



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Morgantown Planning Commission

The West Virginia State Code Chapter 8A-2-11 requires Planning Commissions to:

“Make an annual report to the appropriate governing body concerning the operation of the planning commission and the status of planning within its jurisdiction.”

The Morgantown Planning Commission respectfully submits this 2017 Annual Report to the Morgantown City Council.

Morgantown Land Use Planning Milestones

- 1944.....City Council adopted first Zoning Ordinance
- 1959.....West Virginia Planning Enabling Act Adopted
- 1961.....City’s First Comprehensive Plan Adopted
- 1970.....Comprehensive Plan Updated
- 1979First City Planner Hired
- 1999.....Comprehensive Plan Update Adopted
- 2006.....Planning & Zoning Code Modernized and Codified
- 2010.....Downtown Strategic Plan Update Adopted
- 2013.....Comprehensive Plan Update Adopted
- 2016.....Small Area Plan – Future Study Area No. 17
- 2017.....Small Area Plan – Future Study Area No. 2



2017 Planning & Zoning Cases

The following table illustrates the caseload for the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals during the 2015, 2016, and 2017 calendar years.

PC	BZA	Number of Applications			2017 Actions			
		2015	2016	2017	Pending	Approved	Denied	W/drawn
Site Plans (DSI)		6	1	3	0	3	0	0
Minor Subdivisions		19	18	18	1	14	1	2
Major Subdivisions		0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Map Amendments		10	5	3	0	1	1	1
Text Amendments		5	8	12	0	12	0	0
Variances		80	47	42	0	36	3	3
Conditional Uses		12	16	10	0	9	0	1
Administrative Appeals		5	2	3	0	0	3	0
TOTAL		137	98	91	1	75	8	7

Citizen Planners

The success of local planning policies, programming, and services depends largely on the commitment and integrity of residents appointed by the Morgantown City Council to serve on various planning-related commissions, boards, and committees. Morgantown is fortunate to enjoy a well-informed public willing to serve in the role of "Citizen Planner." The following table identifies these volunteers and their respective terms as of December 31, 2017.

Citizen Planner	Date of Original Appointment	Current Term	Tenure (in months)
Planning Commission			
Peter DeMasters, President 6 th Ward Representative	03/21/06	01/01/17 – 12/31/19	140
Carol Pyles, Vice-President 7 th Ward Representative	09/17/08	01/01/16 – 12/31/18	111
Sam Loretta 1 st Ward Representative	06/20/06	01/01/15 – 12/31/17	137
Tim Stranko 2 nd Ward Representative	03/21/07	01/01/15 – 12/31/17	128
William Blosser 3 rd Ward Representative	11/05/2013	01/01/17 – 12/31/19	49
William Petros 4 th Ward Representative	01/19/10	01/01/16 – 12/31/18	95
Michael Shuman 5 th Ward Representative	08/04/09	01/01/16 – 12/31/18	100
William Kawecki City Councilor	07/02/13	City Council term ending 06/30/17	47
Ron Dulaney Jr. City Councilor	07/01/17	City Council term ending 06/30/19	6
Julie Robison Administration Representative	11//07/17	at the will of City Manager	1
<i>PC Tenure Summary:</i>	Total: 808 mos. or 67.3 yrs. Average: 89.7 mos. or 7.4 yrs.		
Board of Zoning Appeals			
Leanne Cardoso	01/17/17	1/17/17 – 12/31/17	12
George Papandreas	02/06/08	01/01/15 – 12/31/17	118
William Burton	12/17/2013	01/01/17 – 12/31/19 (Resigned 01/2017)	37
James Shaffer	02/07/06	01/01/16 – 12/31/18 (Resigned 08/2017)	138
Linda Herbst	1/1/2015	1/1/2015 – 12/31/17 (Resigned 1/2017)	25
Colin Wattleworth	4/12/2016	4/12/2016 – 12/31/18 (Resigned 06/2017)	14
Harrison Case	2/21/2017	2/21/17 – 12/31/19	11
Tom Shamberger	9/19/2017	9/19/17 – 12/31/18	4
Kevin Meehan	10/17/2017	10/17/16 – 12/31/18	3
<i>BZA Tenure Summary:</i>	Total: 362 mos. or 30.2 yrs. Average: 40.2 mos. or 3.35 yrs.		

The following table identifies attendance trends for the 2015, 2016, and 2017 calendar years. One (1) Planning Commission and two (2) BZA meetings were canceled in 2017.

Citizen Planner	2015		2016		2017		Three-Year Attendance Rate
	Absent	Present	Absent	Present	Absent	Present	
Planning Commission							
Peter DeMasters 6 th Ward Representative	1	8	4	8	1	10	81%
Carol Pyles 7 th Ward Representative	3	6	3	9	4	7	69%
Sam Loretta 1 st Ward Representative	0	9	0	12	0	11	100%
Tim Stranko 2 nd Ward Representative	2	7	2	10	2	9	81%
William Blosser 3 rd Ward Representative	1	8	0	12	0	11	97%
William Petros 4 th Ward Representative	3	6	2	10	2	9	78%
Michael Shuman 5 th Ward Representative	3	6	4	8	5	6	63%
William Kaweck City Councilor	0	9	1	11	0	5	97%
Ronald Dulaney, Jr. City Councilor	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	5	83%
Julie Robison Administration Representative	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	1	100%
Board of Zoning Appeals							
Leanne Cardoso	2	10	0	2	0	10	92%
George Papandreas	1	11	1	11	5	5	79%
James Shaffer	3	9	6	6	2	4	63%
Bill Burton	1	11	1	11	0	0	92%
Linda Herbst	2	10	3	9	0	0	86%
Harrison Case	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	8	88%
Colin Wattleworth	N/A	N/A	1	9	0	4	93%
Tom Shamberger	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	4	100%
Kevin Meehan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	2	100%

2017 Building Permits and Construction Value

The following table identifies building permit and construction value (nominal) trends for the 2015, 2016, and 2017 calendar years as tracked and report by the City's Code Enforcement Department.

	2015		2016		2017	
	No. / Value	% Change	No. / Value	% Change	No. / Value	% Change
No. of Building Permits Issued	1,646	23.7%	1,555	-5.5%	1,910	22.8%
Total Construction/Improvement Value	\$102,121,306	356.7%	\$33,010,428	-67.7%	\$36,267,943	9.9%
Total Amount of Building Permit Related Fees Paid to the City	\$234,243	72.0%	\$201,059	-14.2%	\$206,042	2.5%

Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)

As of December 31, 2017, there have been seven (7) Planned Unit Development (PUD) Outline Plans recommended by the Planning Commission and approved by City Council. The following narrative provides a brief update on the history and status for each PUD [Article 1357.03(D)(4)(c)].

- **Square at Falling Run** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in 2003. Phase I to construct “The Augusta” was completed and tenants occupied the buildings in September 2007. The Planning Division reports the developer filed bankruptcy and most, if not all of the related realty was acquired by West Virginia University. The 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update recommends a new zoning district be developed to include most, if not all the University’s realty.
- **SC Bodner** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in 2006 and an amendment approved in 2008. The construction of “Mountaineer Place Apartments” has been completed and occupancy permits issued Fall 2010. The gateway enhancement project within the Stewart Street and University Avenue right-of-way to satisfy the PUD’s open space requirement was completed by the City’s Public Works Department in 2017.
- **Grand Central Apartments** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in 2007 and an amendment approved in December 2008. The amendment approval included, among others, a condition that the PUD Development Plan be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission within 18 months following City Council approval of the Outline Plan. The PUD Development Plan was not submitted and City Council, with the recommendation of the Planning Commission, consequentially enacted Ordinance 10-34 in September 2010 rescinding the PUD designation and reclassifying the subject realty to its previous zoning. It should be noted that the subject site and surrounding area is identified in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update Appendix A as a future study area.
- **Westminster House** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in December 2008 and amendments approved November 2009, February 2011, October 2011, and December 2011 extending the deadline to submit the PUD Development Plan. City Council, with the recommendation of the

Planning Commission and consent of the developer, enacted Ordinance 12-48 in November 2012 rescinding the PUD designation and reclassifying the subject realty to its previous zoning. The zoning for the subject site was again reclassified to B-4, General Business District by Ordinance 13-47 in September 2013 and construction of the “Central Place Apartments” development on the subject site was completed in the Summer 2015.

- **Habitat for Humanity** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in July 2009 and an amendment approved February 2011 to extend the deadline to submit the PUD Development Plan. City Council, with the recommendation of the Planning Commission and consent of the developer, enacted Ordinance 12-03 in January 2012 rescinding the PUD designation and reclassifying the subject realty to its previous zoning. Habitat for Humanity has nearly completed the construction of single-family structures on the subject site.
- **Beech View Place** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in March 2010. Construction has been completed with full residential occupancy and the majority of the retail spaces occupied. The Planning Division reports the property was transferred in 2016 and rebranded by the new owner to “State on Campus”.
- **Glenn Ridge Apartments** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in August 2015 to construct three (3) apartment buildings with a mix of 149 one- and two-bedroom units with a maximum number of 157 occupants. The PUD Development Plan was not submitted and City Council, with the recommendation of the Planning Commission, consequentially enacted Ordinance 17-39 in October 2017 rescinding the PUD designation and reclassifying the subject realty to its previous zoning designations.

2018 Priorities & Planned Activities

- **City of Morgantown 2017-2019 Strategic Plan** – In December 2017, City Council finalized a strategic plan to serve as a road map guiding its vision toward implementing significant, measurable and attainable improvements. It is anticipated that the Planning Commission will have direct or indirect roles in contributing to the following strategic goals and objectives.

Attractive Amenities
Objective 1: Continue to revitalize the riverfront
Promote infill and redevelopment in the Wharf District
Cooperative Relationships
Objective 1: Leverage and expand intergovernmental relationships
Development relationships with other political entities for cooperative service delivery
Excellent City Services
Objective 3: Promote collaborate code enforcement
Evaluate appropriate staffing assignments and levels to address code violations
Fiscal Stability
Objective 3: Institute tax and fee collection best practices
Conduct and evaluate fees and charges for appropriateness to recoup cost of service(s)
Quality Development
Objective 1: Promote strategic community development
Provide updates of the comprehensive plan implementation regularly
Analyze and review downtown development and design standards

Vibrant Downtown
Objective 1: Encourage the continued enhancement and diversity of the downtown area
Promote infill of vacant areas to encourage and facilitate private investment downtown
Attainable Housing
Objective 1: Promote quality and diversification of housing
Research tools to increase affordable housing through inclusionary and incentive zoning practices

Under the direction of the City Manager’s Office, the Planning Division will develop implementation strategies during the first quarter of 2018 intended to advance these goals and objectives accordingly.

- **Geographic Information System (GIS)** – The Monongalia County Assessor’s Office maintains a web-based GIS parcel viewer [<https://ags.agdmaps.com/wv/mon/>]. The Planning Division continues to edit the City’s zoning district boundaries to align with the County’s GIS-based parcel mapping boundaries. Once completed, collaboration with the County Assessor’s Office will be initiated to advance including the City’s zoning spatial data as a viewable layer on the County’s web-based Parcel Viewer. This will significantly enhance citizen and customer access to the City’s zoning classification information.

Additionally, General Fund resources have been programmed and direction given by the City Manager’s Office to recruit a full-time GIS professional, outsourced technical support, and acquire necessary hardware and software to launch an integrated City GIS. Initiation of related tasks are anticipated for the first quarter of 2018.

- **Small Area Studies** – Strategies NH 1.2 and ED 5.7 of the Comprehensive Plan provides for the preparation and implementation of small area studies for sixteen (16) “Future Study Areas”, which are identified in Appendix A of the Plan. The Future Study Area No. 2 project will be presented to the Planning Commission in the first quarter of 2018. The Planning Division will complete five (5) to six (6) additional small area studies in 2018.
- **Modernization of Subdivision Regulations** – The Planning Commission and City Council completed the lengthy task of modernizing and codifying the City’s zoning regulations in 2006. The fundamental purpose of this endeavor was to implement progressive land use policies and strategies as well as comply with the State Legislature’s similar effort in 2004 to modernize the State’s Planning Enabling Law. Changes in State Code have created opportunities to streamline the review and approval of subdivision petitions. Incorporating these opportunities in Morgantown’s Planning and Zoning Code requires a major amendment to the City’s subdivision regulations. This project remains a priority and requires General Fund support to outsource the project. The Planning Division will continue to request project funding.
- **Collaborative Planning Advisory Committee** – This ad hoc committee was formed in late 2016 and expanded to include planning commission representatives from Monongalia County, Morgantown, Westover, Granville, and Star City. The primary intent of this committee is to identify and explore common interests, issues, and opportunities toward advancing regional planning progress. The committee met through 2017 and discussed citizen planning training objectives and desired revisions to existing State Code related to urban growth boundary provisions. This effort was prioritized as Strategy LM 10.1 of the Comprehensive Plan. Committee meetings will continue to be scheduled through 2018.