

Denton Planning Commission

Minutes

Town of Denton

June 24, 2014

Planning Commission Members:

Doris Walls, Chairperson*
William Quick*
Sue Cruickshank*
Marina Dowdall*
Matt Breedlove*** (Unexcused)
Dean Danielson*

* Those Present
** Excused
*** Absent

Visitors:

None

Recording:

Thomas Batchelor, Acting Planning Director

For the purposes of clarity the Minutes have been edited for brevity.

PROCEEDINGS

Call to Order:

The regular meeting was called to order by Chairperson Walls at 6:00 p.m., on June 24, 2014, at the Denton Town Office and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

The April 29, 2014, minutes were approved as submitted.

Old Business #1 – Other: None.

New Business #1 – Arts & Entertainment District Expansion: Marina Dowdall made

the presentation on behalf of the Caroline County Arts Council (“CCAC”) for the proposed expansion of the Arts & Entertainment District. A brief history of the existing Arts & Entertainment District was provided to the Commission. The original district was implemented to address blighted properties in and around North 4th Street. The proposed expansion includes Central Business Commercial, Townscale Residential, and Mixed Residential Zoning Districts. The program, recently enhanced by the State, provides tax incentives to artists operating and selling their art in the Arts & Entertainment (“A&E”) District. Recent enhancements allow artists to work in one A&E district and sell art in another district throughout the state without incurring state sales taxes. The program is neutral in effect on property owners, commercial or residential, in essence providing benefit of expanded uses and opportunities. The program proposes to provide residential housing and business opportunities for artists and has been used as a revitalization tool in other jurisdictions, such as Hagerstown.

A public meeting held on June 23 presented the potential impacts of the A&E district on businesses in the district with a small showing of business owners. Ms. Dowdall indicated that the CCAC is examining procedures for public notification to identify that the information is effectively reaching targeted property owners and public because of the small turn-out.

1 The Commission discussed possible extensions of the A&E District to Lincoln Street,
2 negative impacts from potential unintended or unauthorized expansion of uses, such as art
3 galleries, in or adjacent to a more restrictive residential zoned district. Staff informed the
4 Commission that regulations may be written in the A&E ordinance to address potential
5 nuisances, similar to home occupations. Commission would consider extension of the A&E
6 District to Lincoln Street in the future.

7 CCAC are considering coordinating efforts with the Caroline County Habitat for
8 Humanity for artist housing.

9 The A&E District redesignation with the State is scheduled for 2015.

10 Ordinance must be adopted by the application deadline. The ordinance will be
11 introduced to the Town Council in August for September adoption.

12 **New Business #2 – Other:** None.

13 **Staff Item #1 – Denton Plaza Redevelopment, BOP, Developer:** Staff updated the
14 progress at Denton Plaza redevelopment. Construction was stopped by the MD Department of
15 the Environment (“MDE”) for working out of sequence and minor labeling of Erosion &
16 Sediment Control (“E&SC”) plans. Demolition is partially complete and foundation work is in
17 the process. Site plan is conditionally approved pending Public Works and Stormwater
18 Agreements, as well as, final E&SC approval.

19 **Staff Item #2 – The Gardens, J. DiDonato, Developer:**

20 Staff provided updates on the status of the Gardens Subdivision approvals. The
21 Commission approved the amended subdivision in the previous meeting and the developer is
22 seeking Town Engineer, Town Attorney, and staff approval for the plans. At this time, the Town
23 Engineer has completed review without comments, the Town Attorney has completed review
24 and is incorporating language changes to the Stormwater and Public Works Agreements, and
25 staff has completed review and has minimal comments.

1 **Staff Item #3 – Sandy Meadows, T. Shultz, Developer:**

2 Staff informed the Commission of the upcoming Sandy Meadows Subdivision meeting.
3 The developer is seeking the initial steps towards obtaining approval of the Public Right-of-Way
4 transfer.

5 **Staff Item #4 – New Town Office Rehab, Town of Denton:**

6 Project update was provided by staff on the rehabilitation.

7 **Staff Item #5 – T. Batchelor reduction to part time status:**

8 Tom Batchelor, Acting Director and Senior Code Official, informed the Commission of
9 reduction to part time status and eventual departure from the Town of Denton. Mr. Batchelor has
10 accepted the position of project manager for an architecture firm and is pursuing licensing as an
11 architect. Mr. Batchelor will remain in part time status to complete current projects, perform
12 inspections of single family residences and commercial projects, as well as, provide planning
13 support. The details of the transition are being developed.

14 **Adjournment:**

15 The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.