

**REGULAR MEETING OF
LURAY PLANNING COMMISSION
February 11, 2026**

The Luray Planning Commission met on Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in regular session. The meeting was held in the Luray Town Council Chambers at 45 East Main Street, Luray, Virginia at which time there were present the following:

Commissioner's Present:

Ronald Good, Chairman
John Shaffer, Vice Chairman
Bill Huffman
Barbie Stombock
Frankie Seaward
Brian Sours
Tracie Dickson 7:02

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present:

Bryan Chrisman, Town Manager
Michael Coffelt, Assistant Town Manager
Brooke Fox, Planning & Zoning Technician

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Good at 7:00 p.m. and everyone joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called with six (6) members present and one (1) member absent. Commissioner Dickson arrived slightly late.

ADDITIONS OR DELETION OF AGENDA

Motion: Commissioner Huffman approved the February 11, 2026, agenda as presented.
Motion seconded by Commissioner Seaward with the vote as follows: **YEA:** Chairman Good, Commissioners Shaffer, Huffman, Stombock, Seaward, Sours, Dickson **Approved 7-0**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Good led a review of the January 14, 2026, regular meeting minutes.

Motion: Commissioner Shaffer made the motion to approve the January 14, 2026, regular meeting minutes as presented. **Motion seconded** by Commissioner Seaward with the vote as follows: **YEA:** Chairman Good, Commissioners Shaffer, Huffman, Stombock, Seaward, Sours, Dickson **Approved 7-0**

GENERAL CITIZENS COMMENTS:

There were no citizen comments.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no public hearings.

UPDATES & DISCUSSION ITEMS

8A) Sign Ordinance Amendments

The Planning Commission is requested to review and discuss proposed amendments to the sign ordinance. Included in the latest revision (v.6) that incorporates changes from the January meeting, as well as comments from the Council to this point.

Mr. Chrisman informed the commission that version 7 with the changes from the January meeting and comments from council were provided as a handout and at their places.

Chairman Good noted the revisions. The first is the wall sign definition which states this is a sign with or without a bracket attached to or painted upon a wall or other vertical surface or structure, such as a window, canopy or awning. The second is Section 801.5(g) paragraph 2(1) regarding feather banners not more than twelve (12) feet in height and thirty-six (36) sq ft in area. This is in B1 and M1.

Commissioner Seaward asked since the sixty (60) days were struck out, does this mean they can be permanent. Mr. Chrisman stated it is covered under the next change which is 801.8 (c), which talks about temporary signs. Feather Banners are temporary signs, so he clarified the use of those in that section. There was some conflict there, so he cleared that up.

Mr. Chrisman stated that on Monday night there was a question regarding sign banners and the time of day. If you put up a feather banner for one day and then take it down do I have to wait sixty (60) days to put it back up again. Clarifying that was part of that issue. Sign square footage and maximum height were brought up as being confusing. Exterior illumination has come up twice. This is in Section 801.8(3). The issue with exterior illumination is if there is a residential use adjacent to a B1 or M1 district, that sign is not supposed to be illuminated if the light would adversely impact the residential use on the neighboring lot. Even if the residential use is in a B1 or M1 district. Most people do interior illumination because it is much more efficient and effective. We will make sure Mr. Botkins is clear about this. Projection signs also came up. That is why the definition of a wall sign has been slightly altered to include projection signs. Most of our main street businesses use projection signs. And then there was a question about flashing signs in 801.4(c) and my answer was yes, if it is flashing or scrolling it is not supposed to be there.

Commissioner Huffman asked if this would affect the fire department. Mr. Chrisman stated that for many years digital signs were not allowed. And then they were added to the ordinance to be allowed for nonprofit organizations with a special use permit. The requirement is that you can have a digital sign however it cannot flash, roll or be distracting to motorists.

Commissioner Huffman asked about signs being projected onto a building, as an illumination on to a building. Mr. Chrisman stated that to get it far enough away from your building so that it will show up you would have to be on someone else's property, which is not allowed. He will address it with the town attorney.

Commissioner Stombeck asked what the rule is about obsolete signs. Mr. Chrisman stated that they eliminated that and signs that are falling down become a public nuisance and are handled under the nuisance ordinance. Council did discuss this and having a sign in a sign frame even if the business is not there anymore is better looking than empty sign frames up and down main street. The best option is for them to flip the sign panels around so that they are blank but there is still something in that frame. The real issue that came about with the Uncle Bucks restaurant was signs still being on the building. That confused people because they thought that the business was still open. It was discussed about asking owners to put up a sign that said the business is currently no longer active. However, if they have already left the building and left the signs up, they may not be coming back to do that. So, at one point the council said that was not something they would pursue. But if the sign were in disrepair and became a public safety issue then it would be handled under the nuisance ordinance.

Chairman Good stated that on the sandwich board signs he noticed that it stated two sandwich board signs not more than seven (7) sq ft. Is that standard? Mr. Chrisman stated that it says two sandwich boards not more than seven (7) sq ft per side. As long as it does not impede into the sidewalk. This is for menu boards or sales boards. They are meant for pedestrians and not motorists.

8B) Accessory Dwelling Units

The Planning Commission is requested to review and discuss proposed amendments to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) section of the ordinance, including the definition. Included are several sheets indicating the current definition, the current Ordinance section, and a list of topics for discussion related to these uses and the possible expansion.

Topics for consideration included, but are not limited to:

- Location in zoning districts
- New construction or renovated existing structures (change of use)
- Operational requirements
- Utilities and setbacks
- Subdivision
- Minimum lot sizes
- Special Use Permits

Mrs. Fox has provided addition information at your desks. This included accessory dwelling units in the 2018 USBC from Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development,

and State of the Market and Local Policy: Accessory Dwelling Units in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Mr. Chrisman stated that council was immutable to the concept of expansion of accessory dwelling units. They seemed to be a bit concerned about how far the expansion would go and in which areas. So, the question came up about affordability and whether affordability and housing stock and whether adding accessory dwelling units will lead to lower priced homes? Depending upon where these are located, they can impact neighborhood real estate values. Receiving that comment means we should consider where we are going to allow these units. Additional comments were that we should take our time and work through this one completely. Consider all potential impacts before making a recommendation.

Mr. Chrisman noted the material provided includes the current chapter 516 of the ordinance addressing accessory dwelling units and comments from other localities.

Chairman Good reviewed the topics of consideration.

Commissioner Stombock pointed out that the main concern is not what they are, but where they are.

Mr. Chrisman stated density is important to consider. He also stated that new construction is listed in the topics of consideration. Prior to this it has always been an existing structure that is converted into an accessory dwelling unit. Now we are thinking about the option of allowing someone to construct a new building on their property detached from the principal structure for this use. Density is important and the other density issue is the setbacks. Considering setbacks to the accessory dwelling unit as opposed to setbacks for sheds, that store for example your mower, away from neighboring property lines. We are trying to keep neighbors as far apart as the real estate allows for privacy and quality of life. Typically, the accessory dwelling unit would connect to the principal structures water, sewer and electricity. If in the future they would try to subdivide the accessory dwelling unit, they would have to have their own utility connections and electricity. And it would have to meet the minimum area size and setback requirements for that district. Administration will need to communicate that with the applicant but having that in the ordinance makes it easier for us.

Mr. Chrisman stated that council was not a fan of accessory dwelling units in R1 or R2 zoning districts. Commissioner Stombock stated to her that placing them there made more sense given the amount of area those two districts have. Mr. Chrisman stated that when those districts were written the intent was to protect them from anything but single-family residences. Commissioner Stombock pointed out that when those were written, it was a different environment, and we did not have a housing crisis. We have a serious problem. So, we are talking about putting them where? Mr. Chrisman stated R2, R4 and PND. Commissioner Stombock asked where is R4? Mr. Chrisman responded in the Boomfield. Commissioner Stombock stated this is one of the densest places we have. Mr. Chrisman stated that is why there is a 10,000 sq ft minimum and they would need to have multiple lots to do this. If you want to propose R1 we can run that by council. Commissioner Stombock stated if we are doing this by special use permit why would we not propose R1 and R2. There are a lot of people in R1 sitting on more than one acre.

Chairman Good stated that Mrs. Fox is going to find out what other communities are doing. Mrs. Fox stated she has sent out emails to Harrisonburg, Mt. Jackson, Woodstock, New Market, and Winchester. She has gotten responses back from them stating that they are also considering adding accessory dwelling units. As they go through the process they will update us and we will update them as well.

ACTION ITEMS

9A) Sign Ordinance Amendments

Motion: Commissioner Dickson made the motion that the proposed sign ordinance be recommended to council as presented. **Motion seconded** by Commissioner Stombock
YEA: Chairman Good, Commissioners Shaffer, Stombock, Huffman, Seaward, Sours, Dickson
Approved 7-0

COMMISSION COMMENTS

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman Good asked if there was any additional news or discussion. Mr. Chrisman informed the commission that next Friday will be the Assistant Town Manager, Michael Coffelt's last day.

Mr. Chrisman also updated the commission on the Tiller property. The developer is still inquiring. He and Mr. Coffelt attended an engineering meeting for the projected water supply improvements on west main in order to serve that property. There are still issues with on and off-site sewer. This is going to be a significant improvement project that will have to take place all the way down to either N Bank or Hawksbill Street to upsize that sewer line or run a dedicated line of at least 8-inches. Traffic is still a concern. He will require them to submit an application or require a traffic impact analysis. There will be two entrances. One on Bixlers Ferry Road which is already a low volume narrow laned road and then west main street. West main street will take almost 100% of the vehicles. If the count gets too high, they will have to put in turn lanes and there is not enough room. That means property acquisitions and some other things. They can subdivide but we cannot issue zoning permits if we have issues with water and sewer capacity or we have a conflict with traffic. We would also like to see more single-family homes and duplexes as opposed to town homes. The community would benefit more from that. The construction estimate is going to be fairly large. The difference in the facilities fees that they are going to be required to pay and the actual cost of the offsite improvements that will have to be made to the water and sewer will be somewhere in the range of 2.5 to 4 million dollars. That is on top of the facility fees they will pay. Taxpayers should not foot the bill for that project. They will be coming in to talk with the commission once we get the details and a rough construction estimate. The housing types that they are proposing are not a viable solution to some of our housing issues. And when you look at the townhomes at Luray Landing, some of those have changed hands two or three times since they were built. There is a reason they have changed hands because people are not trying to live there. They are trying to use them as investment properties. The single-family home will be more popular. Just like the property off Reservoir and Fairview. If you are talking about building age restricted homes that are \$450,000,

after this latest reassessment they will be closer to \$600,00. How many local families are going to be able to buy that house? If it is not going to resolve even a portion of our housing issues locally, why would we support such a thing?

Mrs. Fox is working on the annual report. And now the council would like to see a report. But their version is much easier. They would like us to put the meeting minutes, the resolutions and the ordinances into ChatGPT and see what it gives us in terms of accomplishments for the previous year.

In reference to the age restricted property formally known as Century Luray, the mayor and I met with the new board chairman, Bucky Thomas, and the county administrator. We had a chance to bring Bucky Thomas up to speed on that particular project before we did a response letter. That letter went out yesterday. It is a great proposal but people from here are just not going to be able to afford those units. The majority of the property is situated in the county, and ten lots are within town limits. In order to fix the water and sewer that is off site on that project would be somewhere in the 3.75 to 4.65 million on top of the 2.55 million that they would pay in facility fees. This does not account for the cost which was not in the proposal for a sewer pump station. The last time we built one that size, it was one million dollars. And it will need a water booster pump station which runs about 350 to 375 thousand dollars to have enough pressure for 135 homes. This would also require a traffic impact study because the two options for traffic are coming out on S Antioch and Fairview Road. Most people will come out on Fairview Road.

Chairman Good asked if there are any geologic concern with the west main project. Mr. Chrisman stated that for the town to do water improvement there, we would have to do Geotech drilling to make sure that by putting a 500,000-gallon ground mount tank on top of a steel footing, whatever is under there can support the weight. There is also a huge drainage way through the property and that is going to be a challenge to grade the roads and building pads.

Chairman Good informed members that the next meeting would be held on March 11, 2026.

ADJOURNED

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.


Bryan Chrisman
Town Manager