



Comprehensive Rezoning & Update 2020-2021 Task Force

MEETING SUMMARY

Initial Logistics – Virtual Meeting
Thursday, October 15, 2020, at 5 PM

I. **Welcome and Roll Call – Planning Commission Chair Elizabeth H. Morris**

The Planning Commission Chair opened the meeting at 5 pm, conducting member roll call.

The following task force members attended: Elizabeth H. Morris, F. Joseph Hickman, James E. Saunders, Doug Megargee, P. Thomas Mason, Al Nickerson, Bill Norris, Brian Greenwood, Buck Nickerson, Chikki Shajwani, Cindy Genther, Jim Rich, Pat Langenfelder, and Sam Shoge.

The following also attended: Planning Commission Attorney Cynthia L. McCann, Esq.; DPHZ Director Bill Mackey, AICP; Stephanie Jones, Environmental Planner; Rob Tracey, Community Planner; and Brian Jones, Planning Specialist.

There were no members of the public who attended by either the Teams call-in number or the County bridge call-in number. The meeting was also livestreamed, and anyone could listen to the meeting online via the County's website.

II. **Self-Introductions by Task Force Members starting with Planning Commission**

III. **Maryland Open Meetings Act (OMA) Review – Cynthia L. McCann, Esq.**

Ms. McCann reviewed the Maryland Open Meetings Act (OMA) with the task force. A packet of information with links to State of Maryland websites will be provided by Ms. McCann to the DPHZ team for distribution to the task force members for their use and information.

IV. **Setting a Schedule for Future Meetings: Frequency, Dates, Time of Day**

Conclusion: *The task force decided to hold regular meetings approximately every three weeks.*

The task force discussed scheduling for its meetings. Mr. Shoge recommended using a doodle poll to gather information from the members. Mr. Saunders requested that the task force avoid meeting during the first week of the month. Mr. Mason suggested that the meeting day and frequency of meetings be flexible. Ms. Lagenfelder commented that she liked the idea of alternating the meeting days and times. Mr. Shoge mentioned that meeting every three weeks would be reasonable and proposed alternating between afternoon and evening meetings.

V. Discussion of Whether to Elect Officers or Hold Roundtable Meetings

Conclusion: *The task force asked the Planning Commission Chair to lead its meetings.*

Task force members discussed leadership structure options for future meetings. Mr. Saunders suggested selecting someone to oversee the meetings. Ms. McCann advised that an entire slate of officers is not required and having a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson could prove helpful. Ms. Morris and Mr. Mason suggested appointing someone to run the task force meetings. Ms. Lagenfelder made a motion that the Planning Commission Chair be in charge of running the meetings. All task force members were in favor.

VI. Discussion of In-Person Component(s) for the Public and/or Task Force

Conclusion: *The task force decided to include an in-person aspect as much as may be possible.*

Mr. Mackey asked the task force if they were comfortable with a hybrid in-person and remote meeting format, stating that a remote option would always be available for task force members for their safety during this pandemic. Mr. Mackey noted that new equipment is being purchased by IT to enable in-person hybrid meetings. Meetings could be held at facilities around the County. Ms. Lagenfelder expressed that both types of meetings could be beneficial to the community. Mr. Shoge observed that both options would be ideal for giving those without internet access an option to be involved in the process. Mr. Norris commented he would like to see in-person meetings include the task force, if social distancing were followed.

VII. Discussion of Posting Materials, Agenda Format, and Summary Minutes

Conclusion: *The task force decided to remain flexible on a timeline for posting materials online, established an agenda format, and requested outreach via social media and a direct mailing.*

Members discussed the format for agendas, meeting summaries, and the timeline concerning posting materials for future meetings. Several members suggested one week to ten days prior to meetings should be sufficient. Mr. Shoge recommended that materials be sent as quickly as possible, while being mindful of staff constraints. Mr. Megargee replied that not every meeting will be the same, so there could be different circumstances for each meeting, related to the type and amount of information being discussed.

Mr. Tracey asked if the task force would like standing agendas with specific categories and/or announced topics. Mr. Shoge expressed that new business and old business items on agendas are helpful. Ms. McCann advised the task force to follow the recommendations and guidelines in the Open Meetings Act. Mr. Saunders suggested utilizing the same format as the Planning Commission for agendas and meeting summaries. Ms. McCann noted such a summary format would cover discussions and document the decisions made. Mr. Shoge said he would not mind seeing the specific ideas brought forward attributed to the appropriate task force members.

Ms. McCann noted it makes sense to give notice in the local paper with information on future meetings, website and agenda items. Several members supported advertising future meetings and agendas in local papers and suggested that the information be placed in the same location each time. Mr. Shoge suggested a separate website for the rezoning process. Ms. Genter said it would be a good idea to put a link to the rezoning process on the main Kent County website. Mr. Mason expressed the desire for the rezoning process to be transparent and accessible.

Mr. Shoge suggested sending postcards to residents notifying them of announcements related to the rezoning process. Mr. Mackey explained the cost to send postcards would be around \$7,000 to \$8,000, and he would request funding from the County Commissioners. Mr. Shoge opined that using social media would increase overall reach. Ms. Genter mentioned that the Economic Development and Tourism Department has a strong presence on social media, and the task force should investigate using it, and it's also important to ensure regular monitoring. Mr. Tracey noted social media is a good marketing tool, especially for younger generations.

VIII. Discussion of Revised Process Schedule and Future Topics for Meetings

Mr. Mackey suggested this agenda item be tabled until the next meeting of the task force.

IX. Public Comment

There were no members of the public who participated in the call. No public comments were received by email or via written correspondence related to this task force meeting.

X. Task Force Comments

There were no additional comments by task force members under this item.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:12 P.M.