

DORCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES – AUGUST 10, 2011

The Dorchester County Planning Commission held their regular meeting on August 10, 2011 at 12:00 pm in the County Office Building, Room 110 in Cambridge MD. Members present were: Joy Loeffler, Chairperson, Bill Giese, Ralph Lewis, David Andrews, and Laura Layton. Also present were Chad Malkus, Attorney, Steve Dodd, Director, Rodney Banks, Deputy Director of Planning, Michael Bonsteel, Environmental Planner and Merris Hurley, recording. Absent were Pam Jackson and Robbie Hanson.

Chairperson Joy Loeffler called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. Mrs. Loeffler welcomed David Andrews as a new member to the Planning Commission. A motion was made by Mr. Lewis to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2011 meeting. Seconded by Mr. Giese and unanimously carried. A motion was made by Mrs. Layton to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2011 meeting. Seconded by Mr. Lewis and unanimously carried.

PlanMaryland Presentation – Maryland Department of Planning. Chuck Boyd from the Maryland Department of Planning, accompanied by Tracey Gordy, presented a slide show to explain to the Commission and audience the details of PlanMaryland. There were concerns expressed from audience members and county staff, which led to some lengthy discussions.

Mr. Andrews excused himself from the meeting at this time.

Solar Energy Systems, Utility Scale – Revisions to Legislation. Mr. Banks and the Commission reviewed the revisions made to the legislation. In §155-50LL(1)(C), parcel size was changed from 100 to 25 acres and language concerning abutting or adjoining lots was deleted; in (E), language concerning screening was revised; in (F), language regarding setbacks was reduced; in (H), language concerning vegetation removal and mitigation was changed; in (K), language regarding structural engineering analysis was removed and language concerning planting plans was revised; in (N), language about annual reports was revised. In the Use Table, revisions concerning the acreage requirement were shown. There was some discussion on industry standards, constructing berms instead of screening with trees, fencing, buffers, and commercial zoning. A motion was made by Mr. Giese to forward the legislation to the County Council with a favorable recommendation, with the addition of adding the B-2 Zoning District as a special exception. Seconded by Mr. Lewis and unanimously carried.

Critical Area Buffer Exemption Area (BEA) Request – Dennehy. Mike Bonsteel and Mr. Dennehy were sworn in. Mr. Bonsteel told the Commission that the applicant is requesting approval to build a deck and cantilevered addition in the buffer, as well as a porch only partially in the buffer. There will be 661 square feet of disturbance as a result of these improvements. There is an existing deck 40' from the water and the proposed structures will be no closer than 45' away. Lot coverage will be reduced to an acceptable amount. The Critical Area Commission is not opposed to the request. If approved, mitigation will be required and ensured by a Minor Buffer Management Plan. Mrs. Layton made a motion to approve with the condition that a variance be obtained, if needed. Seconded by Mr. Giese and unanimously carried.

Update of Critical Area Program Refinements Legislation. Mr. Bonsteel told the Commission that he and Mr. Banks had decided on a different approach to some of the problems they are encountering. They would like to research administrative variances for existing structures (pre-1988).

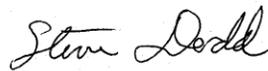
Board of Appeals Cases. The Commission discussed the upcoming BOA cases, but without a quorum, a vote could not be taken.

The Commission decided that comments on PlanMaryland should be sent to Planning staff and forwarded to MDP.

Mr. Malkus informed the Commission that he had a conversation with Wayne Markey concerning his court case and Mr. Markey was dismissing the writ.

With no further items or information, Chairperson Loeffler made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Lewis seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve Dodd".

Steve Dodd