

La Plata Planning Commission
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Regular meeting
December 2, 2003, 7:00 PM

Present: Chairman C. Keith Back, Garyton C. Echols, Jr., Keith A. Hettel, Robert W. Thompson, Zakary A. Krebeck, Roy G. Hale – Commission members; Douglas R. Miller, Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk

Town staff: Steven F. Schroeder, Project Manager

Guests: (see roster)

Minutes:

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

Approval of November minutes

Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes of the November regular meeting. Mr. Hale seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Final plat approvals: Agricopia Sections 4 and 5

Mr. Miller discussed the review comments in the Subdivision Review of these final plats, dated December 2003 (copies provided to each member). He noted that, other than these minor engineering concerns and need for a street tree plan, there were no major concerns. Mr. Miller also advised that a new procedure was developed whereby the Beautification Commission will take a more active role in review and approval of street tree plans.

Gore Bolton, Bolton-Latham, LLC, and R. J. Earnshaw, RDR, LLC, were present to discuss these final plats and answer questions posed by the Commission. One concern of the Commission was that Section 4 abuts the former Navy housing property, upon which a homeless shelter project has been proposed. It was noted that potential buyers in Agricopia be told of this proposed project and that a sign be posted. It was noted that the Town may have more information about the project in about six weeks and will share that information with Mr. Bolton. Mr. Earnshaw agreed that a sign should be posted, but noted it should be posted on the property where the shelter project is to be located. He also advised they have asked for a meeting with that developer.

Mr. Hale made a motion to approve Agricopia Sections 4 and 5 final plats, pending compliance with the items on the Subdivision Review dated December 2003. Mr. Hettel seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Courtesy review: Century 21 Office Building

Frank Daskievige and Ron Litten presented the site plan and building plan of the Century 21 Office Building proposed to be built on part of George Morris' La Plata Village property. The project has received Design Review Board approval. Mr. Miller noted a staff concern that a requirement in the annexation agreement (Morris-Kneib Annexation) provides that a 40' wide strip from Rt. 301 remain undisturbed, and that the patio and sidewalk encroach within that area. He noted that the Town Council enforces annexation agreements, but that the Planning Commission may make a recommendation to the Town Council to be flexible regarding that requirement.

The consensus of the Planning Commission was to recommend that the Town Council consider amending the annexation agreement.

Courtesy review: Chevy Chase Bank

Gore Bolton, Cindy Linkins (architect), and Joe Pearson, Chevy Chase Bank, presented the overall site plan and building elevation of the Chevy Chase Bank proposed to be built as part of the La Plata Plaza development. The Design Review Board has seen the plans. During the discussion which followed, the Commission recommended they install sidewalks for internal circulation.

Hawthorne Greene Section 2: Recommendation to Board of Appeals regarding special exception for senior living community and variance to buffer yard requirements

Mr. Miller explained that this would be an extension of the existing senior living community in Hawthorne Greene Section 1.

Tim Lessner, of Lorenzi Dodds and Gunnill, displayed the site plan, described the proposed development and variance to the buffer yard, and asked for the Planning Commission's favorable recommendation to the Board of Appeals.

During the discussion which followed, the Commission expressed a concern regarding the development's proximity to the Town's wastewater treatment plant. Mr. Sites acknowledged this concern and noted that prospective buyers are informed and buyers must sign an addendum regarding this. The Commission also expressed concern regarding the condos parking lot proximity to the existing single family dwellings in neighboring Quailwood Subdivision. Following the discussion regarding this concern, Mr. Lessner advised they would amend their request for a buffer yard variance to indicate compliance with the Code requirement in the area of the condos. The Commission also expressed concern regarding the lack of an emergency access road to the rear of the condo buildings.

The Planning Commission agreed to table this item until the January meeting. Mr. Lessner agreed to amend the site plan to show compliance with the buffer yard regulations in the condos area. The Clerk was directed to provide a copy of the Planning Commission's recommendation in the petition for Hawthorne Greene Section 1, and indicate any changes to that recommendation by action of the Board of Appeals.

Other business

Mr. Miller advised that the Town Council plans to review the Vision Plan post-tornado, and will be assembling the original 1999 Vision team for a meeting at the Clark Senior Center on January 24, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The Town Council then wants to meet with the Planning Commission in a retreat-type session on February 21.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk