Stacey,

I reviewed the Special Exception (SE) requests from 1982 to present, focusing more specifically on the past 15 years.  I also reviewed all Special Exceptions by Zoning Districts.

My observations.

During the most recent 15 years, the Planning Commission (PC) and Board of Supervisors (BOS) have reviewed an average of 8.1 SE's annually.  During the most recent 5 years the PC & BOS have reviewed an average of 6.4 SE's annually.  In my opinion, the volume of SE requests have been reasonable as the PC and BOS have sought to perform due diligence on behalf the Amherst County citizens and businesses.  While I believe that the PC and Planning Staff should err on the side of maintaining certain Special Exceptions, I offer up the following:

1.  During the past 10 years, the PC and BOS have reviewed 24 SE requests pertaining to Sales or Service/Repair of Automobiles, Motorcycles, Trailers, RVs, etc.  We may want to consider whether some of these requests in the B-2 Zoning District (ZD) which are narrowly defined in scope, be removed from the SE requirement.  If so, I would request a very defined appeal process for citizens/businesses concerned about such approvals for a defined period, i.e., 60 days.  Maybe approval of such requests could be made by staff on a provisional basis given the understanding of the defined appeal process?

2.  Short Term Tourist Rental of a Dwelling - I would be willing to discuss specifically defined parameters for some of these type pf requests which could possibly be removed from the SE process. As in number 1 above, maybe a provisional approval could be made with a defined appeal process for unintended consequences or citizen concerns voiced within a 60 day period of such approval.

3.  As previously discussed, the County will maintain the SE process for new Personal Wireless Facilities exceeding the 50 foot height standard as now handed down by the VA State Legislature.  However, the existing Amherst County ordinance can be revised for Small Cell (5G) and certain existing towers as defined by the 2018 State Statute.

4.  Given our aging Baby Boomer population, maybe we should review Nursing Homes or Assisted Living facilities more broadly in all ZD's except R-1 and R-2?

5.  For V-1 ZD consider allowing the following within defined parameters.  Civic Organization meeting facilities. Professional offices, and Bed & Breakfast facilities.

6.  Consider allowing Emergencies Services in the M-1 ZD.

Best Regards,

Jim

Jim Thompson

Planning Commissioner - District 3

434-841-7499