

La Plata Planning Commission  
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland  
Regular Meeting  
February 3, 2009, 7:00 PM

Present: Chairman Rich Gilpin [*arrived at 7:15 PM*], Keith A. Hettel, Garyton C. Echols, Jr., Mark Rose, Debra W. Posey – Commission members; Cathy Flerlage, Director of Planning and Zoning; Judith T. Frazier, Town Clerk (Due to the absence of Mr. Goldsmith, Ms. Posey had full voting rights.)

Town Staff: Daniel J. Mears, Town Manager; David M. Jenkins, Director of Municipal Development

Minutes:

Vice Chairman Hettel called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM and asked Mr. Echols to lead the Commission and audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### Approval of January minutes

Mr. Echols moved to approve the minutes of the January 6 meeting. Ms. Posey seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Rezoning – concept presentation: Higdon/Frere, owners of Kent Knolls Subdivision at end of East Hawthorne Drive [*A staff report dated February 3, 2009 was included in the Planning Commission's meeting packets.*]

Ms. Flerlage provided a brief overview of the staff report.

Joseph Higdon and Tom Higdon, Jr., two of the owners of Kent Knolls Subdivision (parcels 54, 55 and 56 on tax map 108), presented information regarding their to request to rezone from R-8 to R-3 on the 2.56 acres of property, which would allow for development of moderate income-type, multi-family rental housing. During discussion, they expressed their continued commitment to improve and dedicate E. Hawthorne Drive, which was made as part of the approval of the Kent Knolls Subdivision.

Following discussion, the Planning Commission indicated that this rezoning proposal has merit to move forward as part of the Comprehensive rezoning process.

#### Other business

Ms. Flerlage provided a brief update on projects in the Town.

There being no further business, Mr. Rose moved to adjourn at 7:15 PM. Ms. Posey seconded the motion and it carried. The Planning Commission continued in work session regarding Comprehensive Plan/2008 update.

### Work Session – Comprehensive Plan/2008 update

Transportation Element – consensus regarding language in the current draft [as amended 1/6/09]  
*[A staff report dated February 3, 2009 was included in the Planning Commission’s meeting packets.]*

Mr. Echols led a brief discussion regarding further amendments to the Transportation Element. The Commission agreed to the following further amendments to the text of the Transportation Element and that this Element will be brought back to the Planning Commission again at the March meeting: [Note: Underlining has been added to all amendments; ~~strike-out~~ indicates text deleted; ALL CAPS indicates new text.]

#### 2.4A. Transportation Background Information:

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During the past six years, since the Comprehensive Plan was last updated, several transportation projects (new streets) have been implemented:

\* \* \*

- Rosewick Road has been extended from Washington Ave. to Route 301 as four lanes, divided; the four-lane connection of Rosewick to St. Charles Parkway is near to completion COMPLETED.

\* \* \*

#### 2.4C. Transportation Standards and Implementation: To meet the needs identified above, certain standards and procedures are recommended:

- Install sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks on existing Town streets in the downtown area which are compliant with ADA regulations wherever they do not currently exist to include adding these upgrades to Washington Ave., East Hawthorne Drive, Kent Ave., Oak Ave., Maple Ave., sections of Charles St., and sections of Glen Albin Rd.
- Obtain an additional CSX railroad crossing to provide access and egress for the Heritage Green development. *[FILE NOTE: This item was moved from last to second in this list.]*
- Continue funding the Paving Overlay Program as part of the Town’s Capital Expansion Plan.
- Implement and promote “green street design” for new construction, incorporating methodologies to reduce impervious areas, provide water quality control, decrease rates of urban storm run-off, and reduce “urban heat island” effect.
- Establish standards for curb cut frequency for different classifications of Town streets.
- Set standards for minimum street horizontal curves, intersection radii, and paving widths that serve to slow neighborhood traffic and protect pedestrians (TND design).
- Discourage cul-de-sacs; encourage alley access.
- Use roundabouts vs. signalized intersections on “parkway” functioning streets like La Plata Parkway, Heritage Green Parkway, and Stagecoach Avenue.
- Develop a palette of traffic-calming devices to be utilized as need arises on neighborhood streets, such as vertical deflection, horizontal shifts, and road narrowing.

- 2.4B. Transportation Objectives and Policies: The following items are specific goals for acquisition, improvement, and development of transportation routes in La Plata.

\* \* \*

- Improve emergency access and response times to existing subdivisions in the Town, in order to meet public safety standards for **the number of minutes needed to provide service to a location**. This aspect of plan review will be fulfilled by local emergency service providers, such as the La Plata Volunteer Fire Department and the Charles County Rescue Squad.

The Planning Commission agreed that further research is needed regarding the issue of providing an actual number of minutes in “**the number of minutes needed to provide service to a location**.” Chairman Gilpin will contact Chief Shahan, La Plata Volunteer Fire Department, regarding this issue.

Community and Economic Development Element – consensus regarding language in the current draft  
*[A staff report dated February 3, 2009 was included in the Planning Commission’s meeting packets.]*

Planning Commission consensus: The Planning Commission agreed to the language in the current draft of the Community and Economic Development Element.

Review and Regulation Element – consensus regarding language in the current draft  
*[A staff report dated February 3, 2009 was included in the Planning Commission’s meeting packets.]*

Planning Commission consensus: The Planning Commission agreed to the language in the current draft of the Review and Regulation Element.

Land Use Element – review and discussion of draft  
*[A staff report dated February 3, 2009 was included in the Planning Commission’s meeting packets.]*

Discussion included the list of properties which are subject to rezoning, either by request of the property owners or the Town. It was noted that rezoning to the requested zone made by Rieman, Salem Properties and Spence Bowling would constitute spot zoning.

Further discussion included the proposed Planned Redevelopment and Infill District (PRID) floating zone classification. During discussion a map was displayed which identified the suggested PRID areas.

The Planning Commission will discuss this Element again at the March meeting.

There being no voiced objection, the work session adjourned at 9:33 PM.

Submitted by:

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Judith T. Frazier  
Town Clerk