

La Plata Planning Commission
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
February 4, 2003, 7:00 PM

Present: Chairman C. Keith Back, Walter T. Sollars, Jr., Garyton C. Echols, Jr., Keith A. Hettel, Roy G. Hale - Commission Members; Douglas R. Miller, Town Manager; Steven F. Schroeder, Project Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk

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 January minutes

Mr. Echols made a motion to approve the minutes of the January meeting. Mr. Sollars seconded the motion and it carried.

Morris Subdivision (for information only)

Mr. Miller advised that George Morris wishes to subdivide property he owns in front of Food Lion, off Drury Drive. Mr. Miller also advised that this item was for information only as it has not been reviewed by Town staff or by State Highway Administration.

Frank Daskievige and George Morris presented an area site plan, concept site plan and information regarding the proposal to subdivide the Blue Haven lot into four parcels as Phase 4 of the La Plata Village Shopping Center, with a private shared access drive running from Crain Highway to Drury Drive. There would be two lots on each side of the access drive. A stormwater facility for the entire site would be located on the southern end of the site. The proposed uses include a car wash and a retail building. The Blue Haven building may have exterior improvements or may be entirely replaced, depending on the occupant. Lot 1 is .98 ac., lot 2 is 1.83 ac., lot 3 is .47 ac. (car wash), and lot 4 is .80 ac. (Blue Haven.) They propose to install sidewalk from the point where it ends on the east side of Drury Drive around the cul-de-sac and along the west side of Drury Drive.

During the discussion which followed, concern was expressed about the access drive being a private shared access drive versus a Town-owned street built to Town standards with curb, gutter and sidewalk on both sides, and about the short distance of the access point on Crain Highway to the driveway into lot 2. It was suggested that the driveway be moved further east and that Mr. Morris consider using a common access driveway for those two lots as is shown for the lots on the other side of the access drive. It was also suggested that plantings be upgraded around the buildings, especially as a screen around the car wash site. As the Town is working on architectural review, it was suggested that Mr. Morris and Mr. Daskievige meet with the Design Review Board.

In response to the Commission's question regarding locating a restaurant on the property, Mr. Morris advised that he has tried to recruit Perkins, Friendly's and IHOP, but the Town's major facilities fee, which Mr. Morris stated works out to be approximately \$650 per chair, chases them away and they build in the County, which doesn't have the same high fee. Mr. Miller noted that the County's tap fee is charged on the line size and the Town's fee is computed by actual water usage.

Other business

Mr. Sollars remarked that the Dash In canopy appears to be extending out over Charles Street at a certain point. Mr. Miller advised that C-B Central Business zoning district has a zero lot line yard requirement and noted that prior to use and occupancy permits being issued, the Town requires that lot corners be certified by an engineer.

In response to Mr. Hettel's request for building updates, Mr. Miller noted that the new Design Review Board is active and will be reviewing all permits involving work in the C-B Central Business zoning district; tornado build-back is ahead of schedule; streetscape project will include the Centennial Street extension from La Grange Avenue to Maple Avenue; and the second story will not be built back on the old Bowling's building. Mr. Schroeder advised that use and occupancy permits were issued to Thomas C. Hayden and to Dr. Jenkins.

Mr. Miller advised that the Town is going to purchase the old post office building on La Grange Avenue for the La Plata Police Department. He also noted that the Town Hall property may be sold to Civista to make way for the hospital expansion, and that appraisals are being prepared.

In response to Mr. Sollars' question about a crosswalk on Rt. 6 for the Maples, Mr. Miller advised that State Highway Administration is going to do a major facelift at the intersection of Routes 6 and 301, and the crosswalk should be provided as part of that project.

In response to Mr. Echols' question about the proposed CVS site at Crain Highway and Hawthorne Drive, Mr. Miller advised that a building permit has been issued but there has been no activity yet.

In response to Mr. Hale's request for an update on the Heritage Green project, Mr. Miller advised that he met with the new owners, GP Homes, who plan to follow the same development pattern as in the 1989 plan for a golf course community, which they will start in 18 to 24 months. They may want to move the elementary school site and are hoping the Town will be lenient regarding completion of the golf course to allow it to sit for one year for growth of the root structure. They intend to comply with the annexation agreement. The Town Council and Town Attorney will meet to verify compliance with the annexation agreement. Mr. Miller noted that since the Town approved the master site development plan for this mixed use development, townhouse regulations have changed.

In response to Mr. Hettel's question about the Burleigh House project, Mr. Miller advised

that the owner will not be building. Councilman Winkler spoke from the audience to point out that the owner has put the property up for sale and that a “for sale” sign has been placed on the property. Gore Bolton spoke from the audience to note that he worked on this project and that a main issue in this project is that the Town does not control access onto Washington Avenue. He noted that dealing with the County was impossible and overbearing from a cost standpoint. He asked the Town to be sensitive to this issue for this and other projects.

In response to Mr. Hettel’s question, Mr. Miller and Jeff Guido advised that the Gustavo’s Restaurant project is on schedule. There had been a problem with the new contractor working under the previous contractor’s building permit, which caused a complaint from the previous contractor and a stop work order being issued.

R. J. Earnshaw spoke from the audience to ask the Town to have improvement to the Charles Street railroad crossing included in the streetscape project.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith T. Frazier