

DORCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES – April 3, 2019

The Dorchester County Planning Commission held their regular meeting on April 3, 2019 at 12:00 pm in the County Office Building, Room 110 in Cambridge, MD. Members present were, Robert Hanson, Chair, Jerry Burroughs, Vice Chair, Laura Layton, Ralph Lewis and Mary Losty. Also present were Rodney Banks, Deputy Director, Brian Soper, Planner and Christopher Drummond, Attorney. Absent: Bill Giese

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

Mr. Hanson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of March 6, 2019. Mr. Lewis made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Burroughs seconded. The motion carried, with Ms. Losty and Mr. Hanson abstaining.

OLD BUSINESS

A. P&Z #1350 – Dollar General, applicant - Site Plan Approval.

The applicant is requesting site plan approval for the construction of a retail building with parking and associated site improvements. The site is located at Mt. Holly East New Market Road and is shown on Tax Map 21, Grid 24, Parcel 100. Property is zoned B-2, General Business.

Mr. Banks gave a brief overview of why the applicant is returning for site plan approval. He advised the applicant had requested a waiver for the required number of parking spaces. At the February Planning Commission meeting, John Camp, Oxford Chase Development, was asked to consider upgrading the façade of the store. Mr. Camp agreed to speak with representatives of Dollar General about the façade. Mr. Banks noted that a revised site plan has been given to the Planning Commission with the required number of parking spaces; the request for the parking deviation has been withdrawn.

Tim Glass, Engineer, Lane Engineering, John Camp, Oxford Chase Development, and any other person who would be testifying in this case, were sworn in.

Mr. Glass reviewed the changes to the site plan. The number of parking spaces have been changed to meet the code requirements; the buffering has been expanded to match the perimeter parking for the expanded parking area. Stormwater facilities are still sized to accommodate the proposed development. There are still several technical items to be addressed concerning stormwater management.

Mr. Camp advised the front of the building will be a split face block front. He noted that everything proposed meets code requirements. There was discussion about upgrading the façade. He agreed there are Dollar General buildings that do not look like the proposed building however, the construction cost is determined by the code requirements.

There was a lengthy discussion between Mr. Burroughs and Mr. Camp concerning the appearance of Dollar General stores in other towns, particularly Berlin. Mr. Camp pointed out that the Berlin store was a relocation of a high volume store. Mr. Camp noted that Cambridge Planning and Zoning had requested upgrades to the proposed Dollar General and they had walked away from the idea of building in Cambridge because an agreement could not be reached on upgrades/cost.

Mr. Hanson asked if there was anyone in the audience that would like to speak in favor of the project.

Cynda Twilley, 3809 Warwick Rd., East New Market, MD advised she is the owner of the parcel Dollar General is proposing to build on. She noted that the Mayor of East New Market also wants the building upgraded because East New Market is a historic town. She spoke about the area around the proposed store, noting that the mobile home park and the mini-storage building are not historic. She has asked the owners of Dollar General if the exterior color could be coordinated with the existing storage building; they were agreeable with this request. She pointed out the County needs tax revenue, businesses and places for people to work.

Roy Wells, 105 Merrick Ave., Secretary, MD would like to see the store located at the proposed site for the convenience. He noted that he has to travel to Cambridge now. This store will be less than 1 mile from his house.

Jeff Fooks, 6540 N. Tara Rd., Federalsburg, MD stated that he has built 22 Dollar Generals, all within rural areas. He sees nothing negative about the proposed store and it meets all the requirements of the County's code.

Wyatt Wiggins, 25544 Deerfield Rd. Mardella Springs, MD suggested that the Planning Commission take into consideration the economics of each of the towns used to compare this project with. He feels that if the developer meets the code requirements, they should be allowed to progress with building the store.

Mr. Hanson asked if there was anyone present that would like to speak in opposition to the project.

With no response he asked if any of the Planning Commission members had questions.

Mr. Lewis asked what type of security system the store will have and the type of outside lighting proposed. Mr. Camp advised there will be low voltage lighting around the outside of the entire building. There will be security cameras throughout the store.

Mr. Hanson asked for a motion. Mrs. Layton made a motion to approve the site plan and, Mr. Lewis seconded. The motion carried with Mr. Burroughs opposing.

There was a discussion on upgrading the architectural standards for new buildings. Mr. Banks noted they will ask representatives of AECOM to include in the new

Comprehensive Plan, the need for the County to address/upgrade architectural standards. Eventually the standards will be put in the Zoning Ordinance.

There was a discussion about whether a court would have overturned the Planning Commission's denial of this request.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Board of Appeals Cases – Review and recommendation

Case #2643 – Brian and Brandi Knill

To request a variance to allow an accessory building within the required 60' from center of road front yard setback. Variance requested is 14' or 46' from center of road. Property located at 175 Hoopersville Road, Fishing Creek, MD 21634, containing 1.0 acre. Zoned V – Village District.

Based on the information provided, the Planning Commission suggests the Board make sure the building is placed in conjunction with the setbacks as requested.

Case #2644 – George M. Neall, II, Trustee

To request a variance to allow a primary dwelling and associated appurtenant attachments within the required 100' intermittent stream buffer. Variance requested is 45' (or buffer reduced to 55'). Property located on Tates Bank Road, Cambridge, MD 21613, Map 31, Parcel 111, Lot 1, containing 1.448 acres. Zoned SR – Suburban Residential.

Based on the information provided, the Planning Commission suggests the Board of Appeals assure everything proposed will fit within the requested setbacks

B. Comprehensive Plan Update – Community Facilities and Water Resources Elements.

Mr. Banks advised that the representatives from AECOM would not be attending the meeting today. They are still working on the two elements.

INFORMATION

Mr. Hanson advised that Jeffrey King has resigned from the Planning Commission. A request for a replacement has been sent to the County Council. Mr. Hanson advised Mr. Pfeffer, County Council member, that when a replacement has been chosen from his district, they will meet for training.

Mr. Banks advised there is online training required by the State for Planning Commission and Board of Appeals members.

Ms. Losty advised that the City of Cambridge has had their attorney prepare an ordinance for the new 5G. She noted that if no requirements are in place, there is no limit as to how many boxes can be placed on a pole. Ms. Losty advised she would be glad to share the ordinance with the Planning Commission if they are

interested. Mr. Pfeffer advised that Hurlock is in the process of writing an ordinance now.

There was a discussion about legislation for 5G. Mr. Drummond noted that he has not heard of any county proposals, this appears to be primarily affecting the local towns.

Mr. Hanson advised that Cambridge City Council and Cambridge Planning Committee meet once or twice a term to assure everyone is on the same path. He noted the County Council has never met with the County Planning and Zoning Committee. The members expressed their interest to Mr. Pfeffer about having an open workgroup session with the County Council.

With no further business, Mr. Burroughs made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Burroughs seconded and, the motion unanimously passed. Time of adjournment, 12:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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