



Approved: September 7, 2022

Peter Nagrod called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Because of the Coronavirus pandemic, this meeting took place via ZOOM videoconference. In attendance were Commissioners Georgette Cole, Jonathan Dail, Christine Dibble, Dave Hix, and Robert Johnson. Also in attendance were RASEC member Paula Puglisi and HPC Chair Bob Booher. Woods Committee Co-Chairs Patty Klein and Joan Mahaffey joined the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

**Approval of Agenda:** It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda. The Commission added Solar Farms to Other Business. Approved: 5-0, as amended.

**Building Permit Applications:**

**352 Ridge Road** – Dave Hix explained the plans for a shed presented by the resident. This property is in the RR-4 Zone and includes a Forest Conservation Easement which may or may not have been filed in the County Land Records. One of the side setbacks is problematic due to shed setbacks. The Commission discussed the following:

- Allowable height when using the 10-foot side setback.
- Slope of the property.
- Original ordinance pertaining to side setbacks.
- Foundation plans; type of floor, concrete slab or sonotubes and floor joists.

The Commission decided the way to allow for the proposed placement of the new shed would be if the shed were a bit smaller. A smaller shed would not violate the height ordinance. Dave will contact the property owner with this information. There was a lengthy conversation about filing Forest Conservation Easements and developing a process. The Commission members agreed that the Forest Conservation Easement process should be discussed at a future meeting.

**Edible Garden** – Dave Hix reviewed the proposed plan for an edible garden inside the fence of the asphalt tennis courts. A discussion ensued. Dave Hix moved to approve this use of public land which he and the Planning Commission find consistent with Town Ordinances and the Comprehensive Plan. Peter seconded the motion. Approved: 5-0.

**Public Ways & Property Permits:** Peter brought up a recent substantial water problem at 403 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and he wondered if a PW&PP was required. The Commission determined that this was an emergency, and no permit was required.

**Public Appearances:** There were none.

**Approval of the July 2022 Minutes:** It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes from the July 2022 Planning Commission meeting. There were two minor amendments made. Approved: 5-0, as amended.

**WG ADU/Housing Workgroup Presentation:** Paula Puglisi stated this was not a presentation but just background concerning why the Comprehensive Plan should have a housing section. She asked the PC if they would consider co-sponsoring, with RASEC, a few presentations about Accessory Dwelling Units. There was a discussion about the following:

- Three presentations about ADU's
- Affordable housing
- Not taking a stand in favor or against allowing ADU's
- The meaning of co-sponsoring
- Being stewards of the Town
- Supporting educational and informational efforts while remaining neutral.

Peter asked Paula to send him a draft flyer with disclaimer-type language in order to be sure residents understand the PC is not supporting ADU's.

**Discuss Concept for Ordinance Change Granting PC Flex Power for Historic Cottage Variance Within Agreed Upon Constraint – Discussion:** The current setbacks are restrictive for the RR-2 area, but Article VII Section 3.14 does give some wiggle room for these homes. The Commission agreed that they need to better understand the current flexibility. They also agreed that the setbacks in the RR-2 zone need to be cleaned up. The goal is to preserve the original cottages.

**Discussion of Placement of the Commercial Corner Trash Receptacles and Possible Ordinance Revision:** Peter reported he had a conversation about the dumpster with Commercial Corner property owner Tatyana Bell. She would like to work with the Town concerning our zoning and allowable uses at the Commercial Corner. Mrs. Bell suggested the Town allow building an area for the trash in the back of the building. There was a discussion about the following:

- Changing the zoning to allow for more varied uses.
- Putting trash receptacles in the rear of the building.
- Article VII Section 6.231(d).
- Board of Zoning Appeals.
- More greenspace.

**Locations for Fiscal 2023 Surveys:** Chairman Nagrod asked about continuing the block corner surveys even though their effectiveness is in question. There is no compelling reason to do this now. Robert Johnson stated that perhaps the money would be better spent by getting new corporate and zoning boundary surveys. The Planning Commission agreed with Robert's statement.

**Forest Conservation Easement – Discussion:** Dave Hix reported he wasn't sure if the Town has filed any Forest Conservation Easements. Georgette Cole explained that our ordinances require the Town do a Forest Conservation Easement in order to meet requirements for development. The property owner is the one who files with the Land Records. Dave suggested the PC spend some survey money on identifying existing easements and producing a scope of work.

**Report from Town Council:** Peter reported the following on Christine's behalf:

- New wooden posts installed at Amity Drive and Crabbs Branch Way were done by the County.
- Filing to remove restrictive covenants from deeds.
- Mayor Compton is still working on USPS delivery. He has written a second letter.
- The Town Council continues to work on the Comprehensive Plan. They hope to approve it at the Special Town Council Meeting on August 29, 2022.
- The Town Council approved Resolution 2022-06 Authorizing Joint Town Of Washington Grove And Montgomery County Parks Deer Management Bow Hunting Sessions In Conservation Meadow And Piedmont Crossing Local Park and Resolution 2022-05 Authorizing Deer Management Bow Hunting Sessions.
- Councilors Yachup and Cosson are working on the stormwater infrastructure of the West Woods.

**Gateway Committee – Update:** Peter Nagrod reported two of the three new welcome signs were installed. He also talked with Commercial Corner property owner Tatyana Bell about the third sign and about moving the dumpster. Peter also met with a MoCo representative about cutting back the brush along the West side of Washington Grove Lane. In addition, seven new walkway-only signs are ready for installation along with split rail identity fencing.

**Other Business:**

**Solar Farm** – The Commission discussed treating solar panels as an accessory structure. John Tomlin brought this idea to the PC. The Commission will need a plan before rendering an opinion.

**Guardrail on Johnson Alley** – This project has not been started yet. Peter will look into getting it on the list for RJ Landscape Contractors

**Town Permit Process** – The Commission discussed the need for the Town to align itself with Montgomery County's permitting process. It was suggested that someone call the County and ask how they would like to receive our approved permits. Dave Hix volunteered to take this on.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM.

Kathryn L. Lehman, Town Clerk