

**WASHINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
January 10, 2022**

Due to in-person meeting restrictions related to the COVID pandemic, the Washington County Planning Commission held its regular monthly meeting on Monday, January 10, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. virtually using Zoom software. No physical meeting took place.

Planning Commission members present were: David Kline, Vice Chairman, Denny Reeder, Jeremiah Weddle, Robert Goetz, Jeff Semler, and Ex-officio County Commissioner Randall Wagner. Staff members present were: Washington County Department of Planning & Zoning: Jill Baker, Director; Jennifer Kinzer, Deputy Director; Travis Allen, Comprehensive Planner; Meghan Jenkins, GIS Coordinator; and Debra Eckard, Administrative Assistant.

Also present at the meeting were: Adam Hager and Trevor Frederick of Frederick, Seibert & Associates; Gordon Poffenberger, Fox & Associates; Dan Cross, Cloverly Development; Bob Barrick, Piedmont Design Group; Michael Wiley and Ed Scott representing the Sharpsburg Pike Retail development.

CALL TO ORDER

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

MINUTES

Motion and Vote: Mr. Weddle made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2021 Planning Commission regular meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goetz and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

FOREST CONSERVATION

Cloverly Mixed Use Development [FP-21-004]

Mr. Allen presented for review and approval a preliminary forest conservation plan for a new mixed use development at 12305 Smithsburg Pike in the Town of Smithsburg. As part of the proposed forest mitigation package, the developer is requesting the removal of 7 specimen trees from the development site and to use the payment-in-lieu option to satisfy .93 acres of planting requirements. The developer is also proposing on-site and off-site forest mitigation as well as street trees as part of the preliminary forest conservation plan. A letter of support has been received from the Town of Smithsburg for this plan.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Semler made a motion to approve the preliminary forest conservation plan, the payment-in-lieu request, and the variance request to remove 7 specimen trees. The motion was seconded by Mr. Weddle and unanimously approved.

National Pike Logistics Center [GP-21-019]

Mr. Allen presented for review and approval a variance request to remove 27 specimen trees on property located at 16822 National Pike. Twenty-five of these trees are not part of a forest stand; 22 are Silver Maple trees that line the driveway to the farmhouse. Only ½ acre of trees will be removed from the existing forest and all mitigation will be satisfied on site.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Semler made a motion to approve the variance request as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Reeder and unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

Sharpsburg Pike Retail [S-19-035]

Ms. Baker presented for review and approval a request for a 12-month extension for a subdivision replat of property located at 10324 Sharpsburg Pike. She explained that the developer has had some delays due to dealing with traffic issues and negotiations with other developers in the area.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Goetz made a motion to approve the request for a 12-month extension. The motion was seconded by Mr. Reeder and unanimously approved.

Update of Staff Approvals

Ms. Kinzer stated that a written report was sent to members in the agenda packet.

Comprehensive Plan Update

Ms. Baker began a review of the Highways map and chart that goes along with it. Several resources are used in preparing this map including the Washington County Capital Improvements Program, projects from the Long Range Transportation Plan developed by the HEPMPQ, and the State of Maryland's Highway Needs Inventory.

Staff has been developing the new Land Use Plan. The limitations that are predicted over the next 20 years on water and sewer will be highlighted in the Water Resources Element (WRE). Population projections show a growth of approximately 12,000 new households over the next 20 years. Assuming our standard growth rate of 80% of development in the urban area and 20% in the rural area, we could expect 9,000 new units in the growth areas over the next 20 years. We have also calculated a high growth scenario of 50% above the standard growth rate, which predicts over 24,000 units. Staff has performed a development capacity analysis which looks at the current zoning, how much capacity we have currently, and if we could absorb the additional units. Staff believes that the Urban Growth Area (UGA) is currently oversized for what is needed and what can be served. Therefore, Staff is proposing to retract the Growth Area to basically match the MRGA.

A map was displayed showing the City of Hagerstown's Medium Range Growth Area (MRGA) and staff's proposed boundary. Ms. Baker reviewed the proposed map with members. Staff is proposing the following areas to be retracted from the Growth Area:

- Areas 1, 2 and 3 – The area north of Showalter Road around the Airport will stay in the Growth Area and will eventually be shifted into the City's MRGA boundary with a few exceptions where no water or sewer services are available (areas 1, 2 and 3).
- Areas 4 and 5 (Leitersburg Pike/Spring Valley area) - environmental concerns (flood plain)
- Areas 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 - smaller areas that have no water or sewer available; environmental issues.
- Area 11 (east side of Kieffer Funk Road) - inadequate road, not conducive to development; no utilities available; mostly farmland
- Area 12 - correction to current map.
- Areas 13, 14 and 15 - currently no service on the south side of I-70 at this interchange; roads are not conducive to high levels of development; inadequate one lane bridge on Beaver Creek Road; environmental concerns
 - There was a brief discussion regarding the area north of Claggett's Mill and proposed development in that area. Mr. Weddle believes that Poffenberger Road has changed due to the construction of the Walmart on Sharpsburg Pike and expressed his concern that if this area is removed from the UGA, there will be no improvements on Poffenberger Road on the east side of Antietam Creek. If it stays in the UGA, there could be development that would cause improvements to the roadway and the bridge. Mr. Goetz believes this is an area with potential growth and development. Mr. Weddle also expressed concern that property values will be decreased if it is removed from the UGA. Members expressed their opinions that growth has already happened and we should not be retracting the Growth Area boundary in this area. Staff will re-evaluate.
- Areas 16, 17 and 18 – outside of the MRGA, City will not provide water; no extension of services;
- Area 19 – no water or sewer services; west side of #19 is a railroad track that separates industrial park from farmland
- Area 20 – small area (1 or 2 parcels) – clean up of current map
- Area 21 – small portion of old Williamsport Tannery – not conducive to development, contamination issues
- Area 22 – correction of a property line
- Area 23 – correction of property lines along Honeyfield Road; no services; outside of MRGA
- Areas 24 – currently has public water, no public sewer; limited access for development
- Area 25 – no water service beyond the Church; well outside MRGA; no utilities
- Area 26 (Cearfoss Pike) – limited road access; no public water; outside MRGA; environmental concerns (floodplain)


UPCOMING MEETINGS

1. Monday, February 7, 2022, 7:00 p.m. – Washington County Planning Commission public rezoning information and regular meeting

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Semler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goetz and so ordered by the Vice-Chairman.

Respectfully submitted,



Clint Wiley, Chairman