

Denton Planning Commission

Minutes

Town of Denton

October 29, 2019

Planning Commission Members:

Doris Walls, Chairperson*

William Quick**

Sue Cruickshank*

Joseph Mayer, Jr.*

Lauren Shilling**

Stephen Mead*

* Those Present

** Excused

*** Absent

Visitors:

Abner Levi Galdanez

Jeffrey L. Middleton

Sam Patchett

Joseph Eure

Recording:

Don Mulrine, Jr., Town Administrator

Peter Johnston, Town Planner Consultant

PROCEEDINGS

Call to Order:

The Planning Commission Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Walls at 6:00 p.m., on October 29, 2019, at the Denton Town Office and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

The September 24, 2019, Planning Commission Meeting minutes were reviewed and approved unanimously as submitted.

Old Business #1 – Urban Forestry Plan: Jeffrey Middleton, Senior Program Manager of Vegetation Management for Delmarva Power, Sam Patchett, Asplundh Supervisor, Joseph Eure, Vegetation Management, and Levi Galdanez, Asplundh Supervisor, were present to discuss the tree trimming concerns for the Delmarva Power lines.

Mr. Mulrine provided a brief overview of Vice Chairperson Quick's concerns for the tree trimming process in the Historic District and the effect of the unappealing streetscape along Denton's streets. The Commission is encouraging Delmarva Power to save Denton's streetscape by lightly trimming the trees and installing protective coating wiring when replacing or upgrading wiring so the trees will not have to be unattractively trimmed.

Mr. Middleton provided an explanation of the tree trimming process. Their research proves that the current techniques utilized will have a lesser impact on the health of the trees.

Commissioner Cruickshank questioned the tree trimming process and if the same process was applied to all species.

Mr. Middleton's response was that the tree species, overall health of the trees, and overall proximity to the facilities are all evaluated in the tree trimming process. The evaluation of trimming trees also includes public safety, liability, overall health of the trees, and the concerns of the customers.

Mr. Middleton provided an explanation for the purpose of the coated wiring, and it prevents momentary outages when a tree limb breaks on the line or brushes the line. The tree trimming process for coated wiring is the same as any other power line.

Mr. Johnston requested a copy of the tree trimming guidelines used by Delmarva Power.

Mr. Middleton stated brochures are provided to the property owners that include the minimal requirements by the State of Maryland. A brochure will be provided to the Town.

Mr. Johnston provided a brief overview of the Urban Forestry Plan. Denton's green infrastructure adds value to the land and to the Town.

Mr. Middleton explained that the pruning allows the tree to remain on the property as opposed to removing the tree. The pruned tree will provide the shade and environmental benefits to the Town. Delmarva Power assesses the health of the tree to determine if the tree should be pruned or removed due to the poor health of the tree. The customer is contacted regarding the removal or pruning of the tree, and Delmarva Power will remove and replace the tree with the customer's written permission.

The Department of Natural Resources (Marian Honecny) may have available State resources to help Denton establish a tree inventory. Delmarva Power will assist with the assessment of the trees.

Old Business #2 – 2010 Comprehensive Plan Update: Mr. Johnston had emailed the Commission Members videos of pocket developments and cottage developments for their review.

Mr. Mead commented on the comparison to the growth of the small towns to big cities.

Mr. Johnston noted the next Comprehensive Plan will move in a different direction than the prior Plan. The next Plan will be more about making the most out of what you have and better.

Mr. Johnston provided a handout to the Commission on Community Profile – Socio-Economic Background to review prior to the next meeting. After reviewing the handout, Mr.

Johnston would like the Planning Commission to discuss what goals and objectives should be included in the next Comprehensive Plan at the November Meeting.

Mr. Johnston noted the next Comprehensive Plan should include how to serve the needs of the existing population of Denton and how it will serve the projected growth.

The Smart Town website is a great resource for planning the next Comprehensive Plan.

Small Bets are good for small towns because it requires a small investment.

Mrs. Cruickshank would like to see more landscaping throughout the town.

The planning process includes issues, opportunity, strategy, scenarios, evaluate, and implementation.

Old Business #3 – Other: The Maryland Planning Commissioners Association Meeting is November 6-7 if anyone is interested in attending.

New Business #1 – Other: None.

Staff Item #1 – Other: Mr. Mulrine updated the Commission on the proposed 7-Eleven, Denton Plaza, and Road to Nowhere (Commerce Drive).

Caroline County's tax differential for municipalities was discussed.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.