Meeting Minutes – Monday, April 28, 2025 - Bolivar Planning Commission

7 PM meeting called to order.

Members present: Barb Staats, Deb Hale, Jeffrey Staats, Chris Higdon.

Absent: Marcelo Morinigo. **Also present**: John Hale.

Approval of Minutes

Barb recommended several changes to the January meeting minutes, which she had sent earlier via email to Deb. These changes included details on the BPC Annual Report that she was preparing to submit to Council, as well as details regarding the D'Angelo property line adjustment request. Chris made the motion to approve the Jan 27, 2025, meeting minutes with Barb's changes; Jeff seconded the motion. All members approved.

Unfinished Business

1. **Annual Report and Comprehensive Plan Updates**

   Barb reported that the Town Council received and approved the BPC Annual Report at the regular February 2025 Council meeting. Jeff said that Laura is working with former Councilmember Sarah Gordon to upload the latest Comprehensive Plan to make it accessible on the Town website. Jeff reported that the Harpers Ferry Planning Commission had asked for a copy of Bolivar's Comp Plan to gain extra insight and organizational ideas during their own Comp Plan development process.

2. **Jeff & Karen D'Angelo-property line adjustment update**

   The D'Angelos were able to proceed with a lot line adjustment for neighboring properties on Polk Street, and also obtained a demolition permit to tear down an existing garage/carport.

New Business (out of order to Agenda):

1. **Hiring Certified Zoning Administrator with proper credentials**

Discussion ensued regarding the need to hire a Zoning and Enforcement Administrator/Officer and what enforcement would mean. Public input during Comp Plan development process stressed the desire for enforcement on such matters as sidewalk clearing, pet waste removal, parking, and yard maintenance. The Town is also still in dire need of a certified building inspector for new building permits. Chris made the motion to place this issue of hiring a Zoning Administrator as a separate agenda item for the next Town Council meeting; Jeff seconded the motion. All members approved. Barb will contact Laura to request the agenda item. Chris will contact former mayor Helen Dettmer for any advice and/or recommendations in hiring a Zoning Administrator.

2. **Reviewing/Updating building and demolition permits/fees**

Barb recommended that we update/modernize our permit application form(s). She used Harpers Ferry's streamlined and concise "Zoning Compliance Permit Application" as an example, comparing it to our current sprawling application format. Jeff will email us the Harpers Ferry form so that we can study it and consider using it as a template moving forward. We will re-evaluate at next meeting.

3. **House and Senate Bills Mention at town council meeting by Legal**

There have been no bills passed recently that will affect specific zoning or planning ordinances. But House Bill No. 2382 did pass, which prohibits camping on public land. (This may affect any future changes to the ordinances regarding camping.)

4. **Review SLO for progress**

We quickly reviewed the Comp Plan timeline for Goals and Objectives (Jeff had printed out the table as it appears in the new Comp Plan), and will review them at each quarterly meeting. Many of the items have either been achieved or are currently underway. There was brief discussion of how the local NPS recently announced its attempts at culling the sick deer population on Park grounds.

5. **Mercer St building permit request**

Jeff presented a new building request recently brought to the Town Hall for a new single-family home on a .15 acre lot on Mercer Street. The issue is that the lot in question was not a platted lot on the County tax map prior to the June 2000 date specified in the building ordinances to qualify as a "buildable lot." [See Planning and Zoning codes 1715.03(b) and 1303.04(a).] As such, Jeff made the motion to deny the building permit based on standing ordinances; Chris seconded the motion. All approved. Barb will inform Laura of the decision.

6. **Outline Guide Forum for Bolivar Businesses**

Barb would like to include a page outlining relevant ordinances as it pertains to Commercial properties when business license renewals are sent out each year. This would serve as a "friendly reminder" to business owners of Town rules pertaining to signs, parking requirements, and sidewalk maintenance. There would be a box to check on the renewal form that the business owner has read and reviewed the ordinances and agrees to comply.

Finally, Barb reminded members of the **Ethics and Open Meetings Acts virtual training** on April 30, 2025, from noon-1:00. Barb, Deb, and Chris had already planned to attend.

Jeff made the motion to adjourn the meeting; Chris seconded. All approved. The meeting ended at **8:35 pm**.

Next BPC Meeting is scheduled for **July 28, 2025, at 7 pm.**