

La Plata Planning Commission
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Regular meeting
March 4, 2008, 7:00 PM

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

Town Staff: Daniel J. Mears, Town Manager; Steven F. Schroeder, Project Manager

Minutes:

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

Approval of February minutes

Mr. Echols moved to approve the minutes of the February meeting. Mr. Goldsmith seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

La Grange Subdivision – Preliminary plat approval

[A staff report dated March 4, 2008 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]

Ms. Flerlage provided a brief review of the staff report, noting that concerns expressed at the October 2, 2007 meeting were addressed and that staff recommended approval. Ms. Flerlage described the potential of abandoning the Haldane pumping station, which is a source of much inflow and infiltration, in favor of connecting to the new pumping station to be installed as part of the La Grange Subdivision. She noted a need to obtain advice of the Town Attorney regarding the “double use” of an existing storm water easement to run the sewer line to the new pumping station. She further noted that the Water and Sewer Advisory Committee has reviewed the plat and discussed the potential abandonment of the Haldane pumping station.

James Erdman, Ben Dyer Associates, was present to provide information regarding the preliminary plat and to answer any questions posed by the Planning Commission.

Following discussion, Mr. Echols moved to approve the La Grange Subdivision preliminary plat. Mr. Hettel seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Hawthorne Greene Section 3 – Extension of preliminary plat approval

[A staff report dated March 4, 2008 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]

Ms. Flerlage provided a brief review of the staff report, noting there had been no changes and the conditions placed remain the same. Ms. Flerlage noted that this extension was due in October, 2007 but had been overlooked, and there were no meetings in November and December.

Scott Burroughs, Lorenzi Dodds and Gunnill, Inc., was present to provide information regarding the preliminary plat and to answer any questions posed by the Planning Commission.

Following discussion, Mr. Echols moved to extend for one year the approval of the Hawthorne Greene Section 3 preliminary plat. Mr. Hettel seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Accessory Dwelling Units – proposed zoning text amendment

[A staff report dated March 4, 2008 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]

During discussion, the Commission identified concerns regarding the proposed amendment, including: parking, setbacks, window offsets/views, school seat allocations, language relating to low/very low income households, who determines low/very low income levels, concept/mindset of public regarding single family dwellings only, affordable housing, need for research on the impact of how mortgage industry (financing) regulates additional dwelling units.

Following discussion, the Planning Commission directed Ms. Flerlage to proceed with the proposed amendment, including further investigation of the concerns and need for research indicated during discussion.

Comprehensive Plan/2008 – discussion of Vision Plan

[A staff report dated March 4, 2008 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets. Also included was a copy of the previous month's staff report, dated February 4, 2008.]

Ms. Flerlage provided a brief overview of the staff report and noted a need to develop a schedule to work on at least one of the Plan elements each month, and a need to hold a joint work session with the Town Council.

Other business

Schedule joint work session with Town Council

The majority of the Planning Commission members agreed on Wednesday, March 12, at 7:00 PM. (Mr. Hettel will be unable to attend.) Interest was expressed that the primary topic be municipal growth area.

In response to Mr. Echols' request, Ms. Flerlage provided an update on the status of current development projects in the Town.

Ms. Flerlage advised the owner of the former Posey's Market property asked for suggestions from the Town as to what we would like on that property. She noted that a previous suggestion of Nick's of Clinton was no longer a possibility as the property no longer has a liquor license. A brief discussion was held regarding the possibility of putting a municipal parking structure on the site, with free parking on Saturdays and Sundays such as the City of Frederick provides. It was noted that a parking structure would encourage less paving and provide more green area.

There being no further business, Mr. Goldsmith moved to adjourn at 8:37 PM. Ms. Posey seconded the motion and it carried.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk