

La Plata Planning Commission
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Regular meeting
July 3, 2007, 7:00 PM

Present: Chairman Rich Gilpin, Keith A. Hettel, Garyton C. Echols, Jr., Mark Rose, Debra W. Posey, James Goldsmith – Commission members; Cathy Flerlage, Director of Planning and Zoning; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk

Town Staff: Daniel J. Mears, Town Manager; Steven F. Schroeder, Project Manager; Carol Rollins, Development Coordinator

Minutes:

Chairman Gilpin called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and asked Mr. Goldsmith to lead the Commission and audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of June minutes

Mr. Rose moved to approve the minutes of the June meeting. Mr. Hettel seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

La Plata Commerce Park – final site development plan approval

[A staff report dated July 3, 2007 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]

Ms. Flerlage briefly discussed the staff report and noted that the La Plata Volunteer Fire Department advised they had no comments.

John K. Parlett and Mike Gahan were present to provide information regarding the final site development plan and to answer any questions posed by the Planning Commission.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Hettel moved to approve the final site development plan, pending County approval of an access permit. A brief discussion ensued regarding a request to amend the motion to exclude the condition of obtaining County approval of an access permit. The motion was not amended and died for lack of a second.

Mr. Rose moved to approve the final site development plan. Mr. Goldsmith seconded the motion. During discussion before the vote, Chairman Gilpin cautioned Mr. Parlett that he would be proceeding at his own risk. Vote on the motion: Chairman Gilpin, Mr. Echols, Mr. Rose, Mr. Goldsmith, and Ms. Posey voted aye; Mr. Hettel voted nay. Motion carried by majority vote.

Washington Commons – concept plan review and comment

[A staff report dated July 3, 2007 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]

Jim Whitehead and Brian Olson, of ATCS, were present to provide information regarding the concept plan and to answer any questions posed by the Planning Commission.

Ms. Flerlage briefly discussed the staff report. During discussion, the Commission expressed concerns regarding residential/commercial joint use of parking spaces, commuters from the neighboring MTA park and ride lot parking within this property, lack of enough open/green space for family activities, and potential lack of enough parking spaces if apartments are occupied by roommates vs. families.

It was the consensus of the Planning Commission that they were supportive of the project and that it could proceed, incorporating the comments and concerns expressed by the Commission.

Heritage Green, Phase 1A – final plat and final plan of subdivision review and approval
[A staff report dated July 3, 2007 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]

Ms. Flerlage briefly discussed the staff report.

Harry Lapas, Steve Murray, Ed Carroll and Dan Anderton were present to provide information regarding the final site development plan and to answer any questions posed by the Planning Commission.

During discussion, it was noted that there is still a need to obtain the rail crossing for Heritage Green Parkway for public safety and transportation purposes. It was agreed that intervention by local officials, including the Town Council and possibly the County Commissioners, would be needed to help the developer obtain the approval of CSX for that rail crossing.

Chairman Gilpin suggested that the vote on this final plat and final plan of subdivision be deferred until the next meeting in order to give the parties involved time to show real progress in obtaining the rail crossing, and recommended that Mr. Goldsmith take this up with the Town Council. Mr. Goldsmith agreed to do so, and noted that he would also include this as a topic of discussion at the upcoming joint meeting of the Town Council and County Commissioners.

Mr. Rose moved to table the vote until next month's meeting in order to obtain more information on the rail crossing and the Town Council's involvement. Mr. Hettel seconded the motion. In discussion before the vote, it was noted that it was important that the Town Council become involved in helping to obtain this rail crossing. Vote on the motion: passed by unanimous vote. *[Mr. Hettel left the meeting at 8:39 PM.]*

In response to Ms. Posey's question, Ms. Flerlage advised that the Chief of the La Plata Volunteer Fire Department has not yet responded with his comments, and it was noted that those comments, if any, would be needed by the next meeting. Ms. Flerlage advised she would speak to the Chief and get his comments.

Other business

Ms. Flerlage provided an update regarding the CVS parking lot and entrance revisions, noting that CVS had agreed to the paving and striping required by the Planning Commission as part of the approval granted at the June 6, 2007 meeting.

There being no further business, Mr. Rose moved to adjourn at 8:45 PM. Mr. Goldsmith seconded the motion and it carried.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk