

Council of the Town of La Plata  
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland  
Work Session  
August 22, 2006, 6:00 PM

Present: Mayor Gene Ambrogio, Councilman R. Wayne Winkler, Councilman C. Keith Back, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd; Michelle D. Miner, Interim Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk; Joseph W. Norris, Town Treasurer

Minutes:

Mayor Ambrogio called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

### Matters of Council Discussion

#### Presentation by Rev. James Powell of Christian Family Baptist Church

*Description: Rev. Powell will discuss a proposal for workforce housing.*

Rev. Powell explained a proposal to build workforce housing, 36 rental apartment dwellings, on a 2.6 ac. parcel identified as "Isaac Pender – Parcel 241 [*copies of area maps provided to the Town Council*] on Washington Avenue, and described the proposal that the apartments would be similar to the new apartments on Kent Avenue: 1100 sq. ft., 2 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms. Rev. Powell stated that the market analysis, needs analysis and feasibility study [*copies provided to the Town Council*] was part of the first phase and that the second phase includes a requirement to get a letter of support from the Town. The letter must state that the property is within the Town limits, is within the priority funding area, and state the support the Town will give to the project. Rev. Powell noted that Mayor Ambrogio previously told him the Town could not provide financial support.

During discussion, Council expressed support for the project but noted that the rent amount should be kept to \$1000 or less per month and preference should be given to people who actually work in this area versus another county. In response to a question regarding whether this would be subsidized, Rev. Powell advised that the project is not designed for Section 8, that it is workforce housing designed for people who are working.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed to write a letter of support for this workforce housing project.

#### Location of Public Works facility

*Description: Consensus of the Town Council is needed regarding the property Steve Mote is offering on Washington Avenue for a new Public Works Facility, and the option of Steve Mote purchasing the current location of the Town Shop.*

Ms. Miner explained that Steve Mote was present to determine the Town's intentions regarding the land swap or selling the property which is the current location of the Town Public Works shop to Mr. Mote. Ms. Miner noted she had hoped to be able to provide the appraisal on the Town Public Works shop property but that it is not yet available. Mr. Mote stated he hoped the Town wanted to swap properties, but if not, he still wishes to purchase the property in order to build more workforce housing (apartments).

During discussion, Councilwoman Mudd expressed her continued interest in establishing a Boys and Girls Club in the “top shop” building on the property the Town intends to retain, which also includes the water tower.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed to pursue the land swap, pending the appraisal of the Town Public Works shop property.

#### Tilghman Lake

*Description: Councilman Winkler will make a slide show presentation to discuss the future use of Tilghman Lake.*

Councilman Winkler provided a slide show presentation displaying a camp fire area, broken sign, trash dumping, destruction of property, state of the lake, and the gates being left open. Councilman Winkler advised that Town employees encouraged him to inspect the Tilghman Lake property and that they suggested the lake area be shut down and the gates kept locked. Councilman Winkler suggested that the Town should follow that suggested action, at least until the new Town Manager is on board and a study made to determine the best use of the property.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed to a temporary measure to lock the gates, and allow use by permit by adult-supervised groups only, until a plan for the property is in place.

#### La Plata history books

*Description: Consensus of the Town Council is needed regarding having this book updated.*

Councilman Winkler led a discussion regarding the need to update the Town’s history book, “La Plata, Maryland 1888-1988, 100 Years The Heart of Charles County.” Councilman Winkler noted that information regarding the April 2002 tornado and rebuilding of the Town could be included. Councilman Back noted that pictures of the buildings prior to and as rebuilt could be included. Councilman Winkler volunteered to work with the author, John Wearmouth, to obtain prices and publication information for an update.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed that Councilman Winkler will obtain price quotes from John Wearmouth and other resources, if available, to update the Town’s history book.

#### Matters of Information

Ms. Miner reported that the Redwood Lake repairs should be finished next week, St. Mary’s Avenue paving will start next week, and that Facchina had looked at the La Grange Avenue parking and storm drain project but has not yet given the Town a quote.

Mayor Ambrogio stated he would like the Town to limit to approximately 60,000 sq. ft. the maximum allowable size of “big box” stores on Crain Highway, from Route 6 to Route 225.

Councilwoman Mudd expressed disagreement, noting that she believed that this would create development of little strip malls instead. Councilman Winkler remarked that he had suggested a couple of years ago that the Town make certain size “big box” stores a use by special exception so the Town Council would have some say in their development.

Councilman Winkler provided an update on the Grasso/Ellenwood development. During discussion, it was noted that the annexation agreement ties issuing additional building for the other lots to completion of the main house within a year of the effective date of the annexation, which was October 7, 2005.

Councilman Winkler reported that Marcia Keeth, of Charles County Economic Development, has been assigned duties to work with the Town of La Plata and Town of Indian Head on economic development issues.

Following Councilwoman Mudd’s brief remarks regarding Dr. Ferrero’s need for more parking spaces on La Grange Avenue, including a handicap-accessible parking space, Councilman Back reported he made a site visit and determined that there is a curb cut for the existing handicap parking space that serves Dr. Ferrero’s office.

There being no other discussion, Councilman Winkler moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 PM. Councilman Back seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Submitted by:

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Judith T. Frazier  
Town Clerk