

PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP SESSION
APRIL 17, 2013

Chairman Chris Cerino called the workshop session to order at 6:30 p.m. In attendance were Commission members Christine Betley, Jeffrey Grotsky, Jane Richman and Paul Showalter, Kees de Mooy, Zoning Administrator, Andrew Meehan, Esquire, Jennifer Mulligan, Stenographer and guests.

Mr. Cerino stated that he put together a timeline for the Comprehensive Plan. He said that he would like to have a draft to the Mayor and Council in December 2013. Mr. Cerino stated that he would like to begin meeting between regular meetings in order to keep up with the timeline, if they fell behind. The Commission agreed.

Mr. Cerino stated that this meeting would focus on "Community Character" (pages 67-80).

Mr. Cerino stated that the Community Character section could be briefer. Ms. Betley agreed.

The Commission decided to use the first paragraph and delete the second paragraph in the "Introduction" (page 67). The first part of the "Vision for Growth" would be deleted on page 67, to begin with "The Town wishes to maintain its small-town, rural identity" and continue to the end of the section. It should include things that the Town likes such as pedestrian amenities, green spaces, scale and materials, bike trails, connectivity between neighborhoods and the connection to the water. Mr. Cerino stated that adding to the population while ensuring that any future growth fits in with the existing infrastructure should also be included.

Ms. Betley stated that the "Quality Places" Principles should be removed and replaced with the Ten (10) Smart Growth Principles as follows, providing examples for each principle:

1. Mixed land uses: C3 is a good example.
2. Use compact building design: Stepne good example of where development can be clustered to preserve green space and the existing street grid. Historic District good example. Kent Plaza is not a good example.
3. Create a range of housing opportunity and choices: Larger potential subdivisions can incorporate this idea (Coventry III, Stepne). Include diversity and price points.
4. Create walkable communities: Rail Trail, adding sidewalks in areas that do not have pedestrian amenities (Philosopher's Terrace, Greenwood Ave.), Safe crosswalks are important, as are other connections between communities.
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place: Historical element is important, brick sidewalks, materials that look as though they belong, setbacks, massing and scale, treed streets and green spaces.

6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas: Open space should be central to the design of any new development, accessible and visible to the residents. Views to the Chester River and very important to preserve.
7. Direct new development to existing communities: Maximize infill and the existing water and sewer to capacity. Limit growth outside of Town limits until infill capacity is reached.
8. Provide a variety of transportation modes: Biking and places to park a bike, water trails, pedestrian sidewalks and pathways.
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost-effective: Good Design Guidelines updated zoning and revised Comprehensive Plan should all agree and reinforce each other.
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in new development decisions: World Café, task forces, Chestertown Initiative, charettes are key to gaining acceptance from citizenry.

Mr. de Mooy stated that there were also the twelve (12) State visions that should be referenced after the Ten Visions by referring back to page 23.

Under "Design Principles" the Commission liked how the document went into the four (4) different areas of Town. The waterfront area should be added. Mr. Cerino stated that it might be better to focus on the Historic District as a whole rather than Cannon Street.

Ms. Betley stated that the areas should be revised to reflect the current status of the areas. The focus areas are Upper Washington Avenue, Cannon Street (Historic District), High Street extended, Kent Plaza and Washington Square (C1), the waterfront (foot of High Street to Radcliffe Creek) and Northeast Chestertown.

Mr. Grotsky stated that the map on page 78 had to be changed. He said that it shows Radcliffe Road cutting through the Adkins site to Kent Street. It should be removed.

Mr. Cerino stated that there was language in Upper Washington Avenue about on-street parking on Rt. 213 and he said that had to be removed. He said that the 300 block of Cannon Street was divided into C2 and RB and should be updated to reflect the current zoning.

The Commission decided to hold a workshop on Tuesday, April 30th at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Cerino called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF MARCH 20, 2013

Mr. Cerino asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the Workshop meeting of March 20, 2013. **Mr. Grotsky moved to accept the minutes as presented, was seconded by Mr. Showalter and carried unanimously.**

LOT LINE ADJUSTMENT – JOHN AND JANE RICHMAN – 109-111 S. MILL STREET

Ms. Richman recused herself from the application.

Mr. de Mooy stated that that the existing property, which was constructed as a duplex, was going to be made into one residence. Mr. and Mrs. Richman wished to dissolve the dividing property line.

Mr. Grotsky moved to approve the lot line adjustment for 109-111 South Mill Street as presented, was seconded by Mr. Showalter and carried unanimously.

CONCEPT REVIEW – SULTANA PROJECTS, INC.

Mr. Drew McMullen was present for the application. Mr. Cerino recused himself from the application as he is an employee of Sultana.

Mr. McMullen stated that this was a very preliminary meeting to get feedback from the Planning Commission. He explained the needs for the Sultana Program and how they have been searching for a location in Town. Mr. McMullen stated that they have focused on 200-204 S. Cross Street. Mr. McMullen stated that the property would be bought as a single parcel.

Mr. McMullen stated that the drawings showed a concept proposal of what would be built and explained the layout. He said that they envisioned using the property for schoolchildren from Monday through Friday with a maximum of thirty-two (32) children at any one time. Half of the day the children would be on Sultana while the other half would be at the Cross Street building. Mr. McMullen stated that the children arrived by bus at the foot of High Street so they did not anticipate a problem with parking. He said that there could also be after-school programs at the location. Programs for adults would be held on weekends.

Mr. McMullen stated that the proposal included accordion-like Nana walls that can be pulled back, opening up the entire face of the building to the street. He said that they would like to be able to put the Sultana's rigging in the workshop during the winter months so that the public can enjoy the repair work that takes place. Rigging repair currently takes place at the boat yard where the public can not see it.

Mr. McMullen stated that there were seven (7) parking spaces available. He said that was probably not what was required by code, and they would require a waiver. Mr. McMullen stated that seven (7) spaces were enough for the Sultana staff. The schoolchildren come by bus. He said that when adult classes are offered there are several public parking lots within easy walking distance.

Mr. McMullen stated that they would have to return with lighting and landscape detail. He said that the Sultana's intention was to build a "green" building to the maximum extent practical.

Mr. de Mooy stated that Sultana may have to go to the Zoning Board of Appeals for parking and the proposed uses that do not fall within the permitted uses for C-2: boat shop and educational space.

Mr. McMullen stated that the storm water management for the property was developed for the entire Cross Street property from 200 S. Cannon Street to the Tidewater Trader building and that the storm water management is sufficient to handle the proposed infill building. Mr. de Mooy explained that the storm water regulations in effect at the time of the Cross Street development are grandfathered and that there is a provision in the Code (Chapter 143) to allow the grandfathering within a limited timeframe.

Mr. McMullen stated that Sultana, Inc. did not know what exterior materials would be used on the building, but the sketches were mainly for massing. He said that they did not envision using brick.

Mr. McMullen stated that he would return with a preliminary site plan.

PROPOSED REVISIONS TO SIGN ORDINANCE

Mr. Cerino stated that he would like to discuss the information on the revisions to the Sign Ordinance internally and if there were comments from the audience, they would be heard after the discussion.

Mr. de Mooy stated that this revision creates the opportunity for marquee signage for historic restorations where there was historic evidence of the signage and that it can be recreated as part of the restoration, subject to Historic District Commission approval. He said that internally lit signs were addressed by expanding the definition to include projection screens, television screens and LED signs. Mr. de Mooy stated that the language was clarified in relation to sign clutter which was the concern of the Historic District Commission when the original Sign Ordinance was last revised in 1982.

Mr. Cerino stated that the revisions also gave the ability for more than one sign if there was evidence that such signage once existed.

Ms. Betley moved to recommend the text amendment to the Mayor and Council for their consideration and determination on whether or not a public hearing should be set to move forward on the proposed revisions to the Sign Ordinance. The motion was seconded by Mr. Showalter and carried unanimously.

Mr. Cerino asked if there were any comments from the audience. Mr. Philip Dutton of the Garfield Center for the Arts said that he did not have any comment at the time. Mr. Cerino stated that he said that an internal recommendation would be made and then they

would hear comments. He said that the more appropriate place for comments would be at the public hearing.

There being no further business, **Mr. Grotsky moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m., was seconded by Mr. Showalter and carried unanimously.**

Submitted by: 
Jennifer Mulligan
Stenographer

Approved by:
Chris Cerino
Chair