

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
SYKESVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
February 3, 2014**

Present: Steve Enslow Julia Betz
 Ed Cinkole Phil Singleton

Absent: Louie Shaw James Jacobe Leo Fiander

Staff: Dawn Ashbacher, Town Manager
 Sandy Cazares, Executive Assistant

Others: Bruce Burton, LDE Inc.
 Paul Mueller, Mueller Homes

CALL TO ORDER

Steve Enslow, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

MINUTES

The minutes of the January 6, 2014 Planning Commission meeting were unanimously approved.

BUSINESS

Historic Carriagehouse II – Review and approval of updated concept plans

Paul Mueller’s returned to the Commission to request approval for the two updated concept plans.

A motion was unanimously approved to approve both updated concept site development plans for the Historic Carriagehouse II located at 7526 Main Street [County File No. T-13-016P and T-13-015S] subject to the following:

- Resolution of the front setbacks so that the Town engineer, Zoning Administrator, property owner’s engineer, and SHA agree. The Planning Commission recommends reducing the current proposed setback from 13 feet to no less than 11 feet from face of curb back to face of building;
- Confirmation that the proposed side and rear setbacks meet Town zoning requirements;
- Review and approval by the Public Works Department of the commercial dumpster access for the mixed use building along Main Street;
- Resolution of whether or not the fee in lieu parking will be paid for the five parking spaces associated with the log cabin that will be lost to new construction;
- Confirmation from SHA that it is acceptable for the private driveway to taper to a width of 16 feet from the apron width of 20 feet;

- Acknowledgement that the Planning Commission will consider unique landscaping guidelines that may better apply to this specific site;
- No requirement for sidewalks along the private driveway;
- The property owner will research the acceptability of landing and resting areas for wheelchair access on the sidewalk
- The remaining comments from the Town, County, and State are addressed.

Text amendment for Conservation District to allow age-restricted housing

At the joint meeting on December 18, 2013, the Mayor and Town Council and Planning Commission discussed a development off of Schoolhouse Road. A proposal has been presented to build age-restricted single dwelling unit housing. This would require Town annexation of the property and a text amendment to amend the Conditional Uses for the Conservation District to allow “age-restricted housing”.

At the Mayor and Town Council meeting on January 27, 2014, the Mayor and Town Council voted 5-2 to have Dennis Hoover, Town Attorney, draft a proposed text amendment for the Planning Commission to review and make a report and recommendations per §180 114 -116 of the Town Code.

Dawn Ashbacher, Town Manager, updated the Commission on conversations with the County Resource Management Office regarding the environmental sensitivity of the proposed area. The following information was shared:

- In regards to the environmental impact, County Resource Management said that if trees are removed, they would have to be replanted. If there is a stream on the property, this will limit the amount of developable space.
- Sediment control – In regards to soil, there should be no more impact on the neighbors after this development than before, so there would have to be proper sediment control.
- Storm water – The development cannot discharge more than is currently discharged. There may be some ways to get the developer to tap into the Town’s existing storm water facilities. There is an option to pay a fee in lieu of providing facilities on site. Ms. Ashbacher mentioned that this is an option worth exploring; however the nearest facility is off of the Patapsco Overlook.
- Retaining walls – Ms. Ashbacher mentioned that there could be more of a discussion about retaining walls’ ownership in the future, but this was not discussed in detail during the meeting.

Ms. Ashbacher also spoke to the County Zoning Administrator, Jay Voight regarding the proposed development. The following information was shared with the Commission from that discussion:

- The Town’s Conservation District zoning allows detached single family dwellings with a minimum lot size of three acres. For conditional uses, for nursing homes and continuing care facilities, the Planning and Zoning Commission will review and approve the concept site development plan, traffic, study, density, exterior design, and site layout.

- The text amendment would add “retirement housing” or “age restricted retirement housing” but the Planning Commission would still specify the density. The Town could also instruct the developer to stick with the density, but allow them to cluster the dwellings on a certain area of the property.

The Planning Commission expressed concerns about establishing a precedence of allowing another use in conservation zoning, which is an area that they feel should be conserved and protected.

The following motion was unanimously approved by the Planning Commission:

“The Planning Commission feels that they should not add additional uses at this time for land that is zoned conservation.”

Update on Raincliffe Intersection

The Town Manager provided an update to the Commission regarding the Raincliffe intersection. Work on the intersection improvements have begun. The Mayor and Town Council amended the Public Works Agreement. The intersection is expected to be completed by July 31, 2014. The Town will issue no more than 25 more building permits before the intersection is substantially completed. The Town has currently issued 86 of 125 building permits.

The “Welcome to Sykesville” gateway sign was discussed. As far as the Planning Commission recalls, gateway signs have been discussed over the years. It is the Planning Commission’s intent to have gateway signs at all intersections, but no set design has ever been established. None of the Commissioners recall specific discussions with the Raincliffe developer regarding a gateway sign.

Update on Program Open Space Land Conversion

The Mayor and Town Council originally approved the use of Little Sykes Railway Park for the land conversion. In consulting with the Planning Commission, Commissioners expressed concern that a portion of the park could be considered an extension of the downtown. The Town has a limited amount of infill opportunities in the downtown area.

Planning Commissioners favor exploring the Patapsco Overlook parcel, which is currently being used for recreational purposes. The Mayor and Town Council appreciated the input from the Planning Commission and instructed the Town Manager to explore the Patapsco Overlook parcel.

The Town Manager contacted the Program Open Space official and found out that the land proposed for conversion must have the same recreational potential, e.g. must be buildable, suitable for a playground, etc., as the land being converted. This means the proposed property must be flat and out of the flood plain.

The Town Manager worked with Town Engineer, Bob Bond, to review the parcel to see if there is a one-acre parcel that meets these requirements. The Town Manager and Town Engineer were not able to find a suitable parcel within the Patapsco Overlook parcel. The Mayor and Town Council voted at the January 13, 2014, meeting to approve the use of Little Sykes Railway Park for the Program Open Space land conversion.

The Commission suggested that the Mayor and Town Council think outside the box. It was mentioned that while the Linear Trail may not have one square acre that is buildable, it could have many potentially buildable sections off of the trail. The Commission encouraged inviting the state representative to the Patapsco Overlook property to further explore the Patapsco Overlook option. Several members of the Commission offered to meet with the representative in person either on-site or at their state office.

During the meeting, an area of land located by Bloomfield Manor, the Spring House, and sediment pond was suggested by a member of the audience as another possible viable option for a parcel to “swap”. It appears that this parcel of land is zoned as private conservation, but it is unsure who owns this property. Steve Enslow, Chairman, stated that he would research it by looking up the tax map information.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandy Cazares, Executive Assistant