

La Plata Planning Commission
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
October 1, 2002, 7:00 PM

Present: Chairman Raymond J. Becmer, Walter T. Sollars, Jr., Garyton C. Echols, Jr., C. Keith Back, Roy G. Hale - Commission Members; Judith T. Frazier

Guests: (See roster.)

Minutes:

Chairman Becmer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and read the agenda. Chairman Becmer asked Mr. Hale to lead the Commission and audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

[It is noted for the record that the Mr. Miller and Ms. Bembe were absent due to attending a professional association training conference; however, Mr. Miller provided written briefing comments on all agenda items, in a memorandum to the Planning Commission dated September 26, 2002.]

Approval of September minutes

Mr. Hale made a motion to approve the minutes of the September meeting. Mr. Back seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Review of Commercial Development Plans [for review and comment only]

Martin's Service Station

Richard Dickerson, of Dickerson Construction, and Marty Martin, owner, presented elevations and information regarding Mr. Martin's plans to rebuild his service station. They advised it will have 6 bays which will not be on the front of the station, and will have a small convenience store which will sell coffee, bread, milk and prepackaged snack items (no cooking on-site.) The building will be predominately brick, with some vinyl, and will have white trim and columns. The canopy will be restored and new dispensers will be installed in the same location as they were prior to the tornado.

The Planning Commission agreed that Martin's has been missed and welcomed him back. Chairman Becmer asked for a motion to approve the Martin's Service Station plan. Mr. Echols made a motion to approve, Mr. Sollars seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

County First Bank (not present)

Baldus Real Estate

Carl Baldus and Larry Abell displayed elevations and a site plan concept drawing and provided a hand-out during their presentation on Mr. Baldus' plan to rebuild the Baldus Real Estate Corporate Headquarters and Maryland Bank and Trust building on his property located at Rt. 6 and Rt. 301, in approximately the same footprint location as his office and the bank buildings were prior to the tornado. They advised that the 20,000 sq. ft. building is 3 stories, all brick, the front and rear elevations have the same appearance, and both ends of the building are rounded. The bank's drive-through aisle will be relocated. The main entrance will be on the south side and the bank will have a separate entrance.

A brief discussion was held regarding the 45' setback problem pointed out in Mr. Miller's briefing comments. Mr. Hale advised that this was discussed at a work session of the Mayor and Council, and that the two options available are to petition for a variance from the Board of Appeals or ask for a zoning change. Mr. Baldus remarked the property is zoned both CB and CH and he would prefer a zoning change. He pointed out that the building was being rebuilt fairly close to the location of the two buildings destroyed by the tornado, and that it would cost approximately \$100,000 to move the bank's vault, which is still in place.

The Planning Commission complimented Mr. Baldus on the beautiful building design.

Public hearing: Ordinance 02-17

For the purpose of requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic District Commission before any permit shall be issued in any designated Town of La Plata historic area; providing that decisions of the Historic District Commission may be appealed to the Board of Appeals; creating a new Article VII setting forth the authority, purpose, designation procedure, guidelines, application and review procedure, appeal process and enforcement provisions granted to the Historic District Commission; and matters generally relating to the Historic District Commission.

Chairman Becmer called the hearing to order and read the description of the ordinance. The clerk noted for the record that the notice of the hearing was properly advertised in the September 11, 2002, edition of the Maryland Independent newspaper.

Chairman Becmer asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak. There were no speakers.

During the brief discussion which followed, Mr. Hale explained that the Mayor and Council approved an ordinance establishing the Historic District Commission, for which members are being sought, and explained that Ordinance 02-17 establishes the guidelines for the Historic District. He further noted that the Mayor and Council are looking for a recommendation from the Planning Commission as to whether the Town should support those guidelines. Mr. Echols expressed concern

about who will determine the historic district and which properties will be affected. He noted he could not support recommending approval of the ordinance before obtaining this information. Chairman Becmer also noted he has concerns which need to be addressed by staff.

After determining that no one else wished to speak, Chairman Becmer closed the hearing.

Recommendation: Ordinance 02-17

Mr. Hale made a motion to table until the next meeting, based on the concerns expressed. Chairman Becmer asked that he add that a work session be scheduled by Mr. Miller before the next Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Hale agreed to this amendment. Mr. Sollars seconded the amended motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Quail's Run preliminary final plat

Mr. Miller referred to the subdivision review report dated September, 2002, noting that the sidewalks must meet the new requirements in the Town Code.

Ken Crouse, of Lorenzi, Dodds and Gunnill, represented the developer, La Plata Somerset (John Sites), and displayed a copy of this preliminary plat and addressed review comments contained in the subdivision review staff report dated October, 2002 (copies provided to Planning Commission.) Mr. Crouse described this proposed subdivision as 5.2+ acres located at the entrance of Quailwood Subdivision, zoned R-21, which they proposed to subdivide into 6 lots. Average lot size is 30,000 square feet, with lot 6 being 1.6 acres due to steeper slopes and larger forest conservation area. He noted that the dwellings would be set back an average of 75' to 100' in a staggered pattern. Driveways will be provided with a turn-around area so no vehicles will have to back up onto Quailwood Parkway. In response to item 7. of the subdivision review staff report, Mr. Crouse advised that the developer will contact the Quailwood Homeowners Association to establish deed restrictions/restrictive covenants substantially similar to those of Quailwood.

During the discussion which followed, members of the Planning Commission expressed concern regarding traffic created by having six more driveways on Quailwood Parkway, the dwellings' setbacks being deeper than those of the dwellings across the street, and the lack of curb, gutter and sidewalk. Regarding the curb, gutter and sidewalk issue, the staff review pointed out that not providing these would be consistent with other properties in Quailwood. Mr. Back noted he was concerned with this subdivision not looking like the rest of the street. Chairman Becmer noted he was not in favor of inconsistency within the development, but was concerned that sidewalk be provided along Rt. 6, especially with construction of the new Archbishop Neal School. Mr. Sollars asked that consideration be given to moving the last house, which he noted appears to be extremely close to his home on Walnut Hill Road. Mr. Sollars also asked that consideration be given to connecting the sewer through to the homes on Walnut Hill Road. Mr. Crouse agreed to move the location of the house on the last lot. Mr. Crouse also noted he remembered that a 10" stub was set during the development of Quailwood Subdivision for a Walnut Hill Road connection, and that it

is located at the edge of the Quailwood and Quail's Run property. He agreed to work with the Town Manager regarding this connection.

Mr. Echols made a motion to approve the Quail's Run preliminary plat with the understanding that the Planning Commission's concerns be addressed. Mr. Sollars seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Other business

Chairman Becmer again asked that a work session be scheduled to discuss Ordinance 02-17. He also confirmed that the Planning Commission will meet on November 5, which is election day.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith T. Frazier