

WASHINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
January 6, 2014

The Washington County Planning Commission held its regular meeting on Monday, January 6, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Washington County Administrative Annex, 80 West Baltimore Street, Hagerstown, Maryland.

Members present were: Chairman Terry Reiber, Clint Wiley, Dennis Reeder, Drew Bowen and Ex-officio William McKinley. Staff members present were: Planning Director Stephen Goodrich, Chief of Plan Review & Permitting Tim Lung, Senior Planner Lisa Kelly and Administrative Assistant Debra Eckard.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Reiber called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7:13 p.m.

MINUTES

Mr. Bowen made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 2, 2013 regular meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Reeder and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

- Beaver Creek Speakeasy

Ms. Kelly presented a request by Elizabeth Hopkinson to allow for offsite parking for her existing catering business [Beaver Creek Speakeasy] at 20432 Beaver Creek Road, which is 1.92 acres in size. The applicant is proposing to have on-site events under a tent at the dwelling that was previously approved for a bed and breakfast. The new proposal would require 30 parking spaces to be provided on-site for the tented events and an additional 12 spaces would be required if there are functions inside the house as well. The previously approved site plan for the bed and breakfast shows 6 parking spaces on the site. The applicant has contacted the Beaver Creek Church of the Brethren officials and has obtained approval from them to use the church parking for patrons during hours when it is not being used for church functions. In accordance with Section 22.12(b) of the Zoning Ordinance, there are four conditions associated with the approval of shared parking facilities. The Planning Commission may approve the sharing of parking facilities between one or more uses based on a detailed parking study.

Discussion and Comments: Mr. Bowen expressed his concern regarding safety for patrons going between the church parking lot and the event site. Commissioner McKinley noted that additional information has been submitted that indicates there should not be any conflicts between the church's use of the parking area and the applicant's use. Mr. Wiley noted that the proposed low-speed vehicle that would be used to transport patrons between the parking area and the event site is not a legal vehicle for on-road use. Ms. Hopkinson, applicant, stated that the proposal has changed and this type of vehicle would not be used. Mr. Wiley also expressed his concern with regard to pedestrian traffic between the two sites.

Mr. Fred Frederick of Frederick, Seibert & Associates [the consultant] stated that the distance between the Church's parking area and the event site is approximately 540 feet. This exceeds the 500 foot distance cited in the Zoning Ordinance, which Mr. Frederick indicated is for pedestrian traffic. He noted that guests going to the event site will be shuttled from one site to the other. Mr. Frederick also noted there is enough room at the back of the site where parking could be accommodated; however, this property is close to the Beaver Creek, which is protected. The applicant would like to use this space, if needed, but retain the grass instead of paving. Mr. Lung stated that this request would need to be reviewed by Staff during the site plan phase. Mr. Frederick addressed concerns of buffering between the event site and the neighboring properties. He stated there are evergreen trees surrounding the site that provides year-round buffering.

Commissioner McKinley asked if one of the conditions of renting this facility would be no pedestrian traffic [guests must be shuttled]. Ms. Hopkinson stated that event invitations will inform guests that there will be shuttle service provided from the parking area to the event area. She also noted that the contract for leasing/renting the event space will require that shuttle service be provided. Commissioner McKinley would like the applicant [via a statement in the contract or on the event invitations] to encourage all guests to use the shuttle service. Mr. Reiber asked what the average size of events would be. Ms. Hopkinson stated that she could accommodate up to 80 people; however, the majority of her current clientele are parties of 16 to 20 people. She believes that the majority of events will be between 30 to 50 people. Mr. Reiber asked what type of shuttle service would be provided. Ms. Hopkinson believes a majority of the shuttles will be provided by party buses or limousines.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Bowen made a motion to approve the request for shared parking with the following conditions:

1. There will be no more than 80 guests at an event.
2. The tents will be located on sites 1 and 2 as shown on the drawing accompanying this request.
3. There will be shuttle service provided from the church parking area to the event site.
4. If the Church of the Brethren decides NOT to allow parking at their location, the Beaver Creek Speakeasy forfeits the right to host any/all events. [If this happens, a new site plan may be submitted to the Washington County Planning Commission for approval of new parking arrangements.]

5. The site plan for the Beaver Creek Spreakeasy must be presented to the Planning Commission for approval.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Wiley and unanimously approved.

Walmart/Arnett Farms (PSP-10-001)

Mr. Lung presented an update on the proposed Walmart site located south of Col. HK Douglas Drive. A site plan was approved with conditions on July 1, 2013 by the Planning Commission. Mr. Lung is requesting clarification of the condition specific to the State Highway Administration's approval. In a letter dated July 3, 2013, the State Highway Administration states, "SHA has no objection to the site plan approval, however, we request inclusion in the project after such time as the Traffic Impact Study (TIS) is approved by all agencies." A second letter dated October 15, 2013 was received from the SHA stating that due to the government shutdown, there was a delay in receiving acceptance of the Interstate Access Pointe Approval Submitted from the Federal Highway Administration. Staff is requesting verification from the Planning Commission that State Highway's letter of July 3, 2013 and the follow-up letter of October 15, 2013 is sufficient to meet the Planning Commission's condition of site plan approval regarding SHA approval.

Discussion and Comments: There was a brief discussion regarding the traffic study and the road improvements on Maryland Route 65 including the interstate ramps.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Reeder made a motion to accept the State Highway Administration's letter of July 3, 2014 which is sufficient to meet the Planning Commission's approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wiley and unanimously approved.

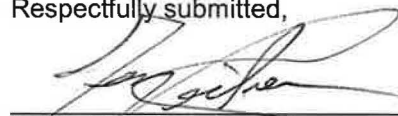
UPCOMING MEETINGS

1. Thursday, January 16, 2014, 7:00 p.m., Hancock Town Growth Area Meeting, Town Hall, 126 West High Street, Hancock, Maryland
2. Wednesday, January 29, 2014, 7:00 p.m. – Clear Spring Town Growth Area meeting, Clear Spring High School, 12630 Broadfording Road, Clear Spring, Maryland
3. Monday, February 3, 2014, 7:00 p.m., Washington County Planning Commission regular meeting (Location: TBA)
4. Wednesday, February 12, 2014, 7:00 p.m., Boonsboro Town Growth Area meeting, Shafer Park Community Center, Park Drive, Boonsboro, Maryland
5. Wednesday, February 26, 2014, 7:00 p.m., Smithsburg Town Growth Area meeting, Town Hall, 21 West Water Street, 2nd Floor, Smithsburg, Maryland

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Reeder made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. So ordered.

Respectfully submitted,



Terry Reiber, Chairman