

La Plata Planning Commission
Town Hall, La Plata, Maryland
Regular meeting
October 7, 2003, 7:00 PM

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

Town staff: Patricia L. Bembe, Assistant Town Manager, Carol L. Rollins, Administrative Assistant, Steven F. Schroeder, Project Manager, Jeffrey F. Guido, Director of Inspections

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.

Chairman Back announced that the Town Council recently appointed Mr. Thompson as full member and Mr. Krebeck as alternate member on the Planning Commission. Chairman Back welcomed and introduced Mr. Krebeck. It was noted that Walter T. Sollars, Jr. had accepted appointment as alternate member of the Board of Appeals.

Approval of September minutes

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

Public hearing: Ordinance 03-13 Sign Regulations

Mr. Miller advised that the hearing notice was advertised in the September 19, 2003 edition of the Maryland Independent. Mr. Miller noted that a great deal of work was done by members of the Town's business community and by Town staff to provide the Sign Regulations ordinance, and advised that a joint work session on this ordinance will be held by the Town Council and the Planning Commission on October 21 or October 28, in an effort to provide legislation prior to the November 15 deadline on the moratorium in place regarding acceptance and processing of sign permits.

Chairman Back called the hearing to order. Chairman Back asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak for or against the ordinance. No one wished to speak. There being no speakers, Chairman Back closed the hearing.

The Planning Commission briefly discussed Ordinance 03-13, noting questions and concerns regarding conflicting language regarding sign height computation, height of flag poles and size of flags, illuminated signs for home occupations in senior living communities, and provision of a survey of existing signage in the town. In addition, due to their lack of attendance at this hearing, a concern was expressed that business community representatives be contacted by Town staff and be encouraged to attend the Town Council's hearing. It was also noted that the Planning Commission should carefully review this ordinance and consider its impact on current businesses and on businesses the Town is trying to attract.

Regarding the joint work session, it was suggested that more than one work session be held. The Commission agreed to schedule a work session on October 21, at 7:00 PM, and to also have a work session on October 28, if necessary.

Preliminary plat: Agricopia Subdivision

Mr. Miller briefly discussed the items in the subdivision review report, dated October, 2003 (copy provided to each member), noting there was no reason to not approve the preliminary plat.

Gore Bolton and R. J. Earnshaw were present to discuss the preliminary plat. Mr. Bolton remarked they had no problems with any of the items in the report. In response to Mr. Hale, Mr. Bolton advised that the final plat would reflect a correction to the error of having two cul-de-sacs with the same street name, and that they would also coordinate this correction with the 911 address office. Regarding connecting the hiker-biker trail, it was noted that the link will be made with Hickory Ridge. Mr. Bolton also responded that they are days away from being able to submit final plats for Sections 4 and 5.

Mr. Echols made a motion to approve the Agricopia preliminary plat, with the condition that the staff review comments be incorporated. Mr. Hale seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous vote.

Other business (none)

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Submitted by:

Judith T. Frazier
Town Clerk