

Denton Planning Commission

Minutes

Town of Denton

January 28, 2020

Planning Commission Members:

Doris Walls, Chairperson*

William Quick*

Sue Cruickshank*

Joseph Mayer, Jr.*

Lauren Shilling*

Stephen Mead*

* Those Present

** Excused

*** Absent

Visitors:

Donna Poole

Sam Gardiner

Jessica Poole

Walter Johnson

Recording:

Donald H. 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 January 28, 2020, at the Denton Town Office and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Election of 2020 Officers:

Doris Walls was re-elected for Chairperson and William Quick was re-elected for Vice Chairperson by unanimous vote.

Approval of Minutes:

The November 26, 2019, Planning Commission Meeting minutes were reviewed and approved unanimously as submitted.

Chairperson Walls moved to proceed with New Business Items.

New Business #1 – Mid-Atlantic Real Estate Investments, Inc./Denton Plaza Site Plan

Revision:

Kevin Sills, owner of Mid-Atlantic Real Estate Investments, Inc., submitted a written request for a one-year extension to the Denton Plaza final site plan approved February 26, 2019, for the new retail building pad site.

Commissioner Mayer motioned to approve the one-year extension for the Denton Plaza final site plan approved February 26, 2019, as requested by the Applicant.

Commissioner Shilling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (5:0)

New Business #2 – Arcadia of Denton II, LLC/Minor Site Plan:

Kevin Shearon, DMS & Associates, made the presentation for the Arcadia of Denton II, LLC, minor site plan on behalf of the Applicants, Donna and Jessica Poole.

The minor site plan is for a change of use to the property located at 609 Daffin Lane, formerly the Choptank Community Health Systems building for medical offices. This existing site includes forty (40) parking spaces. The Applicants are requesting approval for the conversion of the existing building to a sixteen (16) bed assisted living facility. This conversion only requires interior renovations to the existing building.

A landscape bufferyard will be added to the site per Mr. Johnston's comments.

The only exterior renovations to the building will include a new covered entry feature to the front of the building and a handicap accessible ramp.

A new water line will be installed to the property to accommodate the interior sprinkler system.

Vice Chairperson Quick stated the Boy Scouts have a small structure on the property behind this site that was flooded a couple of years ago and would like to see the bufferyard increased to prevent drainage.

Mr. Johnston inquired about the details for screening of the dumpster.

Ms. Poole stated she would like to move the dumpster to another area on the site. When she purchased the property, there was an agreement with Caroline Health Services to share the dumpster.

Commissioner Mayer inquired about the details of the stormwater management pond.

Mr. Shearon provided comments regarding the details since he worked on the design several years ago.

Mr. Mulrine noted the stormwater management pond is dry 90% of the time.

Commissioner Shilling motioned to approve the minor site plan for a change of use to an assisted living facility for the Arcadia of Denton II, LLC, located at 609 Daffin Lane, conditioned on relocating and screening the dumpster and adjust the bufferyard for site conditions.

Commissioner Mayer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (5:0)

New Business #3 – Stahl Point Holdings, LLC/Minor Site Plan:

Sam Gardiner, Stahl Point Holdings, LLC, submitted a minor site plan application requesting approval for a new office building to be located at G. L. Hollingsworth, 907 Crystal Avenue. There is an existing shop and dispatch office at this site. The 12' x 60' modular office building will include two (2) offices equipped with a sprinkler system and is handicap accessible. Two parking spaces have been added to the site plan. There is one driveway to access the property.

Commissioner Mayer motioned to approve the minor site plan for a new office building to be located at 907 Crystal Avenue conditioned upon the Town Council approval for the water and sewer allocation.

Commissioner Shilling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (5:0)

New Business #4 – Other:

Mr. Mulrine provided the Commission with a concept plan from Caroline County for the subdivision of the Double Hills farm property. Caroline County is requesting annexation of this property into the town limits. The Town has agreed to annex the proposed YMCA property. The Denton Town Council would like comments from the Planning Commission on Caroline County's proposed annexation.

The guidelines for annexation can be found on the Maryland Municipal League website.

Old Business #1 – 2010 Comprehensive Plan Update:

At the last meeting, Mr. Johnston distributed blank neighborhood maps to the Commission and requested the Commission define their neighborhoods. This exercise was for each Commission Member to define their neighborhood and think about the concept of a neighborhood.

The current Comprehensive Plan is directly linked to the zoning. Mr. Johnston would like to decouple the Land Use Plan from the zoning and reattach it to the Pattern Book.

The components of a neighborhood are important in development of the infill and redevelopment areas. Identify the opportunities to backfill and create the components to develop those neighborhoods. The connectivity to the town with streets and pedestrian walkways is important to the creation of the neighborhood.

What are the Town's goals and objectives? How do we support the market that drives the infill and redevelopment with the current zoning standards and density requirements?

The redevelopment standards can be modified to allow the Planning Commission to approve projects on a case by case basis. The applicant would have to demonstrate that the proposed project is context appropriate.

Mr. Johnston discussed the value per acre component relative to the age of the buildings and how to keep these properties valuable to the town. Property taxes are a return on investment through infrastructure improvements adding value to the town. The Comprehensive Plan recommendations should include transportation improvements, pedestrian improvements, park and recreation improvements, etc.

Chairperson Walls stated that Denton should be kept as the small-town rural lifestyle. Denton needs more restaurants and less apartments.

Commissioner Mayer stated the focus should be the redevelopment of the existing infill areas modifying the setbacks and density for the development of the narrow lots.

Vice Chairperson Quick stated community is the key to building neighborhoods. To build a community, there needs to be some type of anchor that everyone feels connected to. Denton is a bedroom community.

Mr. Johnston commented that infrastructure should be included to make neighborhoods through the Comprehensive Plan.

Councilman Johnson commented the YMCA at the Denton Plaza does not have the members to support it. Moving the YMCA to the Double Hills Farm will allow for the expansion of facilities and recreation to attract more members.

Old Business #2 – Other:

Mr. Mulrine noted that staff had met with the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative group from Salisbury University, and they will be performing a tree pilot study of the Historic District. The Town of Easton has a tree inventory.

Staff Item #1 – Other:

The Maryland Planning Commissioners Association is hosting a Workshop at Salisbury University on February 21, 2020, if anyone is interested in attending.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.