

Economic Development Commission

The County Commissioners of Kent County

400 High Street, 3rd Floor

Chestertown, MD 21620

February 6, 2019

Commission Members Present: Jim Luff, Cindy Genter, Kate Gray, Rob Thompson, Tracey Williams, Aaron Bramble, Richard Story, and Trae Hoffner

Commission Members Absent:

Also in Attendance: Bob Jacob, County Commissioner; Emily McCoy, Assistant, Economic Development.

At 3:00 p.m. Mr. Luff called the meeting to order. Mr. Luff requested a motion to approve the minutes from the January 9, 2019, meeting. On motion by Mr. Bramble and seconded by Mr. Thompson, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes from the January 9, 2019, meeting.

Ms. Williams shared the following update on behalf of Amy Moredock, Director, Planning, Housing, and Zoning.

- The Kent County Planning Commission will meet on 7 February 2019 to:
 - Hold a public hearing regarding the County Commissioner-sponsored Zoning Text Amendment to alter the existing special exception use as follows: “structures for the buying, processing, and sale of farm products related to agriculture, including the sale of fertilizer and seed but not including animal products, in structures that exceed 10,000 square feet but are less than ~~25,000~~ 50,000 square feet.
 - Review 2 applications to create agricultural preservation districts. All recommendations will be forwarded to the County Commissioners for action.
 - Decide an application for Minor Amendment to an approved subdivision to remove building restriction lines which are more restrictive than the Ordinance standards.
- Zoning Text Amendments: Four amendments were conveyed to the County Commissioners at their 8 January meeting (sediment control mandated updates, country inn provision updates, animal shelter clarification, and utility scale solar systems in residential districts as special exception uses). The hearing schedule has been set to ensure due consideration of each case as follows:
 - CHR Bill No. 1-2019 – Country inn provision updates
 - 1st reading/introduction: 5 February 2019
 - 2nd reading/public hearing: 5 March 2019
 - 3rd reading/vote: 19 March 2019
 - CHR Bill No. 2-2019 – Utility scale solar systems in residential districts as special exception uses
 - 1st reading/introduction: 19 February 2019
 - 2nd reading/public hearing: 19 March 2019
 - 3rd reading/vote: 2 April 2019
 - CHR Bill No. 3-2019 – Animal shelter clarification: TBD
 - CHR Bill No. 4-2019 – Sediment control mandated updates
 - 1st reading/introduction: 16 April 2019

- 2nd reading/public hearing: 7 May 2019
- 3rd reading/vote: 21 May 2019
- County Commissioners v Bayshore Land Holdings, LLC, et al case (C14-CV-17-61): A Consent Order was executed by both parties and signed by the Circuit Court Judge on 17 January 2019. This Order outlines grandfathering determination on both parcels and a timeframe for the conversion of the on-site sewage disposal from holding tanks to an onsite sewage disposal system in accordance within COMAR requirements to include a nitrogen reducing system.

Tracey Williams shared the results of the 2018-2019 score card for Kent County Public Schools. The system converted to a star rating system. The schools are ranked on a bell curve, the star rating scale, and the percentile score. The rankings are a moving target basis and the graduation rate was shared for traditional 4-year students and expanded plan program students on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Ms. Williams shared details for ranking readiness for post-secondary success, school quality, and student success components which included quality of the school environment with access to well-rounded curriculum. Ms. Williams also discussed the school climate survey that is being conducted during Spring of 2019 (safety, engagement, relationship to environments). Ms. Williams referenced marylandreportcard.com as a tool to look at any school in the state of Maryland.

Maria Hynson, Advisor, Washington College, Habitat for Humanity, shared information about the program with the Commission. The group has been on campus for 20 years and they regularly partner with Tuckahoe Habitat for Humanity and other non-profit organizations as a student group. Caitlyn Creasy and Ben Lammers, Washington College student representatives, spoke about group activities and fundraisers the group participates in like Cookie Delivery to the Dorms, Kiss the Pig, Graduation Flowers, and Raffle Baskets. Ms. Hynson shared the history of the organization including the organization's diversity and inclusion policy. The Habitat for Humanity club at Washington College has 47 active members. Habitat for Humanity focuses on interest free, low cost mortgages for economic independence. The group serves some of the poorest industrial and rural areas in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast including Denton, MD, Onancock, VA, Salem, NJ, Sumter, SC. The club will participate in Habitat for Humanity International's Collegiate Challenge, Alternative Spring Break, for the 20th Anniversary.

Randy Jenkins, Executive Director of Tuckahoe Habitat for Humanity presented to the Commission about the participation of the collegiate and high school clubs throughout the state. He shared the history of the organization and how the organization expanded from Caroline County into Queen Anne's. He shared three programs that can assist with community development.

- Main Street Program - focuses on facades and operating funds for non-profits
- Community Legacy Program - focuses on infrastructure, available to non-profits and private entities
- Strategic Demolition Smart Growth Fund – focuses on abandoned buildings to return them to taxpaying productive use, available to municipalities but not to counties

Jamie Williams shared she and Ms. McCoy have been in contact with Washington College about the Innovation Internships and efforts to retain students after graduation.

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Ms. Williams recommended the Commission review the Zoning Text Amendments.

Ms. Williams shared the efforts in the General Assembly to achieve a sales and use tax exemption for data centers, Senate Bill 850. The Alcoholic beverage regulations were approved by the County Commissioners and have been forwarded to the delegation.

Ms. Williams shared that the efforts to expand the Enterprise Zone into Worton have ceased, Maryland Department of Commerce shared that current data does not qualify for expansion (unemployment, poverty, and family income).

Ms. Genther made a motion to write an unfavorable recommendation for CHR Bill No. 2-2019 – Utility scale solar systems in residential districts as special exception uses, seconded by Mr. Thompson and carried unanimously, the Commission voted unanimously to send an unfavorable recommendation letter.

In unfinished business, Mr. Luff shared that the plan for a housing development in Millington is moving forward. Ballots was distributed for voting members to elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and Nominating Committee position. The Commission voted to elect Jim Luff Chair, Cindy Genther, Vice Chair, and Richard Story, Aaron Bramble, and Kate Gray to the Nominating Committee unanimously. It was decided that all interested in serving on the nominating committee would serve.

Mr. Bramble attended the Maryland Outdoor Recreation for Economic Growth conference and Kent County Department of Tourism was also in attendance. The state-wide push on hunting and fishing was discussed. Youth hunting programs are being initiated in the county in partnership with other counties and organizations.

Elliott Furhman shared the delivery of the glasses to students through the Vision to Learn program. He praised the economic development department for the material that was provided by the department to prospective businesses. He discussed the possibility of hemp production in Kent County and the importance of brain power as Kent's greatest asset.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Story, seconded by Ms. Gray and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 5:32 pm. The Commission agreed to meet again on Wednesday, March 6, 2019, at 3:00 pm in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie L. Williams
Director