

Council of the Town of La Plata
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Work Session
October 4, 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

Minutes:

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

Matters of Council Discussion

Pre-annexation Conference - Charles Stuart

Description: Charles Stuart has approached the Town about annexing a parcel of land at Rosewick Road and Washington Avenue. He will discuss that request with the Council.

Mr. Stuart discussed annexing 17 acres of land north of Town limits on Washington Avenue, which he advised was an old lumber yard, and stated that the owner has offered to sell the property to him. He advised it was zoned industrial by the County and that he was interested in developing it as residential – townhouses and apartments. Mr. Stuart asked the Council if they would encourage him to proceed.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed they would not be receptive to annexing the property if it was to be developed as residential, and agreed they would consider an annexation if the property was to be developed as commercial or industrial.

Comcast Cable Franchise Renewal

Description: The Assistant Town Manager will review the final draft of the Cable Franchise Agreement renewal. A public hearing on the topic is scheduled for October 11th.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed they want Ms. Bembe to add two additional cable hook-ups for the Train Station and the Fire Museum.

Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Parking Lot

Description: MDOT wishes to build a park-and-ride lot in La Plata for the bus service they provide into Washington, D.C. This is a very popular and successful program in Southern Maryland. They want either the Town or the County to maintain the lot. The Council will review the project.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed to maintain the lot, have it landscaped, and speak to Secretary of Transportation Flanagan to try to have the original structure built on a shared-cost basis.

School Seat Allocations

Description: The proposed school seat allocation list will be presented. If satisfactory, it will be introduced by resolution on October 11th.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed to introduce the resolution at the October 11 meeting.

Pending Capital Projects

Description: The Town Manager will review the status of several pending capital projects, including (1) Water Tank Replacement/Well 8 well house, (2) I & I study, (3) Rt. 301 Sewer Reroute Project, (4) Well # 11, (5) Willow Lane Pump Station/GP Homes Pump Station.

Mr. Miller provided a hand-out which contained provided the status of capital projects:

I & I study (Inflow and Infiltration)

Description: During heavy rain and snow melt events, a significant amount of rain water finds its way into the sanitary sewer system. Flows at the treatment plant can increase from a normal 1,000,000 gallons per day to over 2,500,000 gallons per day. In addition, sanitary sewer overflows and sewage backups in houses can occur. The Town is taking a two-staged approach to dealing with this problem. First, the engineering firm URS has been contracted to evaluate the health of the sewage collection system. They have done visual inspections of manholes, televised the system and “smoked” the lines. From this exploratory work a report recommending rehabilitation and repair steps will be prepared for the Town. Then the Town can begin to take physical steps to reduce I & I. Anticipated cost: \$2,000,000. Funding source: MDE Loan repaid through the sewer user rates. Project status: URS report is due in early October.

Willow Lane Pump Station/GP Homes Pump Station

Description: The antiquated Willow Lane Sewage Pump Station is in need of upgrading. At the same time, Heritage Green needs to build a pump station to accommodate their development. There is a possibility that these efforts can be combined. Anticipated cost: \$2,500,000. Funding sources: Developer contribution, Town funds, possible Town supplementary funds as part of an APFO. Project status: GP Homes is studying feasibility.

Water Tank Replacement/Well 8 well house

Description: In 2002 the Town’s oldest water tower (75,000) gallons was destroyed by the tornado. In 2005 the County took down a small tower that was part of the old Radio Station base. That tower was part of the La Plata system. In its place, a 750,000 gallon ground water tank will be installed. Well #8 is the Town’s oldest major well. The well has no well house and has an antiquated system. A new house and more modern controls will be installed. Anticipated cost: \$905,400. Funding sources: insurance proceeds (\$229,850), Federal grant (\$352,550), Town Major Facility Fee funds* (\$323,000). *Does not include engineering and MDE oversight of 3%. Project status: Bids should be ready this month, with anticipated opening in November or December. The Town Council will have to appropriate matching funds. Anticipated completion is May 2006.

Rt. 301 Sewer Reroute Project

Description: The sewage collection system in the southwest quadrant of town is undersized. Anticipated growth in that area will further stress the system. Also, during heavy rain and snow melt events, the collection system surges and raw sewage comes out of the manholes at Rt. 301 and Centennial Street. A possible easy interim fix is to install a parallel sewage collection system to accommodate the excess. There were no bids received after the first bidding process. Anticipated

cost: \$413,765. (New estimates are being sought.) Funding sources: Federal grant (\$221,760), developer contribution (\$150,000), Town funds (\$42,005). Project status: Design is complete. Easements have been secured. Viability of the project will be reevaluated using the hydraulic model created by URS as part of the I & I work. Facchina will be consulted as to probable construction cost. The Town Council will have to appropriate matching funds. The project will be re-bid with the construction schedule to coordinate with the ANS academic year.

Well # 11

Description: The Town needs to add another major water well to its system. This is a major effort and will involve components such as permitting, design, siting, well development and construction. Anticipated cost: \$1,000,000. Funding source: Debt service paid by Major Facility Fees. Project status: Initial engineering conversations have been held with MES.

Commercial Vehicles on Residential Streets

Description: The Council will discuss the possible restriction of parking commercial vehicles on residential streets.

Council consensus: The Council agreed research was needed and directed the Town Manager to check with the Town Attorney and Maryland Municipal League.

Snow/Ice Removal in the Commercial Districts

Description: A policy to enforce the clearing of snow and ice on commercial sidewalks will be discussed.

Council consensus: The Town Council agreed to develop a brochure regarding commercial property owners' responsibilities and deliver it with a bag of salt.

Housing Standards

In response to Councilman Winkler's request for an update on amending the Code to provide for construction to withstand certain wind speeds, Mr. Miller advised that the Town Inspector today delivered copies of the 2003 International Building Codes, which will be sent to the Town Attorney and will need to have local amendments included.

Matters of Information

MML Legislative Conference, October 20- 22, 2005
SMMA Legislative Dinner, December 7, 2005

Future Work Session Topics

Meeting with the County Commissioners, October 18, 2005 – Topics to include police department staffing and sewer overflows.

Police Study Presentation, October 26, 2005
Voter ID, October 26, 2005

There being no other discussion, Councilman Back made a motion to adjourn at 5:44 PM. Councilman Newman seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk