

Planning & Zoning Commission

SEPTEMBER 24, 2009

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission was held at Town Hall on September 24, 2009. In attendance were Chairman Houlihan, Commissioner Anderton, Commission Members Henderson, Ferro, Dixon, and Boyan, Community Development Coordinator Hardin and Clerk of Council Fisher. Absent: Commission Member Slabaugh, and Code Enforcement Officer Bounds. Guests: Mark Thomasson, Steve Fuller, Jim Thomasson, Margaret Garraway, Matt Phillips, Rick Tucker and Tim Bourcier.

Call to Order

Chairman Houlihan called the meeting to order.

He reported that Commission Member Slabaugh will not be here this evening.

He hoped that everyone is enjoying the Sesquicentennial Celebration.

Approval of Minutes

Commission Member Ferro made a motion to accept the August 27, 2009 minutes as circulated. Commission Member Dixon seconded the motion which passed with 6 ayes and 1 absent.

New Business

Public Hearing- Public Input hearing for the Maryland Comprehensive Plan

Tim Bourcier from DB&F was present for the input hearing on the Maryland Comprehensive Plan. He said that the comments from the State were mild and not unpredictable. Chairman Houlihan opened up the meeting for public comments on the Plan. After hearing no questions or comments, the public input session was closed.

Commissioner Anderton made a motion for a favorable recommendation to the Maryland Commissioners for the adoption of the Maryland Comprehensive Plan. Commission Member Henderson seconded the motion which passed with 5 ayes, 1 absent, and 1 abstaining (Commission Member Ferro).

Michael Montague- Sign Approval for Sportsman's Liquidation

Mr. Matt Phillips from Phillips Signs along with Rick Tucker from Sportsman's Liquidation were present. Mr. Phillips reported that they have permission from the shopping center to install the sign package as shown to the Commission, along with a sign on the existing pylon.

There was some conversation about the store. It is a small franchise that sells hunting and fishing equipment, but does not sell guns. All items are brand names. They will be opening this Saturday, October 3, 2009. There was some discussion on the hiring of a few local people and the hours of operation.

Commission Member Dixon made a motion for the approval for signage for Sportsman's Liquidation for retail Unit #2 in the State Line Plaza, per the attached drawings. Commission Member Boyan seconded the motion which passed with 6 ayes and 1 absent.

Mark Thomasson- Lighting approval for Holiday Inn Express

Mark Thomasson was present on behalf of Delmar Hospitality for the Holiday Inn Express. There is a national upgrade for Holiday Inn Express lighting, and he is here asking approval for the package. He said that since the Inn faces the highway, it will not disturb any residential neighbors. He also stated that no decision has been made on the color of the lights. The package shows blue and green, but he thinks that is only to show how the lighting will reflect off the building.

Commission Member Boyan made a motion to approve the up and down lighting for the Holiday Inn Express, located in Delmar, Maryland, per the attached drawings. Commission Member Henderson seconded the motion, which passed with 6 ayes and 1 absent.

Steven Fuller & Jim Thomasson- WoodCreek Phase 2 Replacement of Townhouses

Mr. Steven Fuller from Fuller, Hall & Assoc. was present along with Mr. Jim Thomasson of PCS Homes to discuss the replacing of townhouses with single family dwellings in phase 2 in the WoodCreek Development.

Mr. Fuller stated that the lots were created and designed for townhouses and they would like to offer another product for potential buyers. He stated that he wants to utilize the variances that have already been granted. With these proposed plans, they can meet all the existing variances except for the lot sizes. The smallest lot is 3,600 sq. ft. and they did acknowledge that they would need a variance for the lot size.

Mr. Jim Thomasson, President of PCS Homes, handed out a package to the Commission Members that showed the style of products that they are proposing. He said that at the Community Input meeting, one area of concern was that of property values. He said that they want to expand their market and now want to look at first time home buyers. He stated that they are also interested in young families with small children.

Chairman Houlihan reported that Commission Member Henderson resides in WoodCreek. He will be able to participate in discussion but will not be eligible to vote.

Commissioner Anderton spoke of density. He said that the proposed lots are supposed to be geared for families with children. The lot size of 3,000 sq. ft is just too small for children, that there is no space for the children to run and play. He did say that it is a step-up from the other plans that they have presented to the Commission.

He also discussed parking issues that would be associated with the density factor. Mark Thomasson stated that this plan is no different from the other plan that was presented, all will have double driveways.

Chairman Houlihan stated that the lot sizes are smaller, from 50 ft. to 30 ft.

Commission Member Henderson stated that there are already issues in WoodCreek due to high density. He said that this would be a way for PCS Homes to build one home at a time and just draw everything out. He said that it is now changing from a villa to single family home. He said that he wants PCS Homes to make the development better, not more dense.

Mr. Jim Thomasson reported that due to the recession, financing is a challenge and people are very tight with how they spend their money. He said that there would be major infrastructure costs due to the water and sewer already out there.

Commissioner Anderton suggested that there not be as many homes and offer more open space. He said that the current walking trails are nothing more than spread out mulch. He said that there are already lots of things in the community that have not been completed and those should be completed first before any new projects are started.

Commission Member Ferro asked how the retirement community that is already at WoodCreek feels about having younger families with children moving in the community. Mr. Jim Thomasson stated that he had misspoken. They were actually looking at young families, not necessarily ones with children.

Commission Member Anderton compared this close style housing to that of Yorkshire Estates.

Commission Member Henderson stated that this is the first time Jim Thomasson has been at any of these meetings. He said that even at the Community Input meeting, there were 70 plus people there speaking out against this style of homes. This Commission has to factor in those comments when weighing any decision. Mr. Thomasson stated that this is why this new style of home has been brought here this evening. He said that the outcome of that meeting was property value. This new style of home will not compete with anything that is already at WoodCreek.

Commission Member Henderson stated there is a major backlash for the WoodCreek Community for other issues that have not been satisfied by the developer.

Chairman Houlihan stated that the Commission has to be cautious about this whole thing. He said that the Community of WoodCreek is not happy and he has to respect those 200 plus residents.

Commissioner Anderton reported that there have been conversations about fountains not functioning and empty fields that have not been cut.

There was a lot of discussion of the displeasure of the residents of WoodCreek, and PCS Homes have left a bad taste in their mouths.

Commission Member Ferro stated that PCS Homes should take these plans back to the community and have another Input meeting with them.

Commission Member Boyan stated that PCS Homes and WoodCreek take up a lot of time of this Commission with issues that are not being resolved. There is no way that this issue will be resolved this evening.

Resident Lori Dewald agrees with everything the Commission has said. She asked why the Thomasson's did not contact the residents of WoodCreek first. She said that the Community is unified and she is also suggesting that a mediator be hired. Mr. Jim Thomasson did not agree with her. He feels that they do not lack good customer service.

Chairman Houlihan stated that there will be no decision made this evening. Mr. Thomasson will have to bring this before the residents of WoodCreek for another Resident Input meeting.

Mr. Steven Fuller officially withdrew this plan at this time.

Old Business

Ronald Tarlaian- Bridgewood Estates- Open Space

Chairman Houlihan reported that due to health issues, Mr. Tarlaian has requested to be placed on next month's agenda.

Chairman Houlihan reported that due to scheduling conflicts, the Planning and Zoning Commission will have to change their meeting date to Thursday, October 15, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. He said that the Delmar Revitalization Committee, which is scheduled to meet that evening, can meet in the small conference room.

Adjournment

Commission Member Ferro made a motion for adjournment which was seconded by Commission Member Dixon. The meeting was adjourned with 6 ayes and 1 absent.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Fisher

Clerk of Council