

La Plata Planning Commission
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
September 2, 2003, 7:00 PM

Present: Chairman C. Keith Back, Garyton C. Echols, Jr., Walter T. Sollars, Jr., Keith A. Hettel, Robert W. Thompson, Roy G. Hale – Commission members; Douglas R. Miller, Town Manager; Steven F. Schroeder, Project Manager; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk

Guests: (see roster)

Minutes:

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

Approval of August minutes

Mr. Hale made a motion to approve the minutes of the August meeting. Mr. Hettel seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Perkins Restaurant – courtesy review

Brad Voight, of The Peters Group, and Gore Bolton, of Bolton Latham, presented a site and landscape plan and building elevations for Perkins Restaurant, proposed to be built at the corner of Crain Highway and Heritage Green Parkway. The building will be approximately 5700 square feet; the hours of operation are 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM for breakfast, lunch and dinner, with a seating capacity of approximately 170. They noted that they have been before and received approval from the Design Review Board.

During the discussion which followed, the Planning Commission expressed appreciation to Perkins Restaurant for locating in La Plata. The Planning Commission also expressed concern regarding several issues: (1) The potential traffic problem if drivers eastbound on Heritage Green Parkway turn left into the right-in/right-out access drive. Mr. Bolton agreed that a “No U Turn” sign should be posted. (2) The location of the dumpster pad is on the highest point of the site and could be a detriment to traffic. It is also in the equivalent of their front yard and their main entrance drive, and the wood fence will eventually become an eyesore. It was suggested that the dumpster pad be relocated to the opposite corner, where it was noted more potential exists for landscaping. (3) It was noted that their proposed sign and flag pole will be issues due to the new sign regulations being prepared by the Town.

Agricopia Subdivision – bonus density issue

Mr. Miller explained that a work session needed to be scheduled to discuss this complex issue. The Planning Commission agreed to a tentative date of Thursday, September 18, at 7:00 PM. Mr. Miller advised he would confirm the date with the Commission members after he determines that the developer is available on that date.

Other business

Fowler Earnshaw Subdivision sketch plan

Mr. Miller explained that Ken Crouse, of Lorenzi Dodds and Gunnill, was present to obtain feedback from the Planning Commission prior to preparing the preliminary plat design on property located in the Willow Lane/Hemlock Court area which Fowler Earnshaw wishes to subdivide for single family homes.

Mr. Crouse presented the sketch plan and responded to questions posed by the Planning Commission. He described the proposal to build 56 homes (1400-1800 sq. ft., 1 ½- and 2-story.) Regarding a second access, Mr. Crouse noted they are looking into several possibilities: purchasing a property (Winkler) to connect the road through to Oak Avenue, connecting through the school property as an emergency only access (locked gate) and connecting through to Worcester Street, which would require research into deed information.

During this discussion, the Planning Commission advised Mr. Crouse of several concerns: (1) The 910' cul-de-sac exceeds the maximum length allowed. (2) A second access is needed. (3) Connecting to Worcester Street would not be appropriate as the right-of-way is only 30 feet. (4) Willow Lane is owned by the Board of Education. The Town does not know their access policy. (5) The proposed density is of concern in that area of Town and being so close to the schools. (6) Wetlands and streams issues exist.

Other business

Mr. Miller confirmed that the bus would leave Town Hall at 9:15 AM on September 16, for the GP Homes tour of Kentlands in Gaithersburg and King Farm in Rockville.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk