

Council of the Town of La Plata
La Plata Planning Commission
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Joint Work Session
January 18, 2007, 7:00 PM

Present: Town Council: Mayor Gene Ambrogio, Councilman R. Wayne Winkler, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd, Councilman Vic E. Newman; Joseph W. Norris, Acting Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk
La Plata Planning Commission: Chairman Rich Gilpin, Garyton C. Echols, Jr., Mark Rose, Debra W. Posey; Cathy Flerlage, Director of Planning and Zoning

Town Staff: Carol Rollins, Development Coordinator

Minutes:

Mayor Ambrogio called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Matters of Discussion

Comprehensive Plan update (2008)

Green building techniques – should a requirement to implement such practices become a part of the approval process? Codified? Policy?

Following discussion, it was agreed that this should be pursued and that research is needed. In addition to obtaining information and guidance available through the State of Maryland, Town Staff was asked to obtain and distribute to the Town Council and Planning Commission the existing policies set by Prince George's County and the City of Bowie. It was also agreed that the focus of green activities should be placed on areas of the most need in the Town, including landscaping techniques and using gray water for irrigation purposes.

Transportation Planning

1. SHA requirements to widen 301 – why inconsistently applied? How does this affect future development proposals for 301 properties? [*Discussion only – no consensus.*]

2. Interconnection of neighborhood streets, to provide choices, walkability, and improved emergency response

Following discussion, most participants agreed that interconnection of neighborhood streets is desirable and that there will be an opportunity to review this again during discussion of the transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan update.

3. Hiker/Biker paths and other alternative modes of transportation

Following discussion, it was agreed that consideration should be given to incorporating bike path/lane standards in the Town's road construction specifications, and to integrate this within the Comprehensive Plan.

Community Outreach Programs – where should they be allowed to develop (like a boys and girls club, group homes for challenged or at-risk elements of our population)?

Following discussion regarding group homes in residential zoning districts, it was agreed that the definition of “family” should remain as is in the Town Code.

Commercial Development – is there anything the Town can do to bring in specific businesses we'd like to have in our “mix”?

Discussion included reducing the size of stores in the C-H Commercial Highway district along Crain Highway, in the area between Rt. 225 and Rt. 6. It was suggested that this could be accomplished by use of an “overlay zone” such as is provided for TND. Due to the possibility of a major shift of the “downtown” area to the Heritage Green development, it was also suggested to include in the Comprehensive Plan update review, discussions regarding keeping the “downtown” area of La Plata in its current location.

Recreation, parks and cultural activities – how to bolster our current component, types of facilities to add, maintenance.

It was noted that the Town Council is working on an amendment to the fee in lieu and parks requirements, and that the Parks and Recreation Commission is working on a Parks Capital Expansion Plan.

Railroad Crossing at Heritage Green

Concern was expressed regarding whether this crossing can be obtained. It was noted that no update information is available at this time.

There being no other business, Mayor Ambrogio moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 PM. Councilwoman Mudd seconded the motion and it carried.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk