

Kent County Economic Development Commission

The County Commissioners of Kent County

400 High Street, 3rd Floor

Chestertown, MD 21620

Audio recordings of the Economic Development Commission meetings can be found at <https://www.kentcounty.com/economic-development/board-meetings> click on the ‘Audio Recordings Tab’.

March 4, 2020

Commission Members Present: Jim Luff, Cindy Genther, Kate Gray, Rob Thompson, Tracey Williams, Aaron Bramble, Dick Story, and Brendan Jones

Commission Members Absent:

Also in Attendance: Bill Mackey, Director, Planning, Housing, and Zoning; Bob Jacob, County Commissioner; Jamie Williams, Director, Economic Development; and Emily McCoy, Administrative Assistant, Economic Development

At 3:02 p.m. Mr. Luff called the meeting to order. Mr. Luff requested a motion to approve the minutes from the February 5, 2020 meeting. On motion by Mr. Story and seconded by Mr. Bramble, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes from the February 5, 2020 meeting.

Mr. Mackey shared the Planning Commission met in February, they held a preliminary hearing for including “data processing centers” in the Agricultural Zoning District (AZD) as a special exception with certain specific conditions and in certain zoning districts (Village, Intense Village, Commercial, Employment Center, and Industrial) as a permitted use; providing for a process to allow for alternative compliance with specific design standards in certain zoning districts (Commercial, Employment Center, and Industrial); and providing parking requirements for data processing centers. Unfavorable review was submitted to the Commissioners. The Planning Commission objected to the Agricultural, Village, and Intense Village Districts being included in the proposed Zoning Text Amendment. Public Hearing scheduled for March 17, 2020 [Note: due to the pandemic, the public hearing was held on May 26]. The Technical Advisory Commission met to review five applications including a zoning text amendment allowing multi-residential to be a conforming use in the AZD district provided the buildings were constructed prior to 1989.

Mr. Luff began the discussion of CHR3-2020 to allow data processing centers in AZD as a special exception, and Village, Intense Village, Commercial, Employment Center, and Industrial districts as a permitted use. On a motion by Mr. Story and seconded by Mr. Bramble, the motion was approved by majority, Ms. Genther opposed. The Chair will submit a letter to the County Commissioners in support of CHR3-2020.

After a brief discussion of current legislation, Mr. Luff recommended writing a letter of opposition to HB 1354 – Sales and Use Tax for Services. On a motion by Ms. Gray and seconded by Mr. Thompson the commission unanimously voted to write a letter of opposition for HB 1354.

March 4, 2020

Page 2

EDC Minutes

Jamie Williams shared data associated with the strategic plan including data from the Emsi reports recently completed in partnership with the Upper Shore Regional Council. Ms. Williams shared guidance on the purpose and mission of the strategic plan.

Elizabeth Watson, Heritage Strategies, facilitated a SWOT work session with the members of the Economic Development Commission and the audience members. A detailed summary of the SWOT conducted on this date can be reviewed at:

https://www.kentcounty.com/images/Economic_Development/Kent_ED_Mtg2-Notes_03-04-2020.pdf.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Story, seconded by Tracey Williams and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 5:00 pm. The Commission agreed to meet again on Wednesday, April 1, 2020 at 3:00 pm in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie L. Williams, CEcD
Director