

La Plata Planning Commission  
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland  
Regular meeting  
September 7, 2004, 7:00 PM

Present: Chairman C. Keith Back, Garyton C. Echols, Jr., Robert W. Thompson, Zakary A. Krebeck, Roy G. Hale – Commission members; Cathy Flerlage, Director of Planning and Zoning; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk (Due to the absence of Mr. Hettel, Mr. Krebeck had full voting rights.)

Guests: (see roster)

Minutes:

Chairman Back called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, read the agenda and asked Mr. Hale to lead the Commission and audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### Approval of July minutes

Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes of the July regular meeting. Mr. Krebeck seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

#### Other business

Ms. Flerlage provided updates on certain projects in the Town:

Heritage Place II Apartments – This is a single 3-story walkup building with 30 2-bedroom apartments, located in the triangle bounded by Kent Avenue, Dorchester Street and Potomac Street. The Design Review Board has reviewed the architectural, site design and landscaping plans. Ms. Flerlage has reviewed the plan for storm water management, parking tabulations and accessibility. In response to questions from the Commission, Ms. Flerlage advised there are two parking spaces per dwelling unit and 3 handicap spaces, and advised that the fire department has not reviewed the plans. Ms. Flerlage noted that the Town Inspector has a background in fire-related inspection knowledge.

Heritage Green road alignments – Three possible road alignment concepts have been received from Dick Keller/Kellerco, and a meeting has been scheduled on September 10, at 9:30 AM, at Town Hall, with Kellerco, Town staff, two Charles County traffic planners, and State Highway Administration to discuss the possible road alignment concepts and the traffic study report. Ms. Flerlage noted that the developer advised he was at an impasse regarding the railroad crossing at Heritage Green Parkway. During the discussion which followed, the Commission stressed the importance of getting the Heritage Green Parkway railroad crossing, noting also that it was important that the fire department have a connection from Washington Avenue into this large community. Mr. Echols voiced his strong conviction that the traffic study report should come to the Planning Commission in order to review and give recommendations to the developer as to which alignment would be approved. Mr. Hale remarked that he agreed the

Planning Commission should play a major role in this process, but noted that it was the responsibility of the Town Council to assure adherence to the annexation agreement. Mr. Echols responded that Article 66B of the *Annotated Code of Maryland* empowers Planning Commissions to review and approve sites. Chairman Back agreed with Mr. Echols, noting it would be beneficial to the developer to have the Planning Commission's recommendations before they spend a great deal of money on a plan which may not be approved by the Planning Commission. Chairman Back asked that the traffic study be formally presented to the Planning Commission in order for the Commission to make a recommendation, either at a work session within the next two weeks or at the next regular meeting, and that the GP Homes representatives be present. Ms. Flerlage advised she would make every effort to do so.

Civista - Plans are in for final staff review comments and should be approved shortly, and the project will be getting underway. The Design Review Board did a courtesy review of the project as it is zoned mostly P-L Public Lands, with a small area of CB Central Business District. In response to Mr. Echols' question, Ms. Flerlage advised that the fire department has not reviewed the plans.

Sleep Inn – Received a permit to clear and grub, which is underway. Finalized site development plans are under staff review; however, State Highway Administration comments must be addressed. The project will be proceeding shortly with full grading and building permits. In response to Mr. Echols' question, Ms. Flerlage advised that she believed that the fire department has not reviewed the plans, but indicated she would check on this. Mr. Echols noted that the Planning Commission had voted in the past that the fire department review this type of project.

Agricopia lake – Plan has been approved to renovate the existing irrigation lake for stormwater purposes, and authority has been given to begin draining the lake, which is an approximately 4-week process. There are utility issues still to be resolved.

Stagecoach Crossing – The developer will be bringing the Master Site Development Plan to the Planning Commission at the October 5 meeting. A meeting has been scheduled on September 14 for Town staff and the project engineer (Bolton-Latham) and planners.

Faison annexation - Public hearings have been scheduled for the Planning Commission on October 5 and for the Town Council on October 26.

Grasso annexation – A petition was received today, but no hearing schedule has been set.

Charles County Sheriff's Office – A permit was issued last week for their new forensics lab on Kent Avenue. The Quartermaster building on Kent Avenue is moving out to Radio Station Road, and the water tower will come down.

Mr. Echols reiterated that the Planning Commission had voted in the past to make the fire department's review part of the review process on multi-family and commercial projects.

In response to Mr. Krebeck's question, Ms. Flerlage confirmed that the Town's priority for the location of forest conservation is that it be on-site, but, if not, at least in the same watershed.

Regarding the Grasso annexation, Mr. Echols asked Mr. Hale to provide information regarding its location and the proposed development. During his brief discussion, Mr. Hale advised that the Grasso property borders Clarks Run Subdivision, and that the property owner has spoken to a builder who has offered to restore the historic home for the property owner if he is able to build a certain number of homes on the property. Mr. Hale also advised that the Clarks Run Citizens Association formed a committee to look into the proposed annexation, and noted that the Citizens Association will support the project due to the effort to restore and save the historic home and clean up the downed trees, all damaged during the 2002 tornado, but they are recommending the property be zoned R-21, if annexed, rather than the R-10 requested by the petitioner.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:52 PM.

Submitted by:

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Judith T. Frazier  
Town Clerk