

QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
September 14, 2023

The Queen Anne's County Planning Commission met on Thursday, September 14, 2023, at 8:45 A.M. The following members were present: Sharon Dobson, Tom Leigh, Jeff Reiss, Teddy Baker, Kathy Deoudes, Bill Sylvester, and Ben Tilghman.

Also present were Amy Moredock, Director Department of Planning and Zoning; Rob Gunter, Development Review Principal Planner; Stephanie Jones, Long Range Principal Planner; Rob Tracey, Long Range Planner; Steve Johnson, Development Review Planner; John Shelton, Clerk; Christopher F. Drummond, Esquire; and Sharon H. Brinster, Esquire.

1. Public Comment – No comments received.

2. Meeting Minutes Review – Upon motion made by Commissioner Leigh, seconded by Commissioner Deoudes and passed by voice vote, the July 13, 2023, Planning Commission Minutes were approved.

3. UPDATES:

(A) Legislation and Legal Matters – Amy Moredock, Planning and Zoning Director, provided the following updates:

- (1) Armored Storage – County Commissioners granted final approval for Growth Allocation and the map amendment, and both become effective October 7, 2023.
- (2) Kent Island Airport Gateway District – County Commissioners approved the Code and Map updates and both become effective October 28, 2023.
- (3) Legislative Session will be starting.
 - a. A Storm legislation – a program through Maryland Department of the Environment to augment best management practices to the Stormwater Management Model Ordinance.
 - b. Floodplain Model Ordinance legislation – was unsuccessful during the last session, but a workgroup has been formed to ground-truth the data and propose language which may produce successful legislation this year.
 - c. Housing standards – Ms. Moredock was appointed to the Governor's Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Task Force which will hold its first meeting on September 19, 2023.
 - d. Critical Area Commission – has a new Chairman who is holding Critical Area Summits on the Western and Eastern Shores. Staff will attend the summit in Easton on September 15, 2023.
- (4) Fall Events
 - a. Maryland Bar Association's annual Land Use Institute Conference will be held on September 27, 2023; Ms. Moredock was asked to sit on a panel to discuss how attorneys can best coordinate with planning commissions, boards of appeal, and staff.

- b. Forever Maryland Land Conservation Conference will be held on October 5, 2023; Ms. Moredock was asked to sit on a panel to discuss comprehensive plans and their role in land conservation.
- c. Maryland Planning Commission Association Conference (40th Anniversary) will be held in Queen Anne's County. October 24, 2023 will provide training opportunities and a tour; October 25th County Commissioner Corchiarino will kick off the conference and Planning Commissioner Dobson will close the day with an awards ceremony at the dinner; and October 26th will provide Commission and Open Meetings Act training. She encouraged all Planning Commission members to register.
- d. Maryland Association of Floodplain and Stormwater Managers (MAFSM) annual conference is in November.
- e. Winter MACO Conference is in December at the Cambridge Hyatt.
- f. Staff – Currently have openings for a Nuisance Inspector and a new Office Coordinator position to succession plan for the potential for key staff retirements in complicated positions.
- g. Citizen Self-Service Portal for the Planning and Zoning Department is moving forward and is expected to begin within the next year.
- h. Board of Appeals – Recognized Kenny Scott by proclamation for his 20 years of service.

(B) Miscellaneous Staff Items – Rob Tracey, Long Range Planner, requested approval of the County's 60-Day review comment letter to the proposed Town of Millington 2023 Comprehensive Plan.

Upon review and further consideration, the following motion was made by Commissioner Leigh, seconded by Commissioner Reiss, and passed by unanimous voice vote:

RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission approves sending the comment and analysis letter regarding the Town of Millington 2023 Comprehensive Plan as proposed.

4. Amended Major Subdivision – W-D 40 Investments, LLC. SUB # 23-08-0385 – Steven Johnson, Development Review Planner, provided the history of the development and highlights of the applicant's request to modify the approved landscape buffer and forest conservation plan, on 49.274 acres of land on Eagle Manor Drive, in Church Hill.

Jeff Thompson, Esq., described the request to modify the landscape buffer and forest conservation plan including the 3.23-acre area currently tilled by Mr. Bostic with his farm and stated that farming/tilling will continue on the Bostic property for generations as it is protected. He added that adjacent property owners were notified, and no one is here to complain. Additionally, he said the Planning Commission could opt to modify the landscape buffer rather than fully eliminate it.

Chairman Dobson asked if there were members of the public who wished to comment, at which time an email from Jay Falstad, Queen Anne's Conservation Association, was read requesting the Commission carefully evaluate Condor Manor's proposed subdivision amendment ensuring that elimination of buffer and forest conservation plan does not represent a step backward from the forest buffering objectives which are crucial to agriculture and a healthy environment.

The Commissioners discussed the request and noted the purpose of the 50-foot landscape buffer in protecting residents from agricultural noise, dust, and chemicals, providing habitat for animals, and protecting a future farm owner from nuisance complaints by the residents. They reiterated that the 50-foot landscape buffer was agreed to by the developer and farmer at the time of approval and expressed concern regarding the precedent of approving buffer reductions, or, in this request, the elimination of that buffer.

Upon further review and consideration, the following motion was made by Commissioner Leigh, seconded by Commissioner Tilghman and passed with Commissioners Leigh, Reiss, Sylvester, and Tilghman in favor, and Commissioners Baker and Deodes in opposition.

RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission, regarding the request by **W-D 40 Investments, LLC**, for relief from planting the required landscape buffer under §18:1-76.D and to modify the forest conservation plan, on 49.274 acres of land on Eagle Manor Drive, in Church Hill, and as more particularly described in **Department of Planning & Zoning file SUB# 23-08-0385**, hereby denies Amended Major Subdivision approval.

6. Public Comment – No comments received.

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:29 A.M.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Kathy Deodes, Secretary