



Minutes of the Planning Commission Worksession
16 December 2020

Approved:

This meeting was held online using the Zoom App. Attendees could attend by video or telephone.

Attendees: Commissioners Georgette Cole, Charlie Challstrom, Robert Johnson (alternate), Deborah Mehlferber, and Peter Nagrod, HPC Chair Bob Booher, residents Joan Mahaffey and Paula Puglisi.

Call to order 7:35 pm.

1) Deborah moved approval of the agenda; Charlie seconded. Add Racial Equity Committee comments on Section 8.4 as an additional agenda item at #6. Approved with change, 4/0.

2) Robert moved approval of the 11/18 minutes; Charlie seconded. Approve no changes 5/0.

3) Comprehensive Plan Section 3.2 (Parking Policy). The Racial Equity Committee suggested the language regarding parking was too absolute. The Planning Commission made a modification to clarify when and why parking conditions need to be evaluated. A phrase to increase tree protection was also added.

The Zoning Map needs to be re-done. With help from Pat Patula (WG Archivist) Georgette contacted Kirk Eby who is the GIS mapping staff for the Town of Gaithersburg. He has expressed his willingness to work on the project with us. He and Charlie are now in contact and working on an updated Zoning map.

Section 13 (Sustainability)

This completely new section was submitted by the Sustainability Committee (Bob Booher, Chair) on Monday December 14. It will be the subject of our January 20 work session.

State Review Process: Once the Planning Commission has a basically finalized plan, we need to submit it to the Maryland Department of Planning at least 60 days prior to our proposed public hearing. At the same time, we must also send it to all adjoining jurisdictions (Gaithersburg and MNCPPC). The MDP will circulate the plan to the required State agencies. Georgette will contact Nkosi Yearwood at MNCPPC to ask where the draft should be sent.

4) Consideration of Public Ways and Property Permit Forms: A new PW&P permit form was approved by the PC at our 9/ meeting. We have discussed having a separate form for a PW&P permit specifically for town residents asking to work on public land directly abutting their property (ex: driveway apron). One issue is the MD requirement for a Department of Natural Resources

(DNR) Roadside Tree Permit if any plant with a woody stem or trunk which grows all, or in part, within the right of way of a public road will be affected. We are trying to decide how to incorporate this into our permit process. Georgette and Deborah had a draft proposal but the use of the Town arborist was considered potentially difficult. Robert Johnson volunteered to have a go at drafting the next round.

5) Identity Fences for use in Town and Town Borders: Discussion was wide-ranging. We agreed the new fence segments at the eastern end of Oak Street (walkway) were attractive and effective at preventing vehicular intrusion. The Border Committee subgroup met last week to check locations on Railroad Street and Washington Grove Lane for installation of segments.

Note: The West Woods Plat needs to be signed by the PC Chair. The signed plats for both the East and West Woods will then be taken to for filing.

6) Section 8.4 (Commercial Corner Beautification)

The Racial Equity Committee was concerned with wording which might eliminate needed parking spaces. The Commissioners considered the section and altered the wording to direct more general parking changes. They also added removal or movement of the dumpster which creates a pedestrian safety hazard in its current location. Check again later to see if additional wordsmithing is needed to address safety concerns or if this should be referred to the Safety Committee.

Mimi Bolotin's reformatted version of the CP should be scrutinized by all PC members. We need to go over the document as a whole to identify any pieces we missed or which need adjustment.

We adjourned at 10:22 pm.

Georgette will integrate the current changes into a 121620 draft for circulation to Commissioners and posting to the Town web site before the next work session.

Our next meeting will be January 20.

Submitted by Georgette Cole