

DORCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES – December 2, 2015

The Dorchester County Planning Commission held their regular meeting on December 2, 2015, at 12:00 pm in the County Office Building, Room 110 in Cambridge MD. Members present were: Robert Hanson, Chair, Laura Layton, Vice Chair, Bill Giese and Mary Losty. Also present were Steve Dodd, Director, and Rodney Banks, Deputy Director. Absent were Ralph Lewis, Jeffrey King and Christopher Drummond, Attorney.

Mr. Hanson called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

Mr. Hanson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of November 4, 2015. Mrs. Layton made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted and Mr. Giese seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Hanson introduced Mary Losty, who will be the liaison from the City of Cambridge Planning and Zoning.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

A. P & Z #659C – Eastern Shore Dance Academy, LLC – Site Plan Approval. The applicant is requesting site plan approval to develop a commercially zoned property (Tax Map 42, Grid 4, Parcel 413) with a structure and other site improvements.

Jessica Wheatley, applicant/owner, and Steve Whitten of Fink, Whitten & Associates were sworn in. Mr. Dodd reviewed the staff report and site plan. The applicant proposes to build a 5,000 sq. ft. building on property located on Aireys Road Spur. Property is zoned B-2, General Business, and the Dance Academy is a permitted use in this zone. The site plan depicts the septic and sewage reserve area, storm water management area, forest conservation area, parking, signage and landscaping. Storm water management plan has been approved by the Department of Public Works. There will be 22 parking spaces to include ADA compliant spaces.

Mr. Dodd read agency comment letters into record from Paul Galanek of the Health Department and Greg Leblanc, Department of Public Works, both dated November 17, 2015,

Mr. Banks spoke about the Forest Conservation Plan noting that the plan has been approved, however short term and long term agreements for the plantings will need to be completed if the site plan is approved by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Whitten discussed future expansion of the facility and proposed future access onto Cordtown Road. The access has been shown on the drawing, although it is not part of today's decision.

Ms. Losty questioned if a fire safety review is required. Mr. Dodd advised that this is addressed through the building code during the permit process.

Mr. Hanson asked for a motion to approve the site plan. Mr. Giese made the motion and Mrs. Layton seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

B. P & Z #200D – Darcy & Joyce Harding, owners, Andrew Martin, InSite Tower LLC, applicant – Site Plan Approval. The applicant is requesting site plan approval to construct a communications tower and other site improvements (Tax Map 29, Grid 15, Parcel 17).

Darcy Harding, owner and Andrew Martin of InSite Tower, LLC, were sworn in. Mr. Dodd advised that at the April 23, 2015 Board of Appeals meeting, the applicant was granted a special exception to construct a communications tower on his property. There were no conditions placed on this approval. The tower is subject to the zoning code with respect to the height, color and setbacks.

Mr. Dodd advised that the Health Department has approved the plans through an email from Paul Galanek. Mr. Dodd read into record comments from an email dated November 3, 2015 to Daniel Nolan, Advantage Engineering, from Greg Leblanc of the Department of Public Works approving the site plan with the condition that a stormwater management plan will need to be finalized after site plan approval.

Mr. Martin spoke about the lease agreement they entered into with Mr. Harding approximately 1 1/2 years ago for a 10,000 sq. ft. area, however they will only develop an area of about 5,000 sq. ft. There was a discussion on the range of service. The tower will not be built until they have a firm commitment from a provider. The tower is designed to hold four carriers.

Mr. Martin advised that the fencing will be 8 ft. tall. There will be a locked shelter for the equipment. There will be signs posted per FCC regulations to include contact information. Mr. Dodd advised that the tower will be less than 200 ft. in height, monopole, and gray in color.

Ms. Losty asked about notification of surrounding neighbors. Mr. Dodd advised that before the applicant could file for a Board of Appeals special exception, they were required to hold a community meeting to discuss the plans. Mr. Martin advised that a meeting was held at the Neck District Fire Department in December of 2014. Mr. Dodd stated that there was no opposition to the project at the Board of Appeals meeting in April.

Mr. Hanson asked for a motion to approve the site plan with the condition that a stormwater management plan be submitted and approved. Mr. Giese made the motion and Mrs. Layton seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. Election of Officers – Election of Planning Commission Chairman and Vice Chairman for one year terms.

Mr. Hanson opened the floor for nominations for Chairman. Mrs. Layton nominated Robert Hanson and Mr. Giese seconded. Nominations for Vice Chairman were taken with Mr. Giese nominating Laura Layton for Vice Chairman and Ms. Losty seconding. The nominations unanimously carried.

D. Approval of Planning Commission meeting dates in 2016.

Mr. Hanson asked for a motion to approve the schedule as presented. Mrs. Layton made the motion and Mr. Giese seconded. The motion unanimously carried.

E. Board of Appeals Cases – Review and recommendation.

Mr. Dodd advised that there are no Board of Appeals cases for the month of December.

II. INFORMATION

Mr. Hanson spoke about the County Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Dodd advised that they are working with the County Manager and County Council to appropriate funding to update the Plan and will know more as the new budget is prepared.

Mr. Dodd and Mr. Hanson spoke about growth allocation within the County. Mr. Dodd stated that it is still under 50%. He also noted that there are probably over 1,000 platted building lots in the County that were approved over the years but never built on.

Mr. Dodd noted that they are advertising for an in-house building inspector now.

Ms. Losty asked if as the liaison she should give a brief summary of what is happening in the City. Mr. Hanson suggested that Ms. Losty give a quarterly summary.

With no further business, Mr. Hanson made a motion to adjourn and Mrs. Layton seconded. The motion was unanimously carried. The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Robert Hanson", written in a cursive style.