Town of Irvington · Planning Commission

TOWN OF IRVINGTON

PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES

Tuesday, October 6, 2026 · Irvington Town Center

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Tom Chapman called the regular meeting to order. Recorders were confirmed on.

Members present:

Member Name	Present	Member Name	Present
Tom Chapman (Chair)	X	Steve Strait	X
Viv Ralls (Secretary)	X	Jeremy Taylor	X
Marston Smith (electronic)	X	Ruth Fuller	X
David Clarke	X		

There was no objection to electronic participation. The Chair noted a full Commission.

Staff present: Justin, Town Administrator. Others present included members of the public.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the September 1, 2026 meeting was made, seconded, and carried unanimously.

Chair’s Report

The Chair noted the need for four members to establish a quorum for the joint public hearing with the Town Council on Thursday. Jeremy Taylor and Viv Ralls confirmed availability. Ruth Fuller indicated she would try to attend or could participate by phone. Marston Smith is not available. Electronic participation is permitted.

Public Hearings

Zoning Change – Tax Map 34.1.28 (Renaissance Group, R-2 to B-1)

Justin reported that the Renaissance Group has filed to rezone the property running from the new restaurant to White Fences Drive from R-2 to B-1. This is the first public reading; the Commission will vote at its next meeting.

Public comment:

• Mr. Cooper asked the Commission to require a clear statement of the intended use before any zoning change is granted. He noted that prior rezonings by the applicant had proceeded without such information and that approving the change without understanding the purpose gives away too much too soon.

• Ms. Melanie Carter-Maguire, Chases Cove (who had previously submitted a letter) stated that the application provides insufficient information about what will be built. She described it as a blank check, noted potential increases in traffic (particularly with vehicles parked on both sides of Route 200), a shift away from Irvington's historic quiet residential character, and added stress on infrastructure. She indicated the same concerns apply to the broader overlay proposal.

• Gita Pagano (143 Broad / Broadway, Vineyard Grove), representing homeowners who had signed a letter, stated she was not opposing the rezoning but expressed concern about commercial vehicular access via White Fences Drive, which serves the residential community. She asked the Town to explore every reasonable option to keep commercial traffic connected to the Irvington Road commercial corridor rather than White Fences Drive.

Conditional Use Permit – Short-Term Rental, Foreshare LLC, 792 King Carter Drive (Tax Map 933-245)

This is the first reading of an application to operate a short-term rental. No vote was taken. There was no public comment. It was noted that approval would bring the number of short-term rentals to approximately 30.

Other Public Comment

• Evan Cotter (811 King Carter Drive) commented on the Village Overlay proposal recently presented at Compass. He supports exploring some form of the concept but believes the submitted zoning amendment is too open-ended relative to the stated vision. He submitted an approximately 10-page document for the Commission's review. The Chair clarified that the Rappahannock Record incorrectly reported that the overlay would be heard that evening; the Commission is not acting on the overlay.

• Couldn't catch her name (48 Steamboat Road, little red house), a new resident, expressed curiosity about the scale and character of development. She had expected larger residential lots in the area and commercial activity concentrated closer to Compass and Kilmarnock. Discussion

noted that the overlay concept presented was primarily residential (with a pool and community center) except for the corner lot proposed for rezoning, which was shown as an event center. It was emphasized that no formal proposal has been submitted and that the Commission awaits direction from Town Council.

• Lara Brown (39 Madcap Lane) commented on proposed accessory-building amendments and their relationship to accessory dwelling units. She supports reasonable standards that protect neighbors and town character but is concerned the changes could make ADUs unnecessarily difficult to build. She cited Virginia Code § 15.2-2292.4, noting that a locality may not require greater side or rear setbacks for an ADU than those applicable to the primary dwelling or accessory structures on the lot (whichever is less), nor height restrictions more restrictive than those for single-family dwellings in the same district. She questioned how a 25-foot setback for accessory buildings over 500 square feet (while larger garages remain at 10 feet) and any reduced height limit would comply, asked for the Town Attorney's interpretation to be obtained and explained publicly before any recommendation, and suggested evaluating a larger maximum size (750–900 square feet) for accessibility. She also asked that the ordinance expressly address ADUs within or above garages, including conversions of existing buildings, and that existing lawful setbacks be retained for conversions that do not enlarge the structure. She requested a clear, comprehensive ADU ordinance that complies with state law.

Town Administrator Report

No formal report. Justin indicated that a resolution addressing required Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area amendments (resiliency and mature-tree provisions) is ready and will proceed through proper noticing. Details of the specific changes requested by DEQ will be brought back at the next meeting. Tree-protection standards are largely unchanged; living-shoreline guidelines are emerging but are not yet ordinances. There is no current requirement to remove existing riprap. Justin will bring back to the Planning Commission the resolution from Town Council.

Old Business: SB 531 – Accessory Dwelling Units

Steve Strait and Ruth Fuller presented a revised draft that incorporates options for a 500- or 700-square-foot maximum.

Discussion points included:

• Town Council prefers retaining the 10-foot setback. A larger unit may still be limited to 10 feet.

• The state minimum of 500 square feet at 10 feet meets the statutory requirement; the size can be increased later if desired.

• Conversion of an existing garage larger than 500 square feet would require a Board of Zoning Appeals exception.

• Square footage is conditioned living space; garage area does not count toward the ADU limit when the ADU is located above a garage. Explicit clarification may be needed in the ordinance.

• Height: Current accessory buildings (other than garages and carports) are limited to 15 feet. A 20-foot limit was discussed. Members noted that § 15.2-2292.4(E)(2) requires ADU height restrictions not to be more restrictive than those for single-family dwellings (35 feet). Practical considerations make a 35-foot ADU unlikely, but the statute requires that the height allowance not be more restrictive. Privacy concerns with two-story structures were raised. Garages already have no height limit.

• The Town has no architectural standards or Architectural Review Board, so requirements for matching materials or rooflines cannot currently be imposed.

• Accessory structures (other than garages and carports) are currently limited to 300 square feet at 10 feet. The draft updates this to 500 square feet at 10 feet to align with the ADU standard, while retaining the previously discussed option of up to 700 square feet at a 25-foot setback.

Round-the-table: There was no objection to updating the accessory-structure size limit from 300 to 500 square feet at 10 feet. Jeremy Taylor opposed setting the ADU maximum at the state minimum of 500 square feet, noting accessibility needs, existing limitations already imposed by yard coverage and septic capacity, and a preference for 700 square feet with a conditional-use process for larger units. David Clarke and Marston Smith indicated they were comfortable with 500 square feet.

Motion: Steve Strait moved to recommend that Town Council approve the changes to the definitions and to R-1 and R-2 zoning, with an ADU size not to exceed 500 square feet and a height not to exceed 35 feet, and with all other changes as presented. The motion was seconded.

Vote: 6–1 (Ruth Fuller opposed). Motion carried.

The recommendation will be forwarded to Town Council. If Council has no significant disagreement, the text will be placed in ordinance form for public hearing under Virginia Code § 15.2-2204. It was noted that the Town has previously indicated it does not want ADUs and is acting only because state law requires them.

Discussion: Rezoning of Tax Map 34.1.28 (R-2 to B-1)

No vote was taken. Members discussed the public comments, particularly regarding access via White Fences Drive. Once rezoned, only uses permitted in B-1 would be allowed; the list is extensive, and no indication of the intended use has been provided. Zoning is permanent and survives any subsequent sale of the property. Concerns were expressed about expanding commercial area without demonstrated need, the lack of a minimum lot area in B-1, and unresolved questions of traffic, sewer, and septic. White Fences Drive is a private road owned and currently maintained by the Renaissance Group. VDOT curb-cut rules make commercial access via the private road unlikely; access would more probably be from Irvington Road.

Continuous B-1 zoning from White Stone / White Fences to the post office could create a large commercial corridor. Members expressed a desire for more information from the applicant about intended uses before proceeding and noted that the rezoning cannot be fully separated from the larger overlay discussion. Justin was asked to inquire whether the Renaissance Group can provide additional information that would address the concerns raised.

Code Change: State-Mandated Manufactured Housing (SB 346)

Steve Strait presented definition revisions required by state law effective July 1. Manufactured housing (post-1976 HUD standards) must be allowed wherever stick-built dwellings are permitted. Units must have been manufactured within the five years preceding issuance of the certificate of occupancy. The Town's minimum dwelling sizes (1,200 square feet in R-1; 1,800 square feet in R-2) provide a practical limitation. Proposed changes update the definition of "dwelling," add or clarify definitions for manufactured home and modular home, and retain the five-year age limit. Flood-overlay districts may still restrict manufactured housing consistent with other Virginia law.

Motion: Steve Strait moved to recommend to Town Council that the definitions in the code be revised to meet the requirements of SB 346. The motion was seconded.

Vote: Carried, with Jeremy Taylor abstaining (citing concerns that HUD standards are less stringent, particularly for wind resistance) and Marston Smith voting yes while noting he does not like the requirement.

Yard Art / Sculptures

Justin reported citizen inquiries about whether large dog sculptures at a business constitute an end-run around the sign ordinance. The current ordinance does not address the subject. Similar sculptures exist elsewhere in town. Members discussed whether brand-related sculptures function as signs and what other communities have done. David Clarke and Jeremy Taylor were asked to research approaches used elsewhere and report at the next meeting. No action was taken.

Round Table

Viv Ralls noted increasing resident comments about architectural compatibility—accessory structures or ADUs that do not match the materials or appearance of the primary dwelling, including flat-roof sheds that continue to look like garages. She suggested the Commission may need to consider standards to protect character and property values.

Marston Smith suggested improved entrance signs for the Town to create a stronger sense of place and potentially reduce speeds. The Chair indicated he would raise the suggestion at Town Council.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting falls on November 3 (Election Day). The Commission agreed to move the meeting to November 10. Chair Chapman will be out of state; Ruth Fuller will preside, with agenda assistance from the Chair.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes prepared from the official recording of October 6, 2026. Prepared by Vivian Ralls, Secretary.