

DORCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES – DECEMBER 7, 2011

The Dorchester County Planning Commission held their regular meeting on December 7, 2011 at 12:00 pm in the County Office Building, Room 110 in Cambridge MD. Members present were: Joy Loeffler, Chairperson, Rob Hanson, Vice-Chair, Bill Giese, Ralph Lewis, David Andrews, and Laura Layton. Also present were Chad Malkus, Attorney, Steve Dodd, Director of Planning, Kate Donovan, GIS Specialist, Rodney Banks, Deputy Director, Mike Bonsteel, Environmental Planner and Merris Hurley, recording. Absent was Pam Jackson.

Chairperson Loeffler called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

Dorchester County Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Municipalities Growth Maps – Public Hearing. Because this hearing was advertised for 12:30 PM, the Commission moved onto the next order of business.

Dorchester County Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan Amendment, Town of Secretary. Mayor Henry Short told the Commission that they need to replace the current water treatment plant that is shared with East New Market. The current plant treats 200,000 gallons, with the new one treating 400,000 gallons, the new plant being a Class 5 plant. The funding for this project has been put on hold, but they would like to get this step out of the way for next year when the money will be ready. This upgrade will be in keeping with MDE regulations. A motion was made by Mr. Hanson to forward a favorable recommendation to the County Council. Seconded by Mr. Giese and unanimously carried.

P & Z #1207A – Kimberlee A. Bisker – Application for a Shared Driveway Request. Ms. Kimberlee Bisker and Mr. Steve Whitten were sworn in. Mr. Whitten explained to the Commission that Ms. Bisker wishes to subdivide another lot off of her property and they wish to use the existing lane as a shared driveway. There will be no new disturbance and no change of land use. The Health Department and DPW have no objection. A motion was made by Mr. Lewis “to grant conditional approval pending the railroad’s approval.” Seconded by Mr. Hanson and unanimously carried.

Update of Critical Area Program Refinement Legislation. Mr. Banks explained to the Commission that there isn’t much more information to provide. They are waiting on comments from staff.

BOARD OF APPEAL CASES - The following cases were presented to the Planning Commission for review/comment.

Case #2412 - William H. Beckwith, Jr., Owner
John Selby, Applicant

To request a variance from the maximum allowable square footage for an on-premise, free-standing sign. Property is located at 3447 Ocean Gateway and is zoned B-2, General Business. The subject parcel contains 8.41 acres. Mrs. Loeffler asked if the aerial photo they were given depicts compliance with the site plan that they approved for the property. Mr. Dodd informed the Commission that he told the applicant and owner that if they were to come in and challenge the sign issue, they might be opening themselves up to further scrutiny with site plan

compliance. The Planning Commission recommended approval if the applicant can prove hardship.

Dorchester County Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Municipalities Growth Maps – Public Hearing. Mr. Banks explained to the Commission that because of HB 1141, the County was directed to incorporate the municipal growth area maps. Mr. Banks read a letter of support into the record from Keith Hall of Wicomico County. He also read into the record a letter of support from Peter Conrad from MDP.

Doug Worrell from Dorchester Citizens for Planned Growth had some questions about this procedure. He told the Commission that the “greenbelt” was missing from the City of Cambridge maps. Mr. Malkus explained to him that the “greenbelt” was not within the municipal boundaries and therefore not a part of the map.

Cathy McCulley, 3710 Willey Road, Hurlock, MD came forward to say that the need for the “greenbelt” should be taken into consideration.

Margaret Anselo, 217 Linthicum Drive, Cambridge, MD came forward and said that the map should say “this map does not include ‘greenbelt’”.

After further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Lewis to approve the maps. Seconded by Mr. Andrews and unanimously carried.

Mr. Banks told the Commission that Queen Anne’s County is now looking into utility scale solar regulations.

With no further items or information, Mr. Hanson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Giese seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve M. Dodd". The signature is written in black ink and is centered on the page.

Steve M. Dodd