



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

January 21, 2021

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Ben Berto, Director of Planning and Building Services

SUBJECT: Discussion of scheduling of a second Planning Commission meeting permit month

RECOMMENDATION

Make a motion to direct staff to prepare a resolution for adoption at the February 18, 2021 meeting scheduling the first, regular, meeting of each month for the second Thursday except in November when the meetings will occur the second and fourth Wednesdays, with additional direction for the second special meeting date per month to be scheduled for the 4th Thursday of each month (not requiring special approval by Resolution).

BACKGROUND

Private project applications are not expected to decrease in number in the coming year and the Commission and Town have several pressing issues to deal that will require potentially significant amounts of meeting time including the Objective Design and Development Standards (ODDS)/Historic, the legally required Housing, Safety, and Land Use Elements General Plan update process and potentially the processing of the Marinda Heights Subdivision project. This has resulted in staff realizing that it is not possible to accomplish the work that needs to be completed along with the processing of submitted discretionary permit applications at one meeting per month.

DISCUSSION

The Town Council launched a 6-month pilot program to add a second monthly meeting, from November 2020 through April 2021 with the second meetings scheduled for the same week as the Planning Commission's regular meeting date. The Town Council meeting schedule for the next several months is listed below.

February 3, 2021
February 17, 2021 (6:30 pm)
March 3, 2021
March 17, 2021 (6:30 pm)
March 26, 2021 (10:00 am)

April 7, 2021
April 21, 2021 (6:30 pm)
May 5, 2021
May 21, 2021

There is a clear need for the Commission to meet more frequently than once a month. Scheduling both Commission meetings so that they do not conflict with the packet preparation and the Town Council's two meetings per month is necessary because staff often has items scheduled on the Town Council agenda. Preparing for and attending both the Town Council and the Planning Commission meetings in the same weeks is difficult. The plan would be to have one regular meeting per month and a second special meeting later in the month. The benefits to having the second meeting be a special meeting have been outlined by the Town Clerk below:

- Special meetings are not required to have "open time for items not on the agenda".
- Special meetings provide the flexibility to have a different start time and you can select the day (if there are no other meeting conflicts).
- Special meetings require only a 24-hour agenda posting. However, the planning department would still have to post, and mail out required notices ten days in advance.
- The Town Code does not need to be amended to set special meetings and the regular meeting can be set by Resolution of the Planning Commission since the regular meeting date is not specified in Town Code 2.28.090, (Planning Commission) Meetings Generally.
- Special meetings can easily be discontinued without a resolution once the Commission gets through their work program.

What makes the most sense to staff would be to change the Commission meetings so that they are held the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 7:00 PM.

As they are scheduled now the Town Council meeting preparation will be occurring the fourth and second weeks of each month. Changing the regular Commission meeting date and the second special meeting dates to the second and fourth Thursdays, would result in Commission meeting preparation occurring the first and third weeks of each month when the Town Council meetings are scheduled, and council packet preparation is completed. The only potential conflicts would be the need to re-schedule by resolution the November 11 and 25th meetings to Wednesdays, November 10th and 24th because they fall respectively on Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. The Commission would have the ability to change the December 23, ²⁰²¹ special meeting, the only other potential conflict, because that is the day before Christmas Eve, without a resolution.

CONCLUSION

If members of the Planning Commission have conflicts that would prohibit them from attending a regular meeting on the second Thursday of each month, the Commission can consider making the regular meeting the fourth Thursday of each month with the special meeting scheduled on a month-to-month basis on day(s) during the second week of the month. The specific dates for

the second special meetings can be chosen for times when the most Commissioners are available to attend the special meeting. The Commission can also propose alternatives to what has been presented by staff for discussion with the proposal that seems acceptable to most of the Commissioners put to a vote and then direction given to staff on how to proceed.