

Council of the Town of La Plata  
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland  
Work Session  
November 15, 2005, 4:00 PM

Present: Mayor Gene Ambrogio, Councilman Wayne Winkler, Councilman C. Keith Back, Councilwoman Paretta D. Mudd; Douglas R. Miller, Town Manager; Patricia L. Bembe, Assistant Town Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk; Joseph W. Norris, Town Treasurer; Gale E. Crooks, Communication Coordinator/Finance Department

Minutes:

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

### Matters of Council Discussion

#### La Grange Avenue Planting Enhancements

*Description: The Chairperson of the Beautification Commission shall discuss recommendations to enhance the plantings on La Grange Avenue.*

Paula Winkler reported that the Beautification Commission met with most of the business owners affected by the plantings, and they were in favor of relocating to public lands some of the plantings and replacing some with more appropriate plants. The cost estimate is \$18,000 to remove and relocate existing plants only; however, Ms. Winkler noted that the Town's Public Works Department could remove and relocate shrubs (not trees). The Beautification Commission asked if this was a feasible plan for the Town Council to consider.

The Council discussed the possibility of phasing the project, cost-sharing with the affected business owners, a study to determine from the business owners what they want and the cost, and the possibility that the Town may need to include in the next budget hiring a beautification employee for landscape maintenance in the Town. It was agreed that Mr. Miller and Ms. Winkler will work on this and bring it back to the Town Council. Ms. Winkler remarked that she would like to have the Town ask the State what dollar amount they plan to spend on the St. Mary's Avenue Streetscape landscaping and ask for a voucher instead.

#### Faison Annexation Agreement

*Description: The Faison petitioners shall discuss components of the potential annexation agreement for their annexation.*

*[Councilman Winkler recused himself from participating in the discussion and left the Council table until the discussion concluded.]*

Roger Wright and Pat Faux provided a PowerPoint presentation and went over the standards contained in "Rosewick Crossing Annexation Design Standards, November 14, 2005" hand-out.

Matters of concern of the Town Council included the proposed residential/senior living community and the need to have the applicant specify in writing that there will be Lowe's and Giant stores. It was suggested that Mr. Wright speak to representatives of Willing Helpers Hall to help them with upgrades. Mr. Wright advised they would be happy to help them and agreed to obtain the necessary information from Mr. Miller in order to facilitate this.

### Replacement Phone System

*Description: The current phone system for the Town was purchased in 1987. At some point that system should be replaced. Such replacement will be discussed.*

The Town Council was in receipt of a memorandum from Mr. Norris and Mrs. Crooks, dated October 28, 2005, regarding the telephone system upgrade and their recommendation that the Town Council accept the proposal from Elite Telecom in the amount of \$55,089. Mrs. Crooks presented information regarding the current and proposed telephone system. At Councilman Back's request, Mrs. Crooks advised she would set up voice mail for each Council member.

Mr. Miller advised that this would require a formal motion and budget amendment at the next meeting and praised Mrs. Crooks and Mr. Norris for their work on the telephone system upgrade.

### 4:00/7:00/6:00/6:00 Meeting Time Schedule

*Description: The current Council meeting schedule is not totally convenient for all of the members. The Council will discuss switching to a schedule which is primarily oriented to the evenings with the exception of the first Tuesday which must be at 4:00 to accommodate the Planning Commission's meeting.*

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed to begin the new schedule in December, 2005.

### Smoking in Restaurants

*Description: Prince George's County and Charles County are considering banning smoking in restaurants. The Council will discuss if and how the Council will support these efforts.*

Council consensus: Councilmen Winkler, Mudd and Back voiced support of this if the County Commissioners enact legislation banning smoking in restaurants. Mayor Ambrogio advised he does not support smoking but suggested that input be obtained from Town business owners.

### Universal Residential Sprinklers

*Description: Comment was made at the public hearing on the GP Homes TND request regarding residential sprinklers for single family detached structures. The ordinance adopting the 2003 International Building Code as the Town's Building Code is being written. Local governments are allowed to add local amendments. Such a sprinkler requirement could be one such local amendment.*

The Town Council wishes to pursue this amendment. Mr. Miller will obtain more information for consideration by the Town Council. Councilman Winkler will obtain information regarding a reduction in the cost of insurance for homeowners who have residential sprinklers.

### Garage Parking

*Description: An ordinance allowing garages to be used as required parking spaces within the TND under special circumstances has been introduced. A joint work session with the Planning Commission may be scheduled. In the interim any current questions or concerns of the Council will be discussed.*

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed to schedule a joint work session with the Planning Commission on December 6, at 6:30 PM.

#### Urban Townhouse/Suburban Townhouse

*Description: The current regulations only allow townhouse to be 35' or 2.5 stories in height. Taller townhouses are allowed within the TND. Developers are beginning to introduce townhouse products that have a first floor garage plus two stories of living space. Such products violate the current height limitation. The Council must decide if it wants to consider a text amendment to increase the maximum height of a townhouse.*

Mr. Miller advised that Cathy Flerlage is working on information to be presented at a future meeting.

#### GP Homes TND Request

*Description: GP Homes presented a request for a TND Designation. Concerns of the Council will be discussed.*

Council consensus: The Town Council had no concerns to discuss.

#### Uniwest Project Update (5:00)

*Description: Uniwest Development is pursuing the construction of a shopping center in the southwest quadrant of the town. They will update the Council on their progress.*

*[Councilman Winkler recused himself from participating in the discussion and left the Council table.]*

Ken Goldberg and Michael Collier were present to describe their plans, as depicted on a drawing they displayed, "Uniwest/La Plata, Maryland, Sketch Study." They advised they had no signed agreements as yet but are planning for a Home Depot and a grocery store. They further advised they have met with Town staff and are preparing to make a presentation to the Planning Commission. Councilman Back requested that they preserve as large and wide a buffer as possible along their Crain Highway frontage.

#### Matters of Information

- SMMA Legislative Dinner, 12/7/05
- Breakfast with Santa, 12/10/05
- Olde Tyme Holiday Gathering, 12/4/05
- Commission Reception 1/31/06

There being no other discussion, Mayor Ambrogio made a motion to adjourn at 5:50 PM. Councilman Back seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Submitted by:

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Judith T. Frazier  
Town Clerk