

Planning & Zoning Commission

Minutes

July 2, 2019

The Planning and Zoning Commission for the City of Cambridge met on Tuesday, July 2, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at the City Council Chambers, 305 Gay Street, Cambridge, Maryland.

Commissioners in attendance: Eugene Lauer, Chairman, Chan'Tay Nelson, Mary Losty, Marshall Rickert and Jerry Burroughs. Absent William Craig, Vice-Chair and Hubert Trego

Other in attendance included: Pat Escher, City Planner, Patrick Thomas, Assistant City Attorney, Dave Cannon, City Council Liaison

Eugene Lauer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and asked for a moment of silence.

Approval / Amendments to Agenda

Comm. Burroughs motion to accept tonight's amended agenda and second by Comm. Losty. Planning commission voted to approved.

Approval of Minutes

Comm. Burroughs stated that a correction to language on page 1, that "he would not attend another City Council work session meeting in the future."

Comm. Lauer referred to page 2 of the minutes to correct language with respect to signage for the car wash.

Comm. Lauer asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Comm. Nelson made the motion to approve the minutes as submitted and Comm. Losty seconded the motion. The motion approved.

New Business

1. PZ 2020-001 SE Office Building in the DWDD Neighborhood Subdistrict

A positive recommendation for 202 High Street to be used as a professional office with a Special Exception should be forwarded onto the Board of Appeals Commission. Staff said that the Commission has been discussing this issue for several months and provided Council with a text amendment that was passed by the City Council. Mr. Vojtech is coming forward to move the project forward. The Special Exception would restore the commercial use of his property at 202 High Street.

Comm. Burroughs made a motion for approval to have this go forward to the BOA with a positive recommendation which was seconded by Comm. Nelson. The motion carried unanimously.

Comm. Rickert thanked applicant for the historic information on the property.

Comm. Lauer commented that the applicant went beyond the City requirements and got approval from MD Historical Trust requirements.

2. Cambridge Marketplace revised subdivision plats

Staff stated that George Hyde, City Engineer and planning have looked at the plats and think that they are fine. While staff can review up to 4 lots administratively, this exceeds that number and needs the Commission's approval. It is a technical review, basically shifting some lot lines, utility easements and realigning the roads.

Comm. Rickert spoke that he has a new plat but not the old plat. Staff gave Comm. Rickert a copy of the old plat for his review. The new plat is the most current lot configuration, but will probably change when the hospital development moves forward.

Comm. Burroughs made a motion to proceed to approve the subdivision plat. Comm. Losty seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

3. PZ 2016-006 Second Amendment, Phase 1 Cambridge Marketplace – Dollar General – Deferred by the applicant.
4. Annual Reporting Review and Approval that will go before the City Council and then to the State of Maryland.

Comm. Rickert motion to approve and seconded by Comm. Burroughs. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing

1. TA 2020-001 – Conversion of Commercial Property in the General Commercial Zoning District to a Residential Use shall be a Permitted Use with Conditions.

Staff discussed that this amendment of the UDC would allow properties that were originally constructed as residential, but then converted to a business, would be able to revert back to the residential use if they met the listed conditions. Staff reviewed the General Commercial properties in the City and felt the impact would be minimum with some properties on Locust Street and on Route #50 near Bucktown Rd. Staff recommends that this Commission proceed with the amendment.

Tom & Jean Carlson spoke in favor of the amendment.

Comm. Losty motion to approve this change and Comm. Nelson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Staff explained to the Carlsons that the amendment will be going to City

Council for two readings, first for introduction, then for public hearing after which in ten (10) days after approval it would become law.

Discussion Item

1. Minimum lot size

In using Table 3, of Article 5, staff realized that the minimum lot size in the residential zone districts were not coordinated with the actual minimum lot sizes. The minimum lot areas were greater than the mathematical calculation of the minimum lot width and depths. An example of this would be where the minimum lot depth is 125 feet and the minimum lot wide is 50 feet which would result in a minimum lot are of 6,250 sq ft, where the table calls out for a 7,500 sq ft lot.

Comm. Lauer asked is this just needs to be amended and go in that direction. Escher stated yes with a change in the ordinance. Escher spoke that the City Council will get a draft of the ordinance before the first reading, so they can pose questions to us before that first meeting.

Comm. Rickert ask why the Planning Dept does not update or inform the City Council more often than just annually. Patrick Thomas stated after writing the amended ordinance, he sends a copy via email to the City Manager and the City Council to give them ample time for their review and if they have questions that they can send them to the Planning Dept.

City Council, Dave Cannon, stated that when he was first on the Council, they were receiving information on the Wednesday or Thursday before the Council meeting. Recently in the last six months we have been giving plenty of information ahead of the meeting to read over and process with questions to address the issue.

Comm. Lauer expressed agreement with the way the process is now working, giving the Council more time to review the language. He did not want to make any additional changes and had concerns with the potential resurrecting the ordinance committee.

2. Working Water Front Plan

Comm Rickert is not comfortable with some sections of the Plan and needs to understand from DNR what are the Commissions responsibilities and what latitude does the Commission have to recommend changes. Staff will set up a meeting with DNR to meet with this Commission. Comm. Rickert wants to communicate to DNR that we appreciate all the assistance they are giving the City. We are seeing a lot of planning coming to us.

3. Mill Street School Property

HPC had said that it has Historic significance and deemed it worth saving. Mr. Hamon will present that to City Council on July 8th. The last City Council meeting there were a few comments made and then will come back to this Commission again.

4. Commercial Building Design Guidelines

Staff and this Commission discussed this issue last fall and Comm. Losty, Craig, Burroughs and citizen Brian Roach met to discuss the language and give staff comments. Staff has worked on the language and has refined the guidelines and hopes they are helpful to the Commission and developers. The proposed new Medical building at the Cambridge Marketplace was given the graphic representations within Design Guidelines, but not the language. The guidelines will be a text amendment to go before the City Council.

Comm. Losty asked if they could ask and comment before Escher takes to City Council. Comm. Lauer asked if this was City wide or mainly Route #50 based. Escher stated that it will be City wide. Comm. Burroughs spoke that some developers will only do what is the minimum and make no extra attempt to satisfy. He also indicated that there should be language about buildings that are visible from three and/or four sides.

Comm. Rickert comments on the building brought over from Talbot county to the Ruark Boat Works was an effort to get some design standards.

Staff said that issue will move forward in August to the Council.

5. Comm. Rickert - Packing House Update

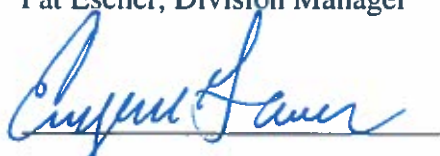
The reconstruction of the smoke stacks has been started. They are being reinforced to strengthen the structure and some of the top layers of bricks had to be replaced. Maryland Historic Trust has been involved in the process to ensure that the new bricks matched the old ones in color, size and texture. The financing for the building is looking hopeful and ESLC and Cross Street are in the process of securing tenants. In order to qualify for grant of new market tax credit money over 30,000 square feet must be secured.

Comm. Lauer asked about the feasibility of some of the businesses that would go into the building. What are we looking at now? Comm. Rickert said it is unknown at this time. The focus is Farm to Table and Boat to Table.

Comm. Lauer asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting by Comm. Burroughs and seconded by Comm. Nelson. Unanimously moved.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Escher, Division Manager


Eugene Lauer, Chair


Date Approved