

August 11, 2020

The regular meeting of the Council of the City of Martinsville, Virginia was held on August 11, 2020 in Council Chambers, Municipal Building, at 7:30 PM with Mayor Kathy Lawson presiding. Other Council Members present included Jim Woods, Danny Turner, Jennifer Bowles and Chad Martin. Staff present included City Manager Leon Towarnicki, Assistant City Manager/City Attorney Eric Monday, Community Development Mark McCaskill, and Police Chief Eddie Cassidy.

Mayor Lawson called the meeting to order. Following the Pledge to the American Flag and invocation by Mayor Lawson, she welcomed everyone to the meeting. Lawson explained that the meeting would follow COVID guidelines and recognizing social distancing recommendations.

Approve minutes from the July 28, 2020 Council Meeting – Council Member Woods made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Council Member Bowles seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

Hear an update from Martinsville City Schools on plans regarding the upcoming 2020/2021 school year – Dr. Zeb Talley, School Superintendent explained that three phases for the school schedule had been approved with student safety as the priority. It will take some time for students to become acclimated to the new virtual learning format. The schools have established help lines for students and parents. Talley explained the meal deliveries being made to student homes and the locations where students can access Wi-Fi. All students will have technology to perform their assignments and paper packets are being provided to the students who need them. The special needs students and the ELL students have a teacher assigned to them to assist with their assignments. Travis Clemons detailed how the COVID funds are being used to equip the school with sanitizer stations and other options for student and staff safety along with funds invested in technology.

Continue the public hearing on a request from Homero Sandoval Ramos for a Special Use Permit for a vehicle display lot and custom designed vehicle wrap business at 125 Clearview Drive – City Manager Towarnicki explained this request had been brought before Council previously and had been continued. Inspections and Community Development staff have reached out to the petitioners for additional information and it was learned that the original plan for a vehicle wrap business had changed. Unfortunately, Community Development has not been able to get anything specific in writing from the petitioner. Staff recommends reopening the hearing for additional comments, if no comments are voiced then they request Council deny the request for the permit. Mark McCaskill of the Community Development Department explained that they were able to reach the petitioner after several attempts. After a recent conference call, there was verbal acknowledgement that the petitioner was not interested in pursuing the original business plan but his department has yet to receive anything official in writing or by email. Mayor Lawson reopened the public hearing. No one approached the podium so Lawson closed the public hearing. Council Member Woods made

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the motion to deny the request for the special use permit. Vice Mayor Martin seconded the motion with all Council voting in favor.

Martinsville City Council
May 12th, 2020 at 7:30PM, Council Chambers
Staff Report

Subject: Conduct a Public Hearing for a Special Use Permit to Consider an Application for a Car Display/Lot and Custom Vehicle Wrap Business at 128 Clearview Drive

Applicant: Homero Sandoval Ramos, Owner

Location: 128 Clearview Dr, Martinsville VA 24112

Tax Parcel Number: 13 (02) 00/ 06A (000226000)

Existing Zoning: C-N (Neighborhood Commercial District)

Adjacent Property Zoning(s): R-N (Neighborhood Residential District) and C-N (Neighborhood Commercial District)

Requested Action: To obtain a special use permit for a car display lot and custom designed car wraps (*Automobile Sales, including display lot and Automobile Repair and Service*), for the location of 128 Clearview Dr, Martinsville VA, 24112. This is permitted by *special use only* in the C-N (Neighborhood Commercial District), per Section XIII, Letter D in the City's Zoning Ordinance.

Circumstances: To obtain a special use permit for a car display lot and custom designed car wraps for the address of 128 Clearview Dr, Martinsville VA, 24112. The building located on the property was constructed in 1940 and is the former site of the Midget Market. According to a record of ownership, this property is owned by Homero Sandoval Ramos since October 29th, 2019. Since 1963 this building has been used as a convenience store/restaurant under the name of the "Midget Market." Although the ownership has changed over the years, the convenience store has always been re-opened under the same name according to records. This property has been used historically for commercial, retail purposes until the Midget Market closed around 2017. Future Land Use Map from the 2009 City of Martinsville's Comprehensive Plan designates this property as a "Professional."

Both the City's Planning Commission and City Council requested additional information from the petitioner and extended the public hearing until May 2020. As of May 2020, the Community Development Office has not received any new information related to the development at 128 Clearview Drive.

Staff Recommendation: Therefore, Staff recommends the Council *deny the request* due to lack of supporting information submitted to the Community Development Office and the applicant's lack of contact with City employees regarding continuance of interest in the project despite numerous outreach attempts on the part of City Staff.

Attachments: Application, Property Information

Excerpt of minutes from the February 11, 2020 Council meeting

Conduct a public hearing on a request from Homero Sandoval Ramos for a Special Use Permit for a vehicle display lot and custom designed vehicle wrap business at 128 Clearview Drive – Kris Bridges invited Council to ask any questions of the Mr. Ramos who was in attendance. Of the three individuals who spoke at the Planning Commission hearing, two expressed concerns about the business regarding possible increased traffic, the potential for it to become a junk yard, etc. Mr. Ramos's son spoke in defense of the business assuring that the appearance of the building would remain professional and that they would not allow it to look junky. There will be security cameras and they would not offer services or sell items at this business that would invite the wrong customer base. The Planning Commission voted to send this request to Council for a final decision with the recommendation that the special use permit be granted. Council Member Turner said he does not feel that the use of this location as a vehicle wrap business would cause any increase in traffic flow. Council Member Bowles asked how a car would be wrapped at the business if it cannot be driven into the building. Mr. Ramos explained that a garage door would be installed and they are reviewing their best options for that. Ramos does not plan to store many vehicles at this location, possibly three or four that are being wrapped since that process could take a week or more. Mayor Lawson opened the public hearing. No one approached the podium. Mayor Lawson continued the public hearing until May 12, 2020 allowing Mr. Ramos time to submit additional information to the Building Inspector's office.

Hear a staff update on various projects and activities – City Manager Towarnicki updated Council on the internet service within the City, stating that they are working to ensure students have access in all residential areas. Towarnicki summarized the CARES Funding, 137 applications had been reviewed with grants totaling \$404,376 made to small businesses within the City. More applications will be reviewed tomorrow. He has been advised that the City could receive a second installment for CARES Funding and all paperwork for that funding has been completed and returned. There is a lot of assistance available for small businesses through the state and the Harvest Foundation also. Towarnicki detailed updates to City Hall to protect staff and visitors during the pandemic. He provided updates on numerous ongoing projects including the Chief Tassel building, the BB&T building, the American of Martinsville site on Aaron Street, two electric projects, the Commonwealth Boulevard bridge, and the Reservoir project. Towarnicki explained the Virginia First Cities grant benefiting individuals on TANF who want to work but are unable to for whatever reason. The City was awarded \$270,000 along with the WIB office and the United Way office through this grant. Towarnicki said there have been a number of meetings with local child care providers in the community to discuss community needs and solutions for child care. The City partnered with the County, Harvest Foundation and EDC to complete a housing

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study that will be presented to Council in the near future. This study was completed to detail the need for new housing construction to contractors and developers. Towarnicki updated Council on the completion of Section 6B of the Dick & Willie Trail. The County is working on plans for Section 6A of the trail. Towarnicki said the Hooker Field concession project is moving forward after receiving funding through the Harvest Foundation. Towarnicki answered Council questions about the Electric Department and their efforts to trim trees away from power lines.

Consider approval of consent agenda – Council Member Bowles made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Vice Mayor Martin seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

BUDGET ADDITIONS FOR 8/11/20				
ORG	OBJECT	DESCRIPTION	DEBIT	CREDIT
BUDGET ADDITIONS				
FY2020				
General Fund:				
01102926	405555	Brownfields Grant - EPA		7,345
01812247	503136	Brownfields - Hazardous - Consultant	6,153	
01812249	503136	Brownfields - Petroleum - Consultant	1,192	
		Requisition #6		
01102926	436401	Categorical Federal - Confiscated Assets - PD		23,653
01311085	506079	Police Dept - Federal Asset Forfeitures	23,653	
		Forfeited assets from Federal Gov't		
Total General Fund:			30,998	30,998
FY2021				
General Fund:				
01101917	442401	Categorical Other State - Confiscated Assets - PD		606
01101917	442402	Categorical Other State - Confiscated Assets - CA		152
01311085	506078	Police Dept - State Asset Forfeitures	606	
01221082	506105	Commonwealth's Atty - State Asset Forfeitures	152	
		Forfeited assets from Commonwealth		
Total General Fund:			758	758

Business from the Floor – None

Comments by City Council – Council Member Turner recognized former Patrick County Board of Supervisors Chairman Locke Boyce who passed away yesterday. Saturday is the 75th Anniversary of Victory in Japan Day; the Honor Guard will honor six WWII veterans with a special presentation at their homes. Vice Mayor Martin announced that this year marked the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment and Women’s Suffrage and asked if a proclamation could be made. Martin presented a gift to female Council Members. Council Member Woods said that Theater Works would be doing a live stream of 20 Musicals in 20 Minutes on Thursday at 7pm. Mayor Lawson commended the Martinsville Mustangs on a 21-10 season, the first winning season the Mustangs have seen since 2007. Lawson said there were several major league recruiters in attendance this season along with other out-of-towners to attend the games. In September, there will be baseball under the lights events for middle and high school kids.

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Comments by the City Manager and City Attorney – none

There being no further business, Council Member Bowles made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Martin with all Council Members voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm

Karen Roberts
Clerk of Council

Kathy Lawson
Mayor