

OFFICIAL MINUTES
Carroll County Planning and Zoning Commission

June 1, 2016

Location: Carroll County Office Building

Members Present: Matthew S. Helminiak, Chair
Eugene A. Canale
Jeffrey A. Wothers
Cynthia L. Cheatwood
Daniel Hoff, Alternate
C. Richard Weaver, Ex-Officio

Present with the Commission were the following persons: Philip R. Hager and intern Darby Metcalf, Department of Planning; Lynda Eisenberg, Scott Graf, and Andrea Gerhard, Bureau of Comprehensive Planning; Clay Black, Laura Matyas, Price Wagoner, John Breeding, Bureau of Development Review; Gail Kessler, County Attorney's Office; Ted Zaleski, Management and Budget; James Marks and William Caine, Board of Education.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairman Helminiak called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 P.M.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Pamela Hare took the attendance of the Commission, noting that six members were present, and there was a quorum.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

OPENING REMARKS

Secretary Hager introduced the summer intern, Darby Metcalf, and noted that there were no changes proposed to the previously distributed agenda and recommended approval.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Commission, on motion of Ms. Cheatwood, seconded by Mr. Wothers, and carried, approved the agenda as distributed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rob Miller, Sykesville area resident, stated that he had two questions. He asked what the criteria for zoning or rezoning an area were and what an employment campus was and what does that mean in a residential area.

Secretary Hager answered the question with an explanation of the two processes by which a property can be rezoned.

Secretary Hager explained that the first of these is a zoning map amendment, also called piecemeal rezoning, which puts the onus on the property owner to prove the property meets criteria to make it eligible for rezoning.

Secretary Hager continued with the second process which is called a comprehensive rezoning which comes about through the adoption of a Master Plan or a Comprehensive Plan. He

explained how the planners look at all aspects of the land from historical use to infrastructure and what the needs may be 30 years into the future; based upon that information land use designations may change.

Secretary Hager explained that a land use designation is not the same as Zoning and once the plan has been approved by the Planning Commission it is then forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners for consideration of Adoption; after Adoption the plan is implemented. It is during this implementation that land use designations are examined and considered for rezoning; a public hearing is required as part of this process.

Mr. Miller thanked Secretary Hager and then asked for an explanation of what an employment campus was.

Chairman Helminiak responded that it was conceptually somewhere between a college campus and an office park; he compared it to something similar to Springfield.

Mr. Miller repeated that this (his area of concern) was a residential area and was unsure as to why something would be proposed for that area. He asked why not consider putting it in Springfield.

Mr. Hoff stated that his concerns were duly noted.

Beth Grey, resident of the Freedom Area, stated that she would expand on what Mr. Miller had said and she wanted to share her concerns regarding the rezoning of other properties. Ms. Grey indicated that there were four, specifically, that she wanted to mention. She stated that the common thread with the concerns was the fact that these were all proposed for commercial uses in predominantly residential areas. Ms. Grey stated the four areas for concern were: the Eli property, Longmeadow, and Obrecht/White Rock/Streaker, Freedom Ave/Piney Ridge Road (off the main corridor of Rt.26/32) Ms. Grey stated that she feels that most of the proposed land use might be better located in less residential neighborhoods.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the March 30th work session, and April 19, 2016 Business Meeting were approved on motion of Mr. Wothers, seconded by Ms. Cheatwood, and carried.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

Chairman Helminiak stated that the Education Facilities Master Plan 2016 – 2025 caused some angst at the last meeting and that the Planning Commission now had to decide on how they would like to express that.

Secretary Hager stated the important point to consider was the focus on the projections that were utilized. He noted that, while demography and population forecasting is a science, it is also an art and there will be fluctuations between the scientist and artist. Secretary Hager indicated that Scott Graff (who is on vacation) came in tonight to be available for any question the Planning Commission might have. Secretary Hager stated that there wasn't a substantial difference in the numbers and there wasn't anything that could be pointed to and that it is clearly inaccurate or could not be relied upon in the Carroll County Public School's projections. He noted that these numbers were probably closer to Planning's numbers than what has been seen in the past.

Secretary Hager stated that the other issue, in regards to Comprehensive Plan consistency, is the location of projected facilities. He noted that, since there is not substantial new school construction forecast as part of this plan, there is nothing to review in regards to geographical location of the educational facilities so it would be difficult to say that it was not inconsistent with the Plan since what you are looking at are the existing schools and their existing locations.

Secretary Hager stated that, in regards to the other concerns, particularly those Mr. Yeo had with regard to collaboration and the fact that we had made repeated pleas to discuss the issues instead of waiting until it was too late to be made part of the process that the Board of Education utilizes, that it would be up to the Planning Commission to decide if they felt it was significant enough to be brought forth in the form of a letter.

Secretary Hager stated that this would be the appropriate time for him to entertain any comments that the Planning Commission might have and to make any suggested revisions to the letters.

Mr. Hoff commented that his concerns were in regard to the numbers that are consistently going down each year. He noted that the Board of Education projects more students than what they actually end up having and that when it is consistently happening in one direction it suggests that something is wrong with the model they are using.

Commissioner Weaver stated that about a hundred district students are not counted but are picked up later and that throws the numbers off a little and there are some other factors that keep it from jiving 100%.

Chairman Helminiak led the discussion on the three draft letters provided by Secretary Hager.

The amended Educational Facilities Master Plan Letter from the Planning and Zoning Commission, was approved on motion of Mr. Wothers, seconded by Mr. Hoff, and carried.

FREEDOM COMMUNITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DISCUSSION

Element 8: Cultural, Historical, and Tourism Amenities Concurrence

Mary Lane stated that everyone should have received a copy of draft three in the mail and noted that after further discussion, staff had decided to take the Scenic Roads section out of Element 8. Ms. Lane pointed out each of the changes that had been made.

Mr. Canale asked who had the responsibility of carrying out Objective #2 where it stated that “we continue to promote public education and outreach for tourism”

Lynda Eisenberg answered that it was Tourism, a unit of the Department of Economic Development.

Ms. Eisenberg stated that Planning has an active role in Historic Preservation Commission as well as in Civil War Heritage area.

Mr. Wothers asked what was needed from the Planning Commission. Ms. Lane answered they needed a motion of concurrence so that the Element could be put on the website for 30 days and then endorsement at the work session on June 29.

On motion of Mr. Wothers, seconded by Ms. Cheatwood, and carried, Element 8, draft three, was approved for Concurrence.

Element 9: Environmental Resources

Secretary Hager stated that the Planning Commission had received this Element at the last meeting

Ms. Cheatwood reviewed her comments and suggested some changes that could be made.

The Planning staff thanked Ms. Cheatwood for her comments and recommendations.

Land Use Discussion Continuation

Ms. Eisenberg reviewed what had been discussed at the last Land Use discussion and stated the staff would be going over the Board of Education sites to make sure everyone was comfortable

with the suggested changes. Ms. Eisenberg stated that staff would like to set up for a second concurrence at the June 21 Business Meeting.

Ms. Eisenberg stated that after tonight's meeting she would prepare a revised map, a new pie chart, and new statistics so the Planning Commission would have a whole new package to replace the map that is in their document.

Mr. Wothers stated for clarity of the viewers and the Planning Commission that when we say "we decide" it is not the end of the process. Secretary Hager confirmed this to be true and Chair Helminiak stated it just allows the map to be put on the website.

Secretary Hager stated that it was not only the Planning staff that needed this but other departments needed the information as well.

The properties discussed were Century and Linton Springs, Bartholow Road, Gibson, Beatty, Schneider, and the proposed Employment Campus at Obrecht and Streaker Roads.

Community Outreach

Ms. Eisenberg briefed the Planning Commission on the July 13 Freedom Area Community Outreach. She noted it is scheduled for 7 to 9 PM at Liberty High School, with the option to have it recorded on video. Ms. Eisenberg stated that it has been posted to the website and the **.gov delivery** notice has been sent out.

Commissioner Weaver stated that at the last Commissioners meeting the topic of a Long-Term Advisory Council was discussed and one of the subgroups of that would be a committee for affordable housing in Carroll County. He stated that it would be beneficial to have a member of the Planning Commission be a part of the subgroup. Commissioner Weaver briefed the Planning Commission on the different areas of the County that could be affected by the Council and its various subgroups.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rob Miller, Sykesville area resident, stated that he had a lot of concerns with the properties discussed during the Land Use portion of the meeting; his concerns were in regard to the water table, tax base, roads, and the impact on schools. Mr. Miller also asked for the differences between low-, medium-, and high-density designations.

Chairman Helminiak stated the difference was how many units per acre. Ms. Eisenberg expounded on that explanation by telling Mr. Miller that low is typically a one acre lot, medium a half acre lot and high a quarter acre lot. Ms. Eisenberg and the Planning Commission explained to Mr. Miller that roads and other factors are taken into consideration and therefore 50 acres wouldn't equal 200 units.

Mr. Miller stated he also had concerns about the Warfield Center and the proposed employment campus. He asked the Planning Commission to reconsider putting an employment campus into a residential area.

Gary McGuinness, Sykesville resident, stated he had asked the last time about what happened to the County plan for a connecting road between Georgetown and Bennett/Enterprise.

Chairman Helminiak stated that was something that would need to be discussed during the Bennett Road discussion and the correct road name was not Enterprise but Progress.

Ms. Eisenberg stated the area in question that was included in the traffic study and the consultant would present them with a possible course of action.

Mr. McGuinness stated that at one time the state had a plan to move 97 east.

Ms. Eisenberg informed him that it was not on the 2001 plan and had been taken off and was no longer a part of the state, nor the County, plan.

Mr. McGuinness asked how the failing intersections impacted the adequacy of public facilities.

The staff and Planning Commission informed Mr. McGuinness that was not part of the criteria.

Mr. McGuinness stated a road was left out of the Scenic Roads section. Chairman Helminiak stated that the Scenic Roads section had been removed.

Mr. McGuinness stated that there was an endangered species in the creek behind the London Fog property. He wasn't sure of what species it was but felt it needed researched.

Mr. McGuinness asked who owned the ball fields that abutted Old Liberty Road.

He was informed they were the property of the school system.

There being no further business, the Commission, on motion of Mr. Wothers seconded by Ms. Cheatwood, and carried, adjourned at approximately 8:05 PM.

Secretary

Approved