me from having trouble with patrons of the store. If you have any questions, give me a call 434-315-3153 Thank you.

Bowe: Okay, open it to the commission. Anybody have anything they want to say about this?

Dorrier: Mr. Chairman, I'm looking through the pamphlet on page 10. Traffic impact? I see where VDOT didn't sign off on it totally. That they were... they had something else to do. Does existing entrance meet the requirements for proposed use? And he has no. And I didn't know exactly what they want to do, what else they wanted to do. I saw where they would change to the curving. But it seems to me like it is something else could be done on the egress on Route 20. That's a bad spot down there I don't know how many of you have traveled it. Probably all the time. But it's s a curve right there. And also, it's a hill where the people come out of the convenience store. And I was wondering, is there anything that we could recommend for VDOT to do rather than just come right out on Route 20 at a blind spot?

Edmondston: Raj, would you like to address any of these questions? I'll ask you to go the microphone. Let me make sure it's on for you.

Dez Raj: I've Talked to VDOT a couple times now and since the new building is going to the back...\*Inaudible\* Our building is closer to the road now but in the future we may have to change but for now he doesn't have any concern.

Dorrier: Would he be coming back looking at that in the future?

Raj: Yes. \*Inaudible\* He comes in all the time.

Dorrier: That's a bad stretch of road when you come around a curve you never know what you might run up on.

Raj: We have done business from there for the last 12 years. It's all right now. Moved back its even safer. Off the road far back far safer turning place.

Dorrier: Glad to hear you expand in and I'm all for that. I'm good for you in the county too. So good.

Allen: How big is your building you got right now?

Raj: \*Inaudible\* I cannot use it. Its to much money for me to remodel the place. I can spend that money to build a new one. It'd be bigger, better. The building's been maybe...Who knows? Maybe 200 year old.

Gormus: Are you going to leave the store open while you build?

Raj: Yes. Yes, ma'am. Okay, we're going to keep the store open. We're going to build a building in the back. We move into new building, then we can tear it down. And we put the pumps in the front.

Bowe: How many pumps do you have out there now?

Raj: We have five. You got a hard time to come. You know, keep all the customers... sometimes they fight each other? Because then I have no room. They wants to come to us support us. But they get frustrated. I can understand their frustration because no room.

Bowe: How many are you going to have at the new?

Raj: We're going to have a three lanes.

Bowe: How many?

Raj: Three lanes.

Bowe: Three lanes?

Raj: Yes, sir.

Bowe: You sure you got enough room for all this on one acre

Raj: Yes, sir.

Bowe: Okay as long as your sure.

Raj: Yes, sir we already have that dealt with the company that build stores they give me okay with that.

Bowe: And how about the chain link fence your neighbors talking about is that a problem?

Raj: If there is any problem for him, I'll put the fence up there

Bowe: So you want to wait and see if it's a problem first is that what you're saying?

Raj: He told me when he came to the store he'll have no problem but just heard today he wanted put fence there so I will do it.

Bowe: Okay, thank you. Anybody else have anything?

Bickford: Are you planning on changing any your operational hours from what you are now for?

Raj: My hours right now six to nine week days? Weekend six to 10, Friday and Saturday. Used to be 11 o'clock I just cut hours because the COVID so cant find him employees to work those times. Its hard. Yes, if the business is there Yes, I do. I would maybe go back to the regular hours. I used to have.

Bickford: With this new building are you on change the lighting or your lighting will be proportional to what it is now?

Raj: Lighting? Not really. We're not changing lighting.

Bickford: Just wanted to know. How about signage, you plan to put signs?

Raj: Yes we are going to have a digital sign on the on the road. This was the requirement from gas company now. Which is going to be in same place. Same size as the sign what we got now. We just want to replace it. Upgrade it.

Bickford: You're not going to have a big large tall sign?

Raj: We use to have that. We just cut it down. We not going to have that. No.

Bickford: Okay Mr. chairman that's all the questions I have.

Gooden: I have a question. The pumps that you're installing. And you said three lanes?

Raj: It's three pump, which is giving you more room. It's not going to be three lanes like huge. It was three pumps; three cars can pump at one time. Now my problem is if you go there, you can only pump one at a time. With this maybe take like 40 feet, more room to put two more pumps

Gooden: Will these pumps that you can use the debit card?

Raj: Yes. It's going to be BP station, already have been approved from the company.

Gormus: You going to keep your kitchen?

Raj: I'm going to expand the kitchen. I try to sell fresh meat, fish. Some of the frozen stuff people buy from the store try to make a market. I used to work in Ukrop years back. I now hold on to their philosophy, how they used to do it, more like organic fresh food. Today's people diet problems. So we try to be healthier.

Allen: Are you going to be able to have a parking lot all the way around?

Raj: Yes sir.

Allen: Okay I just hadn't seen that...

Raj: If the building goes away from there. It's a pretty big lot. It's pretty big lot

Bowe: Anybody else have any questions of him?

Gormus: I'd like to see this move along.

Bickford: I'll second that motion.

Bowe: We have a first and a second. Any discussion? Let's vote All in favor. Dabney?

Crews: Yes.

Raj: Thank you.

Gormus: Thank you, sir.

Raj: Thank you, everybody.

**Commissioner Gormus moved, Commissioner Bickford seconded, and was unanimously carried by the Commission to move ZMA-281 on to the Board of Supervisors.**

Bowe: Unanimous. New business.

Edmondston: Mr. Chairman, I do not have any new business for you at this time.

Bowe: Reports.

Edmondston: The building permit report is included in your packet for informational purposes. And as far as the zoning administrator report, I would just like to tell each and every one, thank

you so much for your hard work and dedication for everything that happened during the year of 2020. There are many great decisions and recommendations made by you as a planning commission. It's been my joy and honor to work with each of you and to learn from each of you. We have quite a wealth of knowledge from the members who have served for many years and the new faces to the Planning Commission. You are all great assets. And I have truly enjoyed 2020. I think that sometimes things that are challenging just offer the opportunity to learn more. So I look forward to 2021 and everything that we can accomplish this year as well. So thank you all very much.

Bickford: Thank you Nicci.

Gormus: Thank you, Jamie for keeping us straight.

Edmondston: Amen to that, Jamie.

Gormus: And technology.

Edmondston: You know that there's a lot to be said for that Buckingham has been able to continue, I applaud each of you. And I do think Jamie Shumaker, because work has been able to continue. We have not had any pause in things that needed to take place. And I know that, you know, I'd say we're leaps and bounds ahead of other places that may not have been as fortunate as we are to have the team members and team players that we have here so many thanks, guys.

Bowe: Commission matters. I have one. Joyce, I think we all got a little text from you this evening about joining a texting group.

Gooden: I heard about that.

Bowe: Was that you?

Gooden: That was me.

Bowe: Okay.

Gooden: Let me explain that. When I get numbers and messages, all I do is put a name to that number. And so what I was doing was putting a name to that number. So when its on my phone I know who it is. I did not intend to send a group message. I am only grateful for the name I chose.

Gormus: Is this the 588 number?

Gooden: Yes.

Bowe: We've got this little thing that no more than two of us can be together at any one time or it's classified as a meeting. Okay, so we can't have any little chats on the phone.

Gooden: I understand. I got that.

Bowe: Just wanted to make sure you...

Gooden: Yes. Oh, yes.

Bowe: Any other commission matters for anybody? Looking for an adjournment.

Bickford: Move to adjourn.

Gormus: Second.

Bowe: We have a first and a Second. All in favor of adjournment. Raise your hand. Dabney?

Crews: Yes.

Bowe: Good. Thank you. Unanimous. We're adjourned.

**Commissioner Bickford moved, Commissioner Gormus seconded, and was unanimously carried by the Commission to adjourn the meeting.**

There being no further business, Chairman Bowe declared the meeting adjourned.

ATTEST:

---

Nicci Edmondston  
Zoning Administrator

---

Patrick Bowe  
Chairman