

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

Present: Chairman Garyton C. Echols, Jr., Keith A. Hettel, Rich Gilpin, Debra W. Posey, C. Keith Back – Commission members; Cathy Flerlage, Director of Planning and Zoning; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk [Due to the absence of Mark Rose, Ms. Posey had full voting rights.]

Town Staff: Steven F. Schroeder, Project Manager

Minutes:

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

Approval of September minutes [*September minutes not included in meeting packets; will be included on November agenda.*]

Hawthorne Greene Section 3 - preliminary plat approval

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

Tim Lessner, of Lorenzi, Dodds & Gunnill, Inc., and David Hrudá, of Somerset Development Company and Hawthorne Greene/applicant, presented information regarding the preliminary plan for Hawthorne Greene Section 3, including the amendment of adding a second means of emergency ingress/egress requested by the Commission at the September meeting.

Ms. Flerlage briefly discussed the issues outlined in the staff report. Following discussion, the Planning Commission agreed that parking spaces should be 10' x 20' and the two entrances should be 24' wide and 18' wide.

Mr. Hettel moved to approve the preliminary plat, with the two entrances being 24' and 18' wide and the parking spaces being 10' x 20'. Mr. Gilpin seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Heritage Green Phase 2 TND development plan – review and comment

[*A staff report dated October 3, 2006, and "TND Development Plan: Project Report – Phase II, September 2006" were included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.*]

Pat Faux, of The Faux Group, Dan Anderton, of Loiederman Soltesz, and Lois Page, of GP Homes, were present to provide information regarding the Heritage Green Phase 2 TND development plan.

Ms. Flerlage briefly discussed the staff report, noting an issue with language in the Code [§191-25.4I(6)(c)] which requires that “Each principal building has a front door opening directly to a frontage line on a principal thoroughfare.” A discussion ensued regarding the townhomes which are facing a green and have public alleys to the rear. Following discussion, the consensus of the Planning Commission was that alterations are needed to [§191-25.4I(6)(c)].

Chairman Echols noted that vehicular access between neighborhoods appears to be limited and that the Commission needed to be informed very soon regarding the connection of Heritage Green Parkway to Washington Avenue via a CSX railroad crossing. Chairman Echols pointed out that a developer in another jurisdiction worked with CSX to provide improvements to off-site grade crossings in return for a crossing. A discussion ensued regarding the letter written by former-Mayor Eckman to CSX with such a proposal and the lack of response by CSX.

Following discussion, the consensus of the Planning Commission was that Ms. Flerlage should work with Ms. Miner to resurrect the letter written to CSX by former-Mayor Eckman, which should be taken before the Town Council. It was also recommended that the Chief of the La Plata Volunteer Fire Department and the State Highway Administration also sign a new letter from the Town Council, which should request a response from CSX within a certain timeframe, with help being sought from our Congressman and Senator if no response is received.

Mr. Gilpin moved to approve Heritage Green Phase 2 TND development plan. Mr. Back seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mote Management Co., Inc. – Special exception for fast food restaurant

[A staff report dated October 3, 2006, and copy of the application package were included in the Planning Commission’s meeting packets.]

Ms. Flerlage briefly reviewed the staff report.

Following discussion, Mr. Hettel moved to recommend that the Board of Appeals approve the special exception. Mr. Gilpin seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Other business

At the request of the Commission, Ms. Flerlage provided an update on several projects in the Town.

There being no further business, Mr. Hettel moved to adjourn at 9:03 PM. Mr. Gilpin seconded the motion and it carried.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk