

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

Present: Chairman Garyton C. Echols, Jr., Keith A. Hettel, Rich Gilpin, Mark Rose, C. Keith Back – Commission members; Cathy Flerlage, Director of Planning and Zoning; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk

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 February minutes

Mr. Hettel moved to approve the minutes of the February regular meeting. Mr. Gilpin seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

#### Public hearings

Ordinance 06-2 Public Garage/Maintenance-Equipment Yards as Permitted Uses in the L-I Light Industrial District *[A staff report dated 3/7/06 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]*

Chairman Echols called the hearing to order. Ms. Flerlage entered into the record the Certification of Publication that the notice of the hearing was properly advertised in the February 17, 2006, edition of the Maryland Independent newspaper. Ms. Flerlage explained the proposed amendments covered in the ordinance, and noted that the Town Council will see an amendment proposed by Town Staff regarding requiring government ownership of these facilities.

Chairman Echols asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak for or against the ordinance. No one wished to speak.

There being no speakers, Chairman Echols closed the hearing at 7:06 PM.

Ordinance 06-3 Restaurant Definitions *[A staff report dated 3/7/06 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]*

Chairman Echols called the hearing to order. Ms. Flerlage entered into the record the Certification of Publication that the notice of the hearing was properly advertised in the February 17, 2006, edition of the Maryland Independent newspaper, and explained the proposed amendments covered in the ordinance.

Chairman Echols asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak for or against the ordinance. No one wished to speak.

There being no speakers, Chairman Echols closed the hearing at 7:10 PM.

Ordinance 06-4 Building Height *[A staff report dated 3/7/06 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]*

Chairman Echols called the hearing to order. Ms. Flerlage entered into the record the Certification of Publication that the notice of the hearing was properly advertised in the February 17, 2006, edition of the Maryland Independent newspaper, and explained the proposed amendments covered in the ordinance.

Chairman Echols asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak for or against the ordinance. No one wished to speak.

There being no speakers, Chairman Echols closed the hearing at 7:13 PM.

Recommendation – Ordinance 06-2

Mr. Gilpin moved to recommend that the Town Council adopt Ordinance 06-2. Mr. Rose seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Recommendation – Ordinance 06-3

Mr. Rose moved to recommend that the Town Council adopt Ordinance 06-3. Mr. Hettel seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Recommendation – Ordinance 06-4

Mr. Hettel moved to recommend that the Town Council adopt Ordinance 06-4. Mr. Gilpin seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Carol's Place Apartments – final site development plan approval  
*[A staff report dated 3/7/06 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]*

Chairman Echols recused himself from participation in discussion of this topic and left the table to sit in the audience. Vice Chairman Hettel conducted this portion of the meeting. Ms. Flerlage briefly reviewed the background of this development and advised that it had been reviewed by the police department and fire department, and that it was ready for approval by the Planning Commission. Ms. Flerlage noted that Ken Crouse, of Lorenzi, Dodds & Gunnill, Inc., was present to answer any questions the Commission might have.

Mr. Gilpin moved to approve the final site development plan of Carol's Place Apartments. Mr. Rose seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Agricopia Sections 6A and 6B – final plat approval

*[A staff report dated 3/7/06 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]*

Ms. Flerlage briefly reviewed the background of this development and advised that it was ready for approval by the Planning Commission. Ms. Flerlage noted that R. J. Earnshaw, developer, and Michelle Bolton, of Bolton and Associates, LLC, were present to answer any questions the Commission might have.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Gilpin moved to approve the final plat of Agricopia Sections 6A and 6B. Mr. Rose seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Special Exception for Senior Living Community – recommendation for Hawthorne Greene Section 3

*[A staff report dated 3/7/06 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]*

Ms. Flerlage provided a brief overview of the staff report on this special exception request and advised that the application meets the requirements for a senior living community, per Section 191-46.2 of the Town Code. Ms. Flerlage noted that the purpose of the Planning Commission is to make a nonbinding recommendation to the Board of Appeals on this request. Ms. Flerlage further noted that if the special exception is granted by the Board, the development of a senior living community in a C-H Commercial Highway zoning district would be subject to Design Review Board review and approval, and would return to the Planning Commission for the development review process.

David Hruda, representing Somerset/Hawthorne Greene, and Tim Lessner, of Lorenzi, Dodds & Gunnill, Inc., presented information regarding the proposed development of a senior living community in Hawthorne Greene Section 3, and responded to questions posed by Commission members. Mr. Lessner gave each Commission member a booklet, "Special Exception Application for Hawthorne Greene, Section 3, Town of La Plata, MD", which contained a vicinity map, application for special exception, special exception report, buffer yard "F" diagram, services proximity map and services proximity description.

Concern was expressed by the Planning Commission regarding the need to provide the best buffer possible between the senior living community and potential commercial development on adjoining C-H properties, and the impact on neighbors caused by traffic entering the proposed entrance. Mr. Lessner advised there should be no affect as the neighboring homes have their own driveways and the proposed parking lot will be on open space, not on private lots. Mr. Lessner and Mr. Hruda agreed that trees and landscaping could be provided to lessen any impact the driveway and parking lot may have on neighboring properties. In response to a suggestion that the developer consider reconfiguring the entrance to provide for a second means of access, Ms. Flerlage acknowledged this could be worked on at the site plan stage. Mr. Lessner indicated an area on the site plan where it may be possible to reconfigure to provide for two access points.

Mr. Rose moved to recommend that the Board of Appeals approve the special exception requested. Mr. Hettel seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Heritage Green Phase One – approval of TND Development Plan

*[A staff report dated 3/7/06 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]*

Pat Faux, Dan Anderton, Harry Lapas, Lois Paige and Nicholas Tryfon were present regarding request for approval of the TND Development Plan of Heritage Green Phase One. Ms. Faux provided a PowerPoint presentation and she and Mr. Anderton responded to questions posed by the Planning Commission.

Chairman Echols lead a discussion regarding having the developer make this presentation to the Design Review Board, in particular obtaining the Board's input regarding the Site Design Guidelines document given to the Planning Commission, which indicates that final approval will go to the Heritage Green architectural review committee and out of the jurisdiction of the Town. Ms. Faux stated she would make the presentation to the Board. Ms. Flerlage advised she would try to put this topic on the agenda of the Design Review Board's April 5, 2006 meeting.

Mr. Rose moved to approve the Heritage Green Phase One TND Development plan. Mr. Gilpin seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Other business

Schedule joint work session with the Town Council

The March 15 date proposed for a joint work session with the Town Council was not available due to a scheduling conflict. The Planning Commission suggested Wednesday, March 22, at 7:00 PM. Mr. Back will poll the other Council members after their March 8 meeting.

There being no further business, Mr. Gilpin moved to adjourn at 9:01 PM. Mr. Hettel seconded the motion and it carried.

Submitted by:

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Judith T. Frazier  
Town Clerk