

WASHINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

December 7, 2015

The Washington County Planning Commission held its regular meeting on Monday, December 7, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at the Washington County Administration Building, 100 West Washington Street, Room 255, 2nd Floor, Hagerstown, Maryland.

Commission members present were: Chairman Terry Reiber, Dennis Reeder, Clint Wiley, Andrew Bowen and newly appointed Jeremiah Weddle. [Mr. Weddle will not be voting on any agenda items at this evening's meeting.] Staff members present were: Washington County Department of Planning & Zoning - Stephen Goodrich, Director, Fred Nugent, Parks & Environmental Planner, and Debra Eckard, Administrative Assistant, Washington County Department of Plan Review – Tim Lung, Deputy Director.

CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Goodrich announced that the item listed on the agenda under Old Business for the Community Rescue Service has been withdrawn at this time.

MINUTES

Motion and Vote: Mr. Bowen made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 2, 2015 Planning Commission regular meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Reeder and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

MODIFICATIONS

Taylor Farms III, LLC (SV-15-012)

Mr. Lung presented for review and approval a modification request from the Subdivision Ordinance as it relates to simplified plats. Mr. Lung explained that the simplified plat procedure is normally reserved for the moving of property lines, adding a piece of property from one property to another without creating a new lot. There is a provision in the Subdivision Ordinance that simplified plats can be used for other purposes which must be approved by the Planning Commission. In this case, the applicant wants to create a stand-alone simplified parcel not for development. The property as it exists today is approximately 42 acres in size; 9 acres is being requested to create the stand-alone not for development parcel and 33 acres would be remaining lands. The remaining lands are proposed to be used for the expansion of DOT Foods. Staff has no objection to the proposal with the caveat that, if the request is approved by the Planning Commission, a condition be placed on the approval that the developer must provide the standard 25-foot from centerline right-of-way along Wright Road.

Discussion and Comments: Mr. Reiber asked if the stand-alone not for development parcel consisting of nine acres will be recorded. Mr. Lung stated that the restriction will be included in the owner's statement that is with the simplified plat and in the recorded deed.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Bowen made a motion to approve the modification request with the condition that the developer will dedicate the standard 25-feet from centerline right-of-way along Wright Road. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wiley and unanimously approved.

FOREST CONSERVATION

Town of Boonsboro

Mr. Nugent presented for review and approval a request from the Town of Boonsboro to establish a forest bank on property located along the east side of Monroe Road and north of Shepherdstown Pike. He explained this is the first request the County has received since the adoption of Section 20 of the Forest Conservation Ordinance. Mr. Nugent stated that a forest bank will establish a permanent easement on the property and briefly explained how the forest banking process will work.

Discussion and Comment: Mr. Reiber expressed his concern that the forest banks may not be in the same area where development is occurring; therefore, it is not helping the environment in the development area. Mr. Nugent explained that forest banking is one step above payment-in-lieu in the mitigation process. The developer must prove that there is no other mitigation available for his particular site. This requirement was established because similar concerns were expressed at the time Section 20 was proposed. Mr. Goodrich stated that all requests to use forest banking as mitigation must be presented to the Planning Commission which has the authority to approve or deny any mitigation proposal. Mr. Reiber expressed his concern that on-site forest retention is not a priority. Mr. Bowen expressed his opinion that having a forest banking program will help to preserve forested areas. Mr. Goodrich stated that the forest bank request being reviewed this evening is intended for projects within the Town of Boonsboro.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Reeder made a motion to approve the request to establish a forest bank for the Town of Boonsboro as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bowen and unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

Update of Staff Approvals

Mr. Lung reported there were 19 new submittals made to the Department of Plan Review including a site plan for a large solar generating facility. There were 11 plan approvals issued in November. A site plan was approved by staff for the Horizon Goodwill facility located along Pennsylvania Avenue near the Hagerstown Regional Airport.

Planning Commission appointments

Mr. Goodrich stated that two of the Planning Commission members' terms will expire in March of 2016. Mr. Reeder, having served one full-term, is eligible for re-appointment; however, Mr. Wiley has served two full terms and is not eligible for re-appointment unless an exception is made by the Board of County Commissioners. A list of potential candidates was distributed to the Commission members.

Discussion and Comment: Mr. Reiber expressed his concern with regard to the appointment of new members during the Comprehensive Plan Update and questioned if the Commissioners would consider an extension of Mr. Wiley's term if he is willing to remain on the Commission. Mr. Goodrich stated he would present the request to the County Commissioners if the Planning Commission chooses to make that its recommendation. Mr. Bowen agreed with Mr. Reiber's comments and believes there should be continuity throughout the Comprehensive Plan Update. Mr. Wiley stated that he has been looking forward to working on and completing the Comprehensive Plan Update and he would be willing to serve an additional term. Commission members will review the candidates' applications and make their recommendations at the January meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Reeder made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wiley and so ordered by the Chairman.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

1. Monday, January 4, 2016, 7:00 p.m., Washington County Planning Commission regular meeting, Washington County Administration Building, 100 West Washington Street, Room 255, Hagerstown, Maryland

Respectfully submitted,



Terry Reiber, Chairman