

## **FY 2022 Town Council Budget Questions- Packet #4**

### **Councilmember Cummings Question- March 19, 2021 Email**

- 1.) **Please provide more detail on the unfunded enhancement requested by the Department of Planning and Zoning for \$250,000 for a consultant to perform a comprehensive review of the Town's zoning ordinance?** **RESPONSE:** There will be changes needed to the Zoning Ordinance (ZO) to fully implement the goals of the Legacy Leesburg Town Plan (LLTP). While staff haven't studied exactly what these changes will be, staff will be considering this as the Planning Commission conducts their review of LLTP. Staff will be compiling a 'list' of things we think need to be amended. It is typical for communities to follow up approval of a new comprehensive plan with a comprehensive review with an update of the ZO to make sure that the Ordinance will implement the plan policy.

Examples locally include Loudoun County and Vienna. The County completed a comprehensive review of their comprehensive plan in 2019, and began almost immediately with planning a process for comprehensively updating the ZO, and working on the ZO now. The Town of Vienna recently updated their comprehensive plan, and now they are undergoing a comprehensive update to their ZO. The Town's Director of Planning and Zoning talked to the Planning Director at Vienna to get a ballpark cost estimate for a comprehensive ZO update. This led to the estimated the \$250,000 estimate for the unfunded budget request.

The following is a short list of some key areas of change recommended by staff to focus on in a comprehensive update to the ZO:

- New Mixed use district. The Plan recommends mixed use development in remaining 'green field' areas and for redevelopment of the Crescent District. We can 'make do' with our existing P-districts. However, staff thinks the Town would probably get better development results if the Town puts work into developing a new mixed use district regulations that implement the 'character' guidance that is currently being developed in the LLTP.
- Crescent Design District (CDD). In 2019, the Town asked the Form-based Code Institute (FBCI) to assess Town CDD regulations. They institute made recommendations on changes they thought should be made and provided a report to the Council. In addition, through experience working with these regulations, and feedback staff have gotten from the development community, staff has determined changes that are recommended. The rezoning application for Virginia Village (which is a major property in the CDD) is currently being reviewed by staff, and are working with the applicant to bring it forward to the Planning Commission to start the public review process soon. This application has been a 'beta test' of sorts to identify things that should be changed in the ordinance.
- B-1 Downtown. This district needs a comprehensive look. Staff have heard from developers, businesses, and our staff about changes that would be advised.
- Close-in Single Family Districts. One of the threats that many communities are experiencing is the 'tear-down' phenomenon where smaller homes are torn down and

replaced with bigger and/or more modern homes. This can be very disrupting for single family neighborhoods. Staff believes this will be a threat particularly for the Vinegar Hill and Lowenbach neighborhoods

Usability and Visual quality of the Ordinance. New ordinances are much more visual and user-friendly than our Ordinance. Staff would recommend this be a big part of a comprehensive review of the ZO.

**Councilmember Fox Questions- March 23, 2021 Email**

- 2.) **How much is the added \$0.04 cents added to the real estate tax rate per the Town Council’s straw votes during the March 22, 2022 Budget Work Session? RESPONSE:** The overall residential tax bill, on average, is increased \$1.80 annually as a result of a real estate tax rate of 18.44 cents per \$100 assessed value. The tax bill does vary by housing type. The following tables reflect the proposed 18.4 cent tax rate and the current pending 18.44 cents tax rate.

Housing Type	Proposed	Pending	Variance	
	TR: 18.4¢	TR: 18.44¢	Annual	Monthly
Single Family Detached	\$1,068	\$1,071	\$2.32	\$0.19
Townhome	\$745	\$747	\$1.62	\$0.14
Condo	\$415	\$416	\$0.90	\$0.08
<b>All Residential</b> (same units as last year)	<b>\$828</b>	<b>\$830</b>	<b>\$1.80</b>	<b>\$0.15</b>

- 3.) **Are there any options to fund the \$37,000 for enhanced holiday decorations without increasing the real estate tax rate? RESPONSE:** The funding for the enhanced holiday decoration display in Fiscal Year 2022 is considered a one-time purchase of supplemental decorations, and as such, could be funded using potential additional one-time vacancy savings expected in Fiscal Year 2021 primarily due to recent personnel turnover in the Police Department, and in other Town departments.

Using the expected excess vacancy savings beyond the current projected Fiscal Year 2021 revenue shortfall would allow the real estate tax rate to remain at the proposed 18.4 cents per \$100 assessed value.