

Denton Planning Commission

Minutes

Town of Denton

October 26, 2021

Planning Commission Members:

Doris Walls, Chairperson*

William Quick*

Joseph Mayer, Jr.**

Stephen Mead*

George Schwaeble**

David Burroughs*

* Those Present

** Excused

*** Absent

Participants:

Walter Keith Johnson

Sue Simmons

Peter Johnston

Donald Mulrine, Jr.

Recording:

Donna Todd, Planning and Codes

George Bacorn, Chief of Police

PROCEEDINGS

Call to Order:

The Planning Commission Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Walls at 6:00 p.m., on October 26, 2021, at the Denton Town Office. Chairperson Walls lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

This Meeting was made available to the public via Zoom Video Conferencing, and access to the meeting was made available on the Town website.

Approval of Minutes:

September 27, 2021, Joint Working Session Meeting minutes and September 28, 2021, Planning Commission Meeting minutes were reviewed and unanimously approved as submitted.

Chairperson Walls moved to Other Old Business #2.

Old Business #2 – Other:

Mr. Mulrine set up the Training Room to display all the proposed parks' plans per the request of the Commission. All plans are located on the tables around the room and show the concept plans, improvement plans, and plans marked up by the various athletic groups.

Vice Chairperson Quick requested park plans to be distributed electronically.

Chairperson Walls moved to New Business #1.

New Business #1 – Caroline County Comprehensive Parks Plan:

At the request of the Commission at the September Planning Commission Meeting, staff coordinated a meeting with Sue Simmons, Director of Caroline County Parks and Recreation, to discuss the Town's plans and the Caroline County comprehensive park plan.

Mrs. Simmons explained the land acquisition investment process and Program Open Space (POS) funding received from the State. The Sharp Road Park was purchased with POS funds.

Denton has two geographic divides, the Choptank River and Route 404. Identifying and acquiring land on the east side of Route 404 for neighborhood parks for future developments should be a consideration during the future planning process. Linkage for pedestrians to access parks is another important factor in the future planning process.

Mr. Johnston noted the Town mapped some privately owned parcels in the last Comprehensive Plan as parks which prevented those landowners' development opportunities. This Recreation and Parks (RP) Zone should be replaced with criteria for neighborhood parks and include Town Code Zoning revisions for developers to include active recreational open space or a Fee-In-Lieu to be used for existing parks.

The Caroline County LPPRP Municipal Park Inventory Map includes public and private parks.

Councilman Johnson provided the following open space information on existing developments east of Rt. 404:

- Mallard Landing – Two playgrounds, swimming pool, RV lot, open space area
- Savannah Overlook – Walking trails, open space area
- Sandy Meadows – Open space area
- The Gardens – Open space area

Caroline County received one million from the State for parks and playground infrastructure. Denton received \$300,000 from Caroline County for the Sharp Road Park improvements.

Municipalities can apply for State Community Parks and Playground funds.

Mr. Mulrine informed the Commission of the proposed plans for the YMCA at Double Hills Farm next to the Denton Industrial Park. This regional park will include a swimming pool, playgrounds, and athletic centers.

Councilman Johnson requested a copy of the County's standards for establishing neighborhood parks within a subdivision for the private sector.

Old Business #1 – Comprehensive Plan Update:

Mr. Johnston noted the discussion on the parks impacts the Community Facilities Element and Land Use Plan in the Comprehensive Plan.

In the current plan, the Recreation and Parks (RP) Zone that was applied to private properties establishes a takings action of their property because there is no other use established for their property.

Eliminating the RP Zone and establishing criteria for the neighborhood parks to include location and characteristics for parks.

Establishing in the Town Code dedication provisions for parks and trail linkage to other areas should be included in the next update to the Town Code.

Staff Items #1 – Other:

Next month the proposed neighborhood parks legislation for the next update to the Zoning Code will be provided to the Commission.

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