

La Plata Planning Commission  
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland  
Regular meeting  
May 2, 2006, 7:00 PM

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

Town Staff: Steven F. Schroeder, Project Manager

Minutes:

Vice Chairman Hettel 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 April minutes

Mr. Rose moved to approve the minutes of the April regular meeting. Ms. Posey seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

#### Public hearing: Rosewick Crossing Annexation – zoning recommendation

*[A staff report dated May 2, 2006 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]*

Vice Chairman Hettel 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 April 14, 2006, edition of the Maryland Independent newspaper.

Steve Scott, attorney representing the applicant, advised that this is the same basic application previously seen by the Commission, that there were no substantive changes, but that the Town Attorney determined there were advertising errors and recommended this course of action. Mr. Scott further advised that Roger Wright of Faison and David Cooksey of Loiederman Soltesz and Associates were present to answer any questions from the Planning Commission.

At Vice Chairman Hettel's request, Ms. Flerlage provided a brief background on this annexation petition, as outlined in the staff report provided to the Commission. Ms. Flerlage advised that CH Commercial Highway is the recommended zoning for the parcels of land and that MUD-3 is the recommended zoning for the portion of Washington Avenue, due to its adjacency to an existing MUD-3 district.

Vice Chairman Hettel asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak.

Linda Redding, P.O. Box 784, La Plata (former resident of the Town), asked that the Town protect natural resources and asked that the buildings be built as "green buildings", including plantings on the roofs, reduction of impervious surfaces (parking lots), bio-retention areas in the parking lots, and use of geothermal and solar energy sources. Ms. Redding advised that a resource for this information is the U. S. Green Building Council.

Harlan Lang, La Plata Garden Apartments, reported on how Route 1 in Laurel looks “like a garden” with all of the trees and other plantings, and noted he believed that with any new development, the developers should be required to make the development look good from the street.

Mike Runfola, 113 Morris Drive, noted that during a previous presentation the applicant stated the users would use 100,000 gallons per day of water. Mr. Runfola reported he had not been able to obtain water use information from Lowe’s and asked the Planning Commission to request that Faison provide to the Town information regarding water use for the past two years.

Linda Redding remarked that “green buildings” pay for themselves, that they catch rain water in barrels or other systems for reuse for hand-washing and use motion detector faucets in sinks. Ms. Redding noted that more community support would be garnered if there is a benefit to the community rather than just to the developer.

Mr. Scott advised he had no closing remarks, and that they would rest on what’s on the record.

Regarding the water use information issue, Mr. Gilpin asked whether it would be unreasonable to require this usage information. Ms. Flerlage advised that when a building permit is to be issued, the Town requires the applicant to provide water use information from a facility of about the same size and scope of services, and that this information is used to determine the major facility fee. Mr. Rose noted he hoped the Town is moving in a direction that will provide for ways to conserve water and provide for better usage of water.

There being no other speakers and no further discussion by the Planning Commission, Vice Chairman Hettel closed the hearing at 7:18 PM.

#### Zoning Recommendation to Town Council on Rosewick annexation petition

Following the hearing and discussion, Mr. Gilpin moved to recommend that if the property is annexed, the recommended zoning be CH Commercial Highway for the parcels of land and MUD-3 for the portion of Washington Avenue which is part of the petition. Mr. Rose seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

SMO Realty, LLC and SMO, Incorporated (La Plata Shell/7-Eleven Store): Recommendation to Board of Appeals regarding special exception application for “redevelopment of an existing filling station, car wash and convenience store” in the C-H zoning district. *[A staff report dated May 2, 2006 was included in the Planning Commission’s meeting packets.]*

Thomas Mudd, attorney for the applicant, advised that Jerry Antosh of SMO, James Erdman of Ben Dyer Associates, and Mike Pellegrino, architect for the project, were present to provide information and answer any questions from the Planning Commission.

Mr. Antosh described the properties, the acreage and current uses of a Shell gas station with convenience store and car wash, and a 7-Eleven store which is closed. He noted they plan to demolish all of the current structures and construct a new Shell station, convenience store and car wash. A bank will be built on the site of the 7-Eleven store, details of which will be displayed in the future when they present a site development plan to the Planning Commission. Mr. Antosh advised they have presented

the plan to SHA and hired a traffic consultant to work with SHA's comments. He further noted there currently are three curb cuts on Rt. 301, one of which will be closed.

At Vice Chairman Hettel's request, Ms. Flerlage went over the staff report on this project.

Mr. Erdman and Mr. Antosh responded to questions posed by the Commission, noting that regrading of the entire property will be a challenge because they will need to drop the middle of the site down and grade the bank site up. They must treat 20% of storm water that's not already treated today. Mr. Back asked if the design of the convenience store is going to be similar to any of the other convenience stores they have. Mr. Antosh responded that this convenience store is completely different in terms of its exterior, noting that it is practically all brick, the carwash is all brick, and the canopy has brick elements. Mr. Back noted that removal of one curb cut at the gas station site will improve that intersection. Regarding the location of the dumpster on the back road, concern was expressed that consideration be given to nearby residents. Concern was expressed that consideration be given to providing a back-up generator so they can still pump fuel in case of emergencies.

Following this discussion, Mr. Back moved to recommend to the Board of Appeals that they approve the special exception as stated. Mr. Gilpin seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Stagecoach Crossing, Phase 2A – site plan review and comment

*[A staff report dated May 2, 2006 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.]*

Ms. Flerlage provided a brief background on this phase of the development.

Steve Murray, Somerset Land Division, Michelle Bolton, Jay Parker and Craig McClure presented information regarding this development, including architecture and landscaping. It was noted that MDE has given jurisdictional approval (no stream crossings.)

Consensus of the Planning Commission: the site plan layout is approvable as shown.

Other business

Ms. Flerlage provided an update on current projects and developments in the Town.

There being no further business, Mr. Gilpin moved to adjourn at 8:17 PM. Mr. Back seconded the motion and it carried.

Submitted by:

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Judith T. Frazier  
Town Clerk