

MINUTES

The Kent County Planning Commission met in regular session on Thursday, July 2, 2015, in the County Commissioners' Hearing Room at 400 High Street, Chestertown, Maryland, with the following members in attendance: Elizabeth Morris, Chairman; William Sutton, Vice Chairman; Ed Birkmire; Bill Crowding; James Saunders; Kim Kohl; and Joe Hickman. Staff in attendance were: Amy Moredock, Director of Planning, Housing, and Zoning; Katrina Tucker, Community Planner; G. Mitchell Mowell, Planning Commission Attorney; and Tonya Thomas, Secretary.

Ms. Morris called the meeting to order at 1:30pm.

MINUTES

The minutes of June 4, 2015, meeting, were approved as presented.

APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW:

Patsy J. Whitely and the The McKee Group – Preliminary and Final Site Plan (A Storage Depot) 1002 Washington Ave. – Fourth Election District – Zoned Intense Village District The McKee Group, the contract purchaser of this property at 1002 Washington Avenue owned by Patsy J. Whitely, is requesting combined preliminary and final site plan approval for their project, "A Storage Depot." The applicant proposes to construct a 5,808 square foot one-story, climate-controlled self-storage center with 543 square feet of ancillary retail on the 24,045 square foot parcel. The applicant also proposes to lease U-Haul trucks, which will include on-site storage of the rental vehicles.

The property is a corner parcel located at the intersection of Washington Avenue and Northgate Drive. It is currently occupied by an existing 2,675 square foot building, which has been the site of a real estate office, that will be demolished. The site is in the Fourth Election District and is zoned Intense Village. The neighborhood is characterized by commercial development along Washington Avenue and Northgate Drive, as well as residential development in the adjacent neighborhood of Crestview.

Present and duly sworn in were, Stephen Watchhorn, CPM, Vice President of the McKee Group; Max Ruehrmund, III, AIA, of M3 Architecture; and Katrina L. Tucker, Community Planner.

Ms. Tucker gave an overview of the application and cited the applicable laws of the *Kent County Land Use Ordinance* to include Article V, Section 8.2 which sets forth the permitted uses in the Intense Village zoning district; Article V, Section 8.8.C.11.c and d., which encourages the use of traditional materials in the Intense Village zoning district; Article V, Section 8.5 of the Intense Village District, which provides that the frontage and minimum yard requirements will be determined during the site plan review; Article V, Section 8.6.4, that establishes General Standards and provides that when deemed necessary by the Planning Commission unobstructed easements at least 10 feet wide are to be provided in order to facilitate walkways to commercial facilities, community areas, and other public areas in the Intense Village District; Article V, Section 8.7.A & B which establishes the environmental standards for the Intense Village District; Article VI, Section 10 that sets forth the stormwater management and water quality criteria; Article V, Section 8.8.A, B, & C that establishes

the General Design Standards, Elements and Specific Design Standards for the Intense Village District addressing design elements, site access, building arrangement, site design, parking, delivery trucks and trash collection vehicles, landscaping, lighting, and architectural features including building mass, size and scale; Article VI, Section 5 which outlines the procedures and requirements for site plan review; and Article VI, Section 5.2.3 providing that the final site plan may be combined with the preliminary site plan, where deemed appropriate by the Planning Director.

Ms. Tucker stated that no correspondence had been received regarding this application. In response to the staff's suggestion the Planning Commission discussed establishing a limit on the number of U-Haul trucks that could be stored onsite. After deliberations the Planning Commission determined that it was not inclined to make this a condition of the final site plan approval.

After much discussion Mr. Hickman made a motion to approve the combined preliminary and final site plan based on the following facts:

- ☞ The applicant conducted a Citizen Participation meeting in Chestertown on April 23, 2015.
- ☞ In general the Intense Village design Standards have been met; the site plan objectives have been met; and the proposal is generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
- ☞ The new building meets the minimum setback and height requirements.
- ☞ The proposed building materials are compatible with the nearby and adjacent commercial buildings, and the materials for the self-storage center are proposed as board and batten siding composed of cement board or vinyl rather than brick or wood. A wainscot composed of brick or stone is proposed from grade to the bottom of the windows along the east, south and partial north sides of the building.
- ☞ Retention of the existing sign is proposed at its current location that is approximately 2 ½ feet from the front property line. The existing detached sign meets the signage standards.
- ☞ The existing accesses, one from Washington Avenue and another on Northgate Drive, into the project site are not proposed to be modified. Full access will be from Washington Avenue/Route 213, for which the State Highway Administration has advised that an access permit is not required. The access on Northgate Drive will be exit only. Furthermore, the property at the rear of this site, which is also occupied by self-storage buildings, is accessed through this site through an existing 20-foot wide perpetual easement recorded at M.L.M 175/90. Consolidation of access points is supported and encouraged in the Land Use Ordinance.
- ☞ Though there is no specific parking standard for self-storage centers, required parking for retail is based on one space per 200 square feet of floor area, so three (3) spaces are needed for the 543 square feet of proposed retail area. Though the Land Use Ordinance does not specifically articulate the number of parking spaces for self-storage centers, during Concept Plan Review the Planning Commission found that 10 spaces provided are adequate, being comprised of nine (9) standard parking plus one (1) handicap accessible space. Six (6) of these parking spaces are located at the rear of the site for storage of the U-Haul rental trucks. Self-storage centers typically do not have significant parking demands, though it is important that the site not become overly encumbered with the storage of rental vehicles.
- ☞ Loading areas are shown at the rear of the building where one-way travel is proposed,

so again, it is important that the site not become overly encumbered with the storage of rental vehicles so that the on-site travel in this area is impeded. Landscaping adjacent to these loading areas is intended to protect the back of the building.

- ☞ A dumpster enclosure is located at the rear of the site. The plan detail reflects that the privacy fence will be taller than the dumpster. The enclosure is also angled to allow efficient access for refuse collection by a garbage truck.
- ☞ New lighting will be wall-mounted on the building and will be night sky compliant.
- ☞ A minimum of 15% of each new or redeveloped site is required to be landscaped, which equates to 3,607 square feet for this site. The plan proposes that 5,013 square feet of the site will be landscaped with plant stock. This includes perimeter landscaping next to adjacent properties and along Northgate Drive, as well as landscaping in the front yard and parking lot landscaping.
- ☞ In addition to the 15% site area landscaping, at least 10 % of all parking lot areas with more than 10 spaces shall be landscaped. The plan reflects that 922 square feet of the parking lot area will be landscaped, which exceeds the minimum required 885 square feet.
- ☞ There are no outdoor display areas proposed as part of this project.
- ☞ Stormwater Management plans have been approved. As an Environmental Site Design (ESD) technique the roof drains on the new building will be directed to a French drain ground gutter and then flow into drywells. Gravel in the drywells allows stormwater runoff to infiltrate into the ground.

Prior to obtaining signatures on the final site plan, the following items must be addressed:

- ☞ Posting sureties for Stormwater Management, Sediment and Erosion Control, and Landscaping.
- ☞ An Agreement must be executed and recorded providing that the 10-foot unobstructed easement is granted and the sign will be relocated at the expense of the property owner if requested by the County in order to facilitate pedestrian walkways.

Ms. Kohl seconded the motion; and the motion passed unanimously.

**Morgan Creek Land Holdings, LLC / Pharm Kent, LLC – Conceptual Site Plan
27030 Morgnec Road – Second Election District – Zoned Industrial District.** This application was withdrawn from the agenda by the applicant.

2014 Annual Report

Ms. Tucker presented the Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning's 2014 Annual Report. Mr. Sutton made a motion to adopt the 2014 Annual Report as presented finding that is factually complete and reflects the County's endeavors to comply with, and implement, the Comprehensive Plan and also that the activities listed support Maryland's 2009 Smart, Green and Growing Legislative goals Ms. Kohl seconded the motion; and the motion was passed unanimously. The 2014 Annual Report will be submitted to the County Commissioners and to the Maryland Department of Planning.

Staff Reports

Amy Moredock:

- Advised that, in her role as the Eastern Shore Representative for the Maryland Association of Floodplain and Stormwater Board, she is working with the Board to organize the annual conference scheduled for October 2015. They are working on soliciting submittals and abstracts for presentations at the conference.
- Made a presentation regarding the Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Cultural Resource Grant. The grant is available with a no cost local match to enable local jurisdictions to conduct surveys and other hazard mitigation planning specific to the historic resource mitigation planning and preservation. Funding is provided through the Hurricane Sandy Relief, and the applicants must be located in areas prone to coastal hazard vulnerability to receive funding.
- Noted that she will be sitting on a Healthy Waters round table at the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) session scheduled for August 12-15, 2015.
- A Utility Solar Conceptual Site Plan was submitted by OneEnergy Blue Star Solar, LLC, proposing to develop a solar farm on the Bramble property in Massey, Maryland. The Citizen Participation meeting will be held at St. Clements Church on July 30, 2015.
- The Environmental Planner Candidate declined the County's offer. The County is re-advertising for the Environmental Planner position.

Katrina Tucker:

- Conducted inspections of farms encumbered by easements with MALPF (Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation) and sent reports to MALPF documenting the farms are in compliance with their easements.
- Over the summer will draft a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking consultant services for the update of the Comprehensive Plan.
- The Maryland Department of Natural Resources sent draft guidelines for updating the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) seeking review and comments on the draft prior to issuing final guidelines.

General Discussion:

There being no further business for the good of the organization, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30p.m.

Elizabeth Morris, Chairman

Tonya L. Thomas, Clerk