

Council of the Town of La Plata  
La Plata Planning Commission  
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland  
Joint Work Session  
March 22, 2006, 7:00 PM

Present: Town Council: Mayor Gene Ambrogio, Councilman R. Wayne Winkler, Councilman C. Keith Back, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd, Councilman Vic E. Newman; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk  
La Plata Planning Commission: Chairman Garyton C. Echols, Jr., Keith A. Hettel, Mark Rose, Debra W. Posey; Cathy Flerlage, Director of Planning and Zoning

Minutes:

Mayor Ambrogio called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### Matters of Discussion

#### Water Impoundment – Stagecoach Crossing

[“Summary of Annexation Agreement – Stagecoach Crossing” handout was provided by Ms. Flerlage.]

*Description: At the time of annexation, it was seen that a deep natural ravine on the property, with a perennial stream, might be conducive to creation of a surface water treatment facility. Per the agreement, the Town has until 2007 to make use of the 31.2 acres, and must begin construction on such a facility or other municipal project before that time or it will revert to the developer. Surface treatment is unlikely to be successfully designed with the intensive TND project proposed. The 31.2 acres has been shown as a resource protection area (forest conservation) on the approved master site plan. Even if the Town should let their option expire, the area in question will remain in trees, set aside as open space/public lands. Any need to pursue “water” rights?*

Consensus: The Town does not wish to let their option expire. The issue is time critical as to what municipal project will be developed on the land and how it will be funded. Some ratio of on-site and off-site forest conservation may be allowed. The municipal use of the property must be identified prior to the developer bringing plans to the Planning Commission.

#### **\*► Topics combined for discussion purposes:**

#### **\*► Rainbow Construction Annexation – Hawthorne Professional Center**

[Concept site plan for The Siding at The West End, prepared by Lawrence Abell & Associates, Ltd., and the site shown on Town zoning map handouts were provided by Ms. Flerlage.]

*Description: This mixed-use office/residential/retail development typifies why there is a need to create a hybrid commercial zone – the annexation petition requests CBT zoning for this*

*project, yet does not really fit into this designation, mostly because of its location fairly distant from the CB District.*

**\* ► General Commercial Zoning District**

[“Community Commercial Zoning District – possible elements and considerations” handout was provided by Ms. Flerlage.]

*Description: Not CB, not CH – what new or additional requirements would we want in a hybrid zone? Not defined by location, as are CB and CH. What design guidelines? The potential “commercialization” of Washington Avenue and Route 225 dictate the need to expand/extend our commercial use districts.*

Consensus: There are concerns regarding the annexation of the Rainbow Construction property, including not being contiguous to the Town’s current boundary line and that water and sewer lines would be outside of the Town at a certain point. The proposed community commercial zoning district may create “spot zoning” if applied to this property. Ms. Flerlage is to prepare text for this new zoning district for review by the Planning Commission for recommendations as to any additional zoning districts, which may be included in the review of the Comprehensive Plan scheduled to begin next year.

Alignment of Oriole Lane

[A staff report dated 1/3/06, which was presented at the Planning Commission’s 1/3/06 meeting, was provided by Ms. Flerlage.]

*Description: Are there any requirements or conditions that could be placed on the design that would make this proposal workable and approvable from the Town’s point of view? Need for, and Town endorsement of, a traffic light at Oriole and Rt. 301 will make or break this concept. What direction might the Town offer to the developer at this preliminary stage?*

Consensus: Ms. Flerlage is to advise the developer that the Town does not support the realignment of Oriole Lane.

Heritage Green Parkway

[A staff report dated 3/7/06, which was presented at the Planning Commission’s 3/7/06 meeting, and document, “Heritage Green Summary of Requirements, Annexation Agreement Recorded June 18, 1990, Amendment recorded March 19, 1998”, were provided by Ms. Flerlage.]

*Description: We will be seeing the first phase of this development as a preliminary plan of subdivision at the March meeting. Approval of the preliminary plan equates to conditional approval of their subdivision as shown, which includes the road alignments. Efforts to pursue an at-grade railroad crossing and connection to Heritage Green Parkway, as it exists on the west side of Washington Ave., have not produced any plan that CSX or the Town have found palatable. A right-of-way to make the connection in the future has been shown on the approved master site plan, but the possibility seems small at this point. Should we choose another name for this north-south by-pass? La Plata Parkway?*

Consensus: The CSX railroad crossing is of great importance, even if as only an emergency access. Concerted effort should continue to be made by the Town and the developer to obtain the crossing. The Town Council may include this on the April 25 meeting agenda with the County Commissioners if more information is obtained by then: fire and rescue response times, school bus trips, and former Mayor Eckman's file containing the information he sent to Carl Rowe/CSX regarding upgrading dangerous crossings in exchange for this new one.

### **Comprehensive Plan Implementation**

*Description: The Planning Commission requests guidance from the Council regarding goal-setting to achieve the best implementation and adherence to the Comprehensive Plan, in light of the current potential for growth and development in the Town.*

During this discussion, the Town Council was encouraged to follow the guidelines established by the Comprehensive Plan and the Vision Plan, particularly as regards annexations and water/sewer issues, and to protect the interests of current residents and current business owners. It was noted that staff will need to be added to the Planning and Zoning Department to handle the additional work resulting from increased development in Town.

Councilwoman Mudd asked Mr. Echols if he would be willing to be part of a taskforce of Town representatives, developers and engineers to discuss cooperation among the developers to construct roads, water, sewer, storm water, and all infrastructure in a cooperative effort rather than piecemeal for individual developments. Councilwoman Mudd also stated she believes that former Mayor Bill Eckman and former Councilman Roy Hale are people who know the history of this and should be included, and that a master plan should be created for this.

All were in agreement that this joint work session was useful and should be held at least on a quarterly basis. There being no voiced objection, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Submitted by:

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Judith T. Frazier  
Town Clerk