

La Plata Planning Commission
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Regular meeting
January 3, 2006, 7:00 PM

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

Town Staff: Steven F. Schroeder, Project Manager

Minutes:

Chairman Echols called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM and asked Mr. Back to lead the Commission and audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of December minutes

Mr. Rose moved to approve the minutes of the December regular meeting. Mr. Gilpin seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Public hearing: Amended Rosewick Crossing Annexation – zoning recommendation
[An updated staff report was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]

Chairman Echols recused himself from participation in the public hearing, any discussion and recommendation to the Town Council. Vice Chairman Hettel called the hearing to order. Ms. Flerlage entered into the record the Certification of Publication that the notice of the hearing was properly advertised in the December 23, 2005, edition of the Maryland Independent newspaper.

Thomas F. Mudd, attorney for annexation applicant Rosewick Limited Partnership, called on David Cooksey, Senior Vice President of Loiederman Soltesz and Associates, to provide information regarding the location of the boundary line of the area designated Future Annexation Area on the 1997 Charles County Comprehensive Plan map, as described in an email from Mr. Cooksey to Douglas R. Miller, dated December 23, 2005. Mr. Cooksey advised he worked for the County when the Comprehensive Plan and map were developed. He noted that it was his recollection that it was their intent to use natural, physical barriers, and that Jenny's Run stream was used as the line of delineation. Mr. Mudd entered into the record a copy of the December 23, 2005 email from Mr. Cooksey to Mr. Miller and of the County's Land Use Plan plat.

Vice Chairman Hettel asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak.

Michael J. Runfola, 113 Morris Drive, La Plata, spoke in opposition to the annexation and rezoning and expressed concern regarding the discrepancy in the boundary line issue, and concern regarding the impact of increased traffic.

William A. Frazier, 29 Willow Lane, spoke in opposition to the annexation and rezoning and expressed concern about water and sewer capacity, traffic impact, and impact on other services which will need to be provided, including police, fire and emergency medical services, and asked that the Planning Commission table action on the annexation petition until additional information is received.

Tom O'Farrell, 104 Oak Avenue, expressed concern that he was unable to review documents more current than those dated October, 2005, and advised he wanted to review a current and accurate plan and amendments.

Kathleen Vinson, 2230 Bridle Path Drive, Waldorf, one of the owners of residential property included in the petition, spoke in support of the annexation and rezoning, noting that all of her property lines border nonresidential uses.

Kathleen Quade, 9604 Kline Drive, La Plata (north of Rosewick Road), spoke in opposition to the annexation and rezoning and expressed concern regarding the impact that this project's use of 100,000 gallons of water per day will have on wells in the neighboring areas, and expressed concern that those wells will fail.

During the discussion which followed, the Planning Commission received information from the applicant regarding the annexation petition amendments to replace the senior housing proposal with an office building and the removal of approximately 25 acres from the annexation petition. Clarification was provided regarding the CH Commercial Highway zoning on the land and MUD-2 Mixed Use District zoning on the portion of Washington Avenue included in the annexation petition.

There being no other speakers and no further discussion by the Planning Commission, Vice Chairman Hettel closed the hearing at 8:09 PM.

Following the hearing and discussion, Ms. Posey moved to recommend that if the property is annexed, the recommended zoning be CH Commercial Highway for the parcels of land and MUD 2 for that portion of Washington Avenue which is part of the petition. Mr. Gilpin seconded the motion. In discussion before the vote, it was noted that the zoning recommendation is step one in many more steps, that it would return to the Planning Commission for the development process if annexed, and that the Town Council will not vote on the annexation until there is a completed annexation agreement to address citizen and Town concerns regarding limits of development and other concerns. Vote on the motion: Ms. Posey, Mr. Gilpin and Mr. Back voted aye; Mr. Hettel and Mr. Rose voted nay. Motion carried by majority vote.

Arehart Subdivision – Subdivision Concept Plan review and comment

[A staff report dated January 3, 2006 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]

James Erdman, Ben Dyer Associates, discussed the proposal to subdivide and build 20 urban townhomes on 2.95 acres located off St. Mary's Avenue, between Arehart-Echols Funeral Home and Charleston Terrace subdivision. It was noted that the issue of Mr. Miedinski's driveway encroachment must be resolved so that Mr. Miedinski has access to his property. Concern was expressed regarding the swale/streambed along the north side of the property, which appears to be on lots 10 and 20, and whether those are buildable lots. Mr. Erdman noted that a storm water drainage plan could be designed to address this issue. The 5' sidewalk must also be constructed behind the garage units shown on lots 1 through 9. Mr. Erdman was asked to consider using a cistern or recycled stormwater for maintenance of the landscaping.

Higdon Subdivision – Subdivision Concept Plan review and comment

[A staff report dated January 3, 2006 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]

Richard Steffens, D. H. Steffens Co., discussed the proposal to subdivide and build 6 single family detached dwellings on 1.27 acres, shown on the subdivision concept plan as located at the end of East Hawthorne Drive (east of Kent Avenue). In addition to the points raised in the staff report, the Commission advised Mr. Steffens to relocate the curb, gutter and sidewalk from the inner portion of the circle to the outer portion, and to provide more delineation of the East Hawthorne Drive connection.

La Plata Town Center – Concept Plan review and comment

[A staff report dated January 3, 2006 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]

Tom McKee and Kevin Nielson discussed their proposal to develop a shopping center on 25.03 acres of property located on the west side of Crain Highway at the intersection with Oriole Lane, with a possible relocation of Oriole Lane and provision of a signalized intersection. They advised they are speaking with Pepsi regarding relocating that facility. During the discussion, the Planning Commission expressed concern regarding how Oriole Lane will be kept as a viable roadway due to the number of access points for the shopping center; the need to meet the requirement that access may only be from arterial streets; the need to retain as much buffer as possible along the Crain Highway frontage; and the impact of the proposed traffic signal on traffic backing up on Crain Highway to a greater extent than already occurs.

Oakwood Subdivision – Final Plat approval

[A staff report dated January 3, 2006 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]

Ms. Flerlage reviewed points discussed in the staff report and noted that Ken Crouse, of Lorenzi, Dodds & Gunnill, Inc., will be asked to include a plat note regarding the actual mileage of streets that are on the plat for future conveyance to the Town.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Back moved to approve the final plat of Oakwood Subdivision, with the provision that information be included regarding the linear feet or miles of streets on the plat. Mr. Hettel seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Other business

Mr. Back announced that all of the members should have received an invitation to the wine and cheese reception on January 31, and asked them to call Town Hall if they had not received it.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:29 PM.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk