

NORTH EAST PLANNING COMMISSION
North East Town Hall Meeting Room
106 South Main Street, North East, Maryland 21901
Tuesday, June 12, 2018
7:00 P.M.

Chairman Mark Dobbins called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Present included Commissioner Raymond Mitchell and members Valerie Combs, Michael Nair and Judy Duffy. Also present were Betsy Vennell, Director of Planning and Lisa Rhoades, Planning and Zoning Assistant.

-MINUTES-

May 1, 2018

Ms. Duffy made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Combs seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

-OLD BUSINESS-

None.

-NEW BUSINESS-

Case A-2018-03-SE: Applicant, Warren N. Beverung, III, 29 South Main Street, North East, Maryland, is requesting a special exception for the purpose of obtaining an on premise alcohol beverage license for 26 South Main Street, North East, Maryland in conjunction with a Restaurant. Property owner: South Main Street Properties, LLC, 1304 Business Center Way, Suite 201, Edgewood, Maryland. Also found on Tax Map 400, Parcel 0270 in the General Commercial Zoning District.

Applicant Warren N. Beverung, III, Rachel Wood Beverung, and Carolyn Crouch all of 29 South Main Street, North East, MD came before the Planning Commission. Mr. Beverung stated he would like to open a full service family style Mexican restaurant at 26 South Main Street with a full liquor license. Mrs. Beverung stated that they have wanted to open a Mexican restaurant in town for some time, however, had not found the ideal location until now.

Mrs. Vennell reported the prior applicant received Special Exception approvals for both an on-premise alcohol beverage license and for the use of a restaurant. The restaurant closed and Mr. Beverung opted to apply for a new alcohol beverage license versus a transfer for his proposed restaurant.

Ms. Vennell displayed the existing approved site plan for 26 South Main Street and reported that there were two Phases previously proposed for 26 South Main Street: Phase 1 was completed and opened as a restaurant pursuant to an approved Special Exception. Phase 2 was only a

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concept plan which was never completed. The applicant Mr. Beverung III confirmed that he does not plan to pursue constructing Phase 2 at this time.

Mr. Nair inquired if any changes were proposed for the front façade of restaurant. Mr. Beverung reported that he may replace the shingles on the small roof facing Main Street with corrugated tin. In addition Mr. Beverung may replace the fence around the patio, for safety reasons.

Mrs. Duffy inquired if there would be any outdoor seating and if the ADA entrance in the rear of the building would remain open to the public. Mr. Beverung confirmed there would be two outdoor tables on the patio and the rear door would remain open to the public. Mr. Beverung added that there is also an ADA ramp on the side of the building adjacent to North East Chocolates Shop. The interior layout will remain the same except for the following changes: the large island adjacent to the bar will become a community dining table, additional seating will be installed in the room that was previously used as a pool room, and a door will be installed to the kitchen. Mr. Beverung reported they hope to open in mid-July.

Mr. Nair inquired about the restaurants business hours. Mrs. Beverung stated they are not planning on staying open past 9:30 P.M. on week nights and 11:00 P.M. on Friday and Saturday. Mr. Beverung added that they would like to keep the hours for the new restaurant consistent with “Woody’s Crab House”.

Mrs. Vennell reported that the Planning Office received a correspondence from the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission, who had no comment. The Town has also received many positive verbal comments over the last couple of weeks.

Ms. Combs made a motion to recommend approval of the on-premise alcohol beverage license to the North East Board of Appeals. Ms. Duffy seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

26 South Main Street – Restaurant Name:

Mrs. Vennell reported that in the past, the Planning Office has solicited the Planning Commission’s opinion regarding the name of a restaurant when it contains the word “bar”, “saloon” etc.” within the name of a sign. Mrs. Vennell reported that the North East Zoning Ordinance does not permit any signs which would in any way be degrading to the Town, or its image, adding that the Town Boards have worked very hard to make downtown North East what it is today. Mrs. Vennell requested the opinion of the Boards concerning the proposed name of the restaurant “Woody’s Tacos and Tequila”, “Woody’s Tacos and Tequila Bar” or “Woody’s Tacos and Tequila Cantina”.

Commissioner Mitchell reported that he has lived in town for the last 37 years and has seen town grow and change into a family oriented tourist destination and was concerned that the word “bar” in a restaurant name is not conducive to a family atmosphere.

Mr. Nair reported that he would be less likely to take his children ages 4-10 into a restaurant that had the word “Bar” in the name, however, he was not opposed to the name “Woody’s Tacos and Tequila”. The Planning Commission concurred the word “bar” should not be utilized.

-REPORTS-

North East Elementary School Parking Lot Expansion

Mrs. Vennell reported the North East Elementary School proposed parking lot expansion is scheduled for the next Planning Commission meeting. A modified site plan will be reviewed which includes a new student drop-off/pick-up and parking lot addition. Mrs. Vennell reported that the North East Elementary School has received a variance from the North East Board of Appeals for their front yard setback to install the parking lot.

Ridgely Forest Landscape Plan

Ridgely Forest will be presenting a Landscape Plan for Section 1 & 2 at the next Planning meeting.

North East Shopping Center/Gilpin Falls

The annexation process has started for the property across from North East Plaza, known as Gilpin Falls. The Planning Commission expressed concern about the entrance off of Route 272 into the new shopping center. Mrs. Vennell reported that a crosswalk from Timberbrook to the new shopping center and a crosswalk, with a signal, for pedestrians crossing Route 40 linking to the new sidewalk adjacent to North East Plaza should be considered as a requirement from the Planning Commission. Mrs. Vennell also reported the developer may come in to the Planning Commission prior to the annexation to obtain the Planning Commission’s opinion regarding the architectural elements for the shopping center.

Ms. Duffy was concerned about the traffic within the entire area with the shopping center proposed along with a potential cross dock facility north of this site.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Route 272/Route 40 Sidewalk and Crosswalk

Ms. Duffy inquired if the work being done on Route 272, north of Route 40 is in relation to the State Highway sidewalk installation project. Mrs. Vennell confirmed that it was and displayed the State Highway plan showing the sidewalk, stormwater management improvements and crosswalk across Route 40.

-COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC-

None.

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-NEXT MEETING-

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for July 10, 2018. Commissioner Mitchell reported he will not be in attendance at the July 10, 2018 meeting.

-ADJOURNMENT-

With no further business, Mr. Nair made a motion to adjourn at 7:42 P.M. Ms. Combs seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Respectfully submitted:

Attest:

Lisa Rhoades
Planning and Zoning Assistant

Mark Dobbins
Chairman