



CITY OF FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA

CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

Council Chambers, 715 Princess Anne Street
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22401

HON. KERRY P. DEVINE, MAYOR
HON. CHARLIE L. FRYE, JR., VICE -MAYOR, WARD FOUR
HON. JANNAN W. HOLMES, AT-LARGE
HON. WILL B. MACKINTOSH, PH.D., AT-LARGE
HON. MATTHEW D. ROWE, WARD ONE
HON. JOY Y. CRUMP, WARD TWO
HON. SUSANNA R. FINN, WARD THREE

Work Session January 13, 2026

Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals Interviews

The Council of the City of Fredericksburg, Virginia held a work session on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Large Conference Room.

City Council Present. Mayor Kerry P. Devine, Presiding; Vice-Mayor Charlie L. Frye, Jr.; Council members Joy Y. Crump; Susanna R. Finn; Jannan W. Holmes; Dr. Will B. Mackintosh; and Matthew D. Rowe.

City Council Absent. None.

Others Present. City Manager Timothy J. Baroody, Deputy City Manager Mark Whitley, Deputy City Manager David Brown, Assistant City Manager Todd Flippen, City Attorney Kelly J. Lackey, Community Planning and Development Director Michael Craig, and Clerk of Council Molly Henderson.

Board of Zoning Appeals Interview.

Terry Hughes – Vice-Mayor Frye asked how Mr. Hughes explains Fredericksburg to people who don't know about it. Mr. Hughes said he does not explain Fredericksburg to people, and that he came to the area for medical reasons and lives in a senior complex.

Councilor Mackintosh asked Mr. Hughes to describe why he is interested in the Board of Zoning Appeals, and what attracts him to zoning and land use. Mr. Hughes said he has been involved in land use for a long time, including his experience in New York as elected Planning Board Chair, where he handled zoning appeals as a board member.

Councilor Rowe asked Mr. Hughes if he had other career experience relevant to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Hughes said he is retired now, but he is a member of the New Jersey Bar Association and a professional chemical engineer in the state of New York.

Councilor Finn asked Mr. Hughes to discuss his process for reviewing cases that are outside of the standard rules. Mr. Hughes discussed his experience on the Planning Board in Washingtonville, New York including pre-meetings and site visits, stating he handled some oddball cases including one for senior housing that went to the Zoning Board of Appeals and eventually to the New York Supreme Court before it came back to the Planning Board.

Councilor Holmes stated that the Board of Zoning Appeals deals with exceptions to the rules, and asked Mr. Hughes if he is willing to get more familiar with Fredericksburg. Mr. Hughes stated he is willing to familiarize himself with the City, and that during his time on the Planning Board in New York, he did not think it fair to the clients if board members don't have a pre-meeting or site visit to fully understand the issue.

Councilor Crump asked Mr. Hughes' if his experience in law would lend to his service on the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Hughes said he does not think so because his work as an engineer and lawyer was mostly environmental.

Mayor Devine asked Mr. Hughes if he had any questions for Council.

Mr. Hughes asked if training is available for Board of Zoning Appeals members. Councilor Finn confirmed online training is offered for board members.

Mr. Hughes asked if Council had any further questions for him since he has not lived in Fredericksburg for long, and he clarified that he lived in Spotsylvania County prior to living in the City. Mayor Devine confirmed with Mr. Hughes that he plans to stay in Fredericksburg long term.

Planning Commission Interview.

Stuart Penninger – Vice-Mayor Frye asked how Mr. Penninger describes Fredericksburg to people who don't know about it. Mr. Penninger said Fredericksburg is the community he calls home, stating he used to live in Stafford County, attended the University of Mary Washington, met his wife, and he described Fredericksburg as the perfect place to build a life.

Councilor Mackintosh referenced Mr. Penninger's application and asked how the City can advocate for smart growth, preserve its character, and embrace innovation. Mr. Penninger said the City is proud of its pre-Revolutionary War history, but there are opportunities for growth and neighborhood connectivity between the downtown, the Fredericksburg Nationals baseball stadium, and Central Park through better walking and cycling infrastructure and decreased

congestion. Mr. Penninger said there are opportunities to highlight the City's historic nature while building out new, affordable housing, outdoor spaces, and parks that will draw people to the area to spend money and expand the tax base. Mr. Penninger said the City's two new buses will help expand mobility.

Councilor Rowe referenced Mr. Penninger's experience working for Esri (Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc.), and asked Mr. Penninger to describe relevant experience in handling planning or zoning issues at the local or state level, or in the private sector. Mr. Penninger described his experience working for Sempergreen to address wastewater runoff in Washington, D.C. in response to new ordinances or zoning by building green wall and roof infrastructure which also provides better insulation and energy efficiency. Mr. Penninger said he also did this type of work in New York City, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Spokane, and Charlotte. Mr. Penninger said his experience included installation of the green roof in the IMF (International Monetary Fund) building in D.C.

Councilor Finn asked how system-level thinking can influence long-range City planning regarding the Comprehensive Plan or Small Area Plans. Referencing the Comprehensive Plan and the City's 2050 goals, Mr. Penninger said Virginia expects continued population growth in the next 25-50 years, so the City must improve built infrastructure such as roads and buildings and consider rezoning areas to allow for increased technology investment and capital spending while balancing resident concerns. Mr. Penninger said the City must protect its environment and prevent development that is detrimental to the Rappahannock River as a primary water supply, and it must better understand energy usage to achieve self-sufficient energy supply un beholden to corporations. Mr. Penninger said Fredericksburg has the space, but the question is, does it have the will.

Councilor Holmes stated Mr. Penninger seems very educated about the City and asked where he gets his information. Mr. Penninger said as a team lead overseeing eight people, he researches training and information for his team, and in his private life he likes reading and research, talking to people, and attending Planning Commission and City Council meetings. Mr. Penninger said he likes understanding what is going on in the community and there are many ways people can get involved.

Councilor Holmes asked what Mr. Penninger hopes to achieve as a Planning Commissioner. Mr. Penninger said the Commission offers the opportunity to work with people

to better understand outcomes at the intersection of planning and building a city that serves everyone and understanding community needs in context with data.

Councilor Crump asked what Mr. Penninger thinks the Planning Commission should prioritize in the next three to five years. Mr. Penninger said prioritization can be difficult but for tactical success, the City can first improve walkability and invest in interconnectivity including the downtown, ballpark, and Central Park; second, build more affordable housing; and third, work in partnership with Dominion to deploy more sustainable energy infrastructure.

Mayor Devine asked Mr. Penninger if he had any questions for Council.

Mr. Penninger asked what Council thinks are the three main problems currently facing the City. Mayor Devine said housing affordability and the impact of traffic around the City, as well as reinvigoration or redevelopment of areas such as old shopping centers.

Mr. Penninger asked if Council is amenable to mixed-use zoning. Vice-Mayor Frye said the City created a Creative Maker district as an example of its openness to zoning that allows amenities and different options. Vice-Mayor Frye said much of Route 2 is underdeveloped and little things make a difference, referring to Spotsylvania County investing in a Hardee's and a Dunkin' Donuts. Vice-Mayor Frye said there are opportunities for neighborhood connectivity.

Councilor Holmes added that Small Area Plan 8 includes Route 2 and is mixed-use.

Mayor Devine stated the old hospital redevelopment includes mixed-use.

Councilor Rowe stated Small Area Plan 1, which includes Central Park, includes potential changes from box stores to neighborhoods.

Adjournment. There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, Mayor Devine declared the session officially adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

APPROVED
02-10-26



Molly Henderson,
Clerk of Council