

DORCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES –MARCH 5, 2014

The Dorchester County Planning Commission held their regular meeting on March 5, 2014 at 12:00 pm in the County Office Building, Room 110 in Cambridge MD. Members present were: Laura Layton, Robbie Hanson, Bill Giese, Ralph Lewis, David Andrews, Jerry Burroughs, and attorney Chad Malkus. Also present were Rodney Banks, Deputy Director, and Merris Hurley, recording. Absent were Steve Dodd and Pam Jackson.

Mr. Hanson called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. A motion was made by Mr. Giese to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2013 meeting. Seconded by Mr. Andrews and carried.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**A. Non-commercial raising of poultry (chickens).** Mr. Banks informed the Commission that Councilman Bradshaw has asked the Commission to revisit their decision in not making revisions to the ordinance regarding this issue. Councilman Bradshaw received information from a poultry engineer that said he saw no reason why a home owner cannot have a few laying hens for personal consumption (eggs). Mr. Banks discussed with the Commission some restrictions that could be added if they wished to revise the ordinance. Restricting roosters and registering flocks with MDA which addresses potential disease situations were suggested. Mr. Hanson commented that if the ordinance is to be changed, the Council has to approve it anyway. The Commission decided that they will stand on the decision they already made to leave the ordinance the way that it is.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Text Amendment “Produce Market” – Referral of proposed Legislation from County Council for review and recommendation.** Mr. Banks explained to the Commission that the office was considering a text amendment to add “produce market” to the ordinance as a supplement to “produce stand”. The Jackson’s of Emily’s Produce were present also. To distinguish between a “market” and a “stand”, there will be a square footage cut-off of 500 square feet or more for a “market” and less than 500 square feet for a “stand”. Other proposed regulations would be: “market” would have to go to the Board of Appeals for a special exception; must be an agricultural use, not commercial use; the sales area of a principal structure must not exceed 3,000 square feet and an accessory structure cannot exceed 2,000 square feet; a list of items that are allowed to be sold (but not limited to just that list); the possibility of a seasonal u-pick; setback requirements; on-site parking; signage; vehicular access and time limitations.

Mrs. Layton informed the Commission that she does not agree with the time limit or the size limit. She thinks that these types of businesses should be allowed to grow.

Mr. Hanson asked if a text amendment needed a public hearing and Mr. Banks informed him that that was up to the Commission.

Mrs. Layton said that more input from the Jackson’s and the Farm Bureau were needed before any decisions were made. Mr. Hanson declared that the record would stay open until a public hearing was held for more suggestions and possible revisions. A motion was made by Mr. Lewis to a have formal public hearing. Seconded by Mr. Giese and carried.

Ryan Showalter spoke for the Jackson’s saying that the Jackson’s still have some concerns regarding the draft amendment and have some suggestions for additional revisions.

**Board of Appeals Cases – Review and recommendation.**

Case #2449 – Gregory & Debra Webster

To request a variance from the setback requirement for a poultry house to a property line. Property located at 3720 Linkwood Road and contains 15.3 acres. AC, Agricultural Conservation Zoning District. The Planning Commission gave a favorable recommendation based on the information presented.

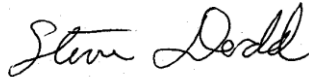
Case #2450 – Verizon Wireless, Applicant  
Michael Banning, Owner

To request, as a special exception, a communications tower. Property located on the north side of Maiden Forest Road (Dorchester County Tax Map 55, Parcel 16) and contains 401 acres. AC, Agricultural Conservation Zoning District. The Planning Commission gave a favorable recommendation based on the information presented.

Mr. Malkus informed the Commission that the Holland Point Preserve plat was almost ready to be submitted and that he should hold off on any action for right now to prevent trouble for the applicant at a later date. Mr. Showalter will be keeping Mr. Dodd up to date on the project.

With no further items or information, Mr. Burroughs made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Giese seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Steve Dodd