

Council of the Town of La Plata
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Manager-Council Meeting
March 16, 2004, 7:00 PM

Present: Mayor William F. Eckman, Councilman Wayne Winkler, Councilman Thomas W. Fritz, Councilman Gene Ambrogio, Councilman Roy G. Hale; Douglas R. Miller, Town Manager; Patricia L. Bembe, Assistant Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk

Town staff: Joseph W. Norris, Town Treasurer

Minutes:

Mayor Eckman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Treasurer's Report

Mayor Eckman acknowledged receipt of the Treasurer's Report dated February 29, 2004.

Petitions, Communications and Appearances

Tom O'Farrell: Park upgrade

Tom O'Farrell advised that the Parks and Recreation Commission voted last week to recommend that the Town Council approve a new park on Caroline Drive, and noted he was present to request the Council approve spending \$22,631.00 for the playground equipment and installation, for which only one bid was received, from All Recreation of Maryland, Inc. Mr. O'Farrell explained that they plan to keep and continue to maintain the other tot lot at the other end of Caroline Drive, and that they plan to review and do maintenance work at all of the other Town parks.

Award bid for park upgrade

[All Recreation of Maryland, Inc. was the only bidder to respond to the RFP, which was advertised in the Maryland Independent on February 25 and 27, 2004. Total bid package is \$22,631.00.]

Councilman Ambrogio made a motion to award the park upgrade bid to All Recreation in the amount of \$22,631.00. Councilman Fritz seconded the motion. In discussion before the vote, Councilman Ambrogio advised that they plan to start with this tot lot to see how it is accepted by the community, and eventually it is planned that equipment will be added for older children, for which the Council's approval will be sought next year. Councilman Winkler encouraged Parks and Recreation to consider recruiting teenagers to be part of a committee to help plan upgrades for Wills Park. Mayor Eckman remarked that older children are not being ignored, noting as examples the agreement with Fifth Management to use the basketball court in the Phoenix Run area, and the Somers Schools tennis court improvements partnership with the Board of Education. Vote: the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Phil Mueller: Town Hall update

Mr. Mueller advised that the target construction start date is April 1, and that they hope to start the footings by the third week in April. He also advised that target completion is by the end of this year. Mr. Mueller advised that the Guaranteed Maximum Price for the project is \$2,826,564.00. The Council briefly discussed why the audio-visual package was not included. Mayor Eckman remarked that the building committee has to let the audio-visual contractor know what is decided.

Councilman Hale made a motion to approve the Guaranteed Maximum Price of \$2,826,564.00 and to authorize the Town Manager to sign the contract. Councilman Fritz seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Bobbie Baldus: Christmas star

Bobbie Baldus and Kenny Hayden presented a written proposal for purchase of the star at a cost of \$8,500.00, to be built and lights installed by Jerry Sterling, Sr. of Pasadena Signs, who will place the star on the pole while it is on the ground on the site. They advised that the Rotary Club will pay (\$3,000.00) for the 100' galvanized 2-section pole and that SMECO ordered and paid the freight for the pole, and will install the pole and star. They estimate electricity costs to be \$400.00 to \$500.00, with the electric cable connection being made at the fire house. They asked for approval of the site at the old site of the water tower, placement of the pole on the site, and authorization to have the star constructed, for which they would also need a deposit of 50% of Pasadena Signs' \$8,500.00 proposal. They noted that their goal was to have the star installed by April 28, 2004.

The Council briefly discussed certain aspects of this project, including how maintenance on the star would be conducted after the pole is erected, the need to shut off the water main which is still in the ground from the destroyed water tower, determination if the Town owns the fire house site (for which the Contract of Sale is being reviewed by the Town Attorney), and the plans of the La Plata Garden Club to plant a star-shaped garden after the pole is erected.

Councilman Hale made a motion to approve the request, subject to obtaining the deed to the fire house property, and to authorize the \$8500.00 expenditure for the star. Councilman Winkler seconded the motion. During the discussion before the vote, the Council questioned if a navigational beacon would be needed, which Don McGuire advised would only be needed if the structure is over 100' tall, and noted that neighboring property owners should be polled to determine if they are or are not opposed to having this structure erected near their properties. Sandra Mitchell spoke from the audience to advise she does not want another object to fall on her building. Mrs. Baldus advised that Van Mitchell and Tom Posey told her they would not oppose the star. The Council also noted that the Town's insurance provider, LGIT, should be asked if this would be covered. In response to Councilman Hale's question, Mr. Miller affirmed that this would fall under the insurance umbrella. It was noted that there were many unanswered questions, which Mr. Miller advised he would have answers to by the next work session.

Councilman Ambrogio made a motion to table the preceding motion until next Tuesday, March 23. Councilman Fritz seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Chris Jakubiak: Marketing plan

Mr. Jakubiak reported on the marketing plan, "A Plan for Economic Development, La Plata, Maryland" (copies of which were provided to each Council member). During the discussion which followed, Mr. Jakubiak responded to the Council's questions regarding how to get businesses to locate in La Plata. He advised that the Town could bring people from the finance and real estate industries together for a one-day forum and ask them who they know in the target industries. He also advised that the Town should give the La Plata Business Association their full support, as they seem willing to fill the role of an economic development commission.

Mark Rose: Green infrastructure

Mr. Rose handed out copies of an announcement of a Green Infrastructure Workshop to be held April 21 at the Business and Industry Building at the La Plata campus of College of Southern Maryland, which he encouraged the Council to attend, and explained that green infrastructure includes the constant area of green in a residential area as opposed to gray (roads), noting that this should be implemented in the planning process.

Legislation

Ordinance 03-20 Central Business Transition District and correction of omission of R-8 zoning district in list of districts and in buffer yard regulations and table (For Adoption) For the purpose of creating Central Business Transition District (CBT), specifying criteria and regulations for CBT, and all matters generally relating thereto; and correcting the omission of R-8 zoning district in the list of districts and in the buffer yard regulations and table.

Mr. Miller briefly described the ordinance and the five amendments that are proposed to the ordinance:

Amendment No. 1

INTENT: To correct the number assigned to the ordinance.

On page 1, in the title at the top of the page, and in the header at the top of each page of the document, strike 03-20 and substitute with 04-1.

Amendment No. 2

On page 3, line 75, immediately after "Highway", strike "region" and replace with "DISTRICT", to read as follows:

((2.)) 3. C-H Commercial Highway ~~region~~ DISTRICT.

Amendment No. 3

On page 4, line 149, insert a new item and renumber subsequent numbers accordingly:

(3) PERSONAL SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS, INCLUDING HAIR SALONS, NAIL SALONS, AND BARBERSHOPS.

Amendment No. 4

On page 5, line 185, immediately after “USES”, strike “(8)” and replace with “(9)”, to read as follows:

(2) FOR PRINCIPAL PERMITTED USES (2) THROUGH ~~(8)~~ (9) SET FORTH IN § 191-23.1A., THERE SHALL BE NO LOT AREA OR WIDTH REQUIREMENTS, AND THERE SHALL BE NO LOT COVERAGE REQUIREMENTS. MAXIMUM HEIGHT SHALL BE FIFTY (50) FEET.

Amendment No. 5

[At the request of the La Plata Planning Commission; 3/2/04.]

On page 6, line 211, immediately following “uses”, strike “TWO (2)” and replace with “ONE AND ONE-HALF (1/2)”, to read as follows:

(11) DWELLINGS ABOVE OR BEHIND PRINCIPAL USES: ~~TWO (2)~~ ONE AND ONE-HALF (1 1/2) SPACES PER DWELLING UNIT.

Councilman Winkler stated that he recused himself from voting due to having represented a client who may be involved. *[Councilman Winkler left the table and sat in the audience, returning after the vote on this ordinance.]*

Councilman Fritz made a motion to approve Amendments 1 through 5. Councilman Hale seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Councilman Ambrogio made a motion to adopt Ordinance 03-20 as amended to be Ordinance 04-1 as amended. Councilman Hale seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Ordinance 04-2 Design Review Board Alternate Member (For Adoption) – For the purpose of including an Alternate Member on the Design Review Board; specifying the term of office of the Alternate Member; and all matters generally relating thereto.

Councilman Fritz made a motion to adopt Ordinance 04-2. Councilman Winkler seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Emergency Ordinance 04-3 Historic District Commission – Correcting Typographical Errors (For Adoption) – For the purpose of making corrections to typographical errors in the Article and Section numbers of the Historic District Commission Article so that these corrections can be included in the March 2004 supplement currently being prepared by the publisher; and all matters generally relating thereto.

A brief explanation was provided to advise that no text changes were made as part of this ordinance, which only corrects errors in the Article and Section numbers of the Historic District Commission Article.

Councilman Winkler made a motion to adopt Emergency Ordinance 04-3. Councilman Ambrogio seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Unfinished Business (none)

New Business (none)

Work Session

[Phil Mueller: Town Hall pricing, Chris Jakubiak: Marketing plan, and Bobbie Baldus: Christmas star: As reported under the topic, "Petitions, Communications and Appearances - Phil Mueller: Town Hall update"]

Status: Critical 11: Mr. Miller reported on the status of the Council's Critical 11.

Mr. Miller reminded the Council that La Plata is hosting the Southern Maryland Municipal Association meeting on March 17.

Ms. Bembe handed out Maryland Municipal League convention forms, asking that they be returned soon to take advantage of early registration.

Mayor Eckman advised he believed the Town should consider relining the old line on Charles Street. The Town Council agreed they want the line upgraded. Mr. Miller is looking into having this done.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk