

NORTH EAST PLANNING COMMISSION
North East Town Hall Meeting Room
106 South Main Street, North East, Maryland 21901
Tuesday, May 7, 2019
7:00 P.M.

Chairman Mark Dobbins called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M. Present included Commissioner Raymond Mitchell and member Judy Duffy. Also present were Chris Mink, Town Engineer, Melissa Cook-MacKenzie, Zoning Administrator, Betsy Vennell, Director of Planning and Zoning, and Lisa Rhoades, Planning and Zoning Assistant. Members Valerie Combs and Mike Nair were absent from the meeting.

-MINUTES-

April 2, 2019

Ms. Duffy made a motion to approve the April 2, 2019 minutes with a minor correction. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

-OLD BUSINESS-

None.

-NEW BUSINESS-

Cecil County Public Library-North East

Cecil County Public Library: Proposed is a two-story; 43,000 square foot library building within the North East Station Shopping Center. Subject property can be found on Tax Map 31, Parcel 1314; Lot 7; 3.52 acres. Zoning Designation: Highway Commercial; Highway Commercial Overlay District. Property owner: Cecil County Maryland; 200 Chesapeake Boulevard Public Library, Elkton, Maryland.

Morgan Miller, Director of Cecil County Library, 301 Newark Ave, Elkton, Maryland, Representatives from GPI Engineering, John Sabatino and Brian Morgan, 15 Grandview Avenue, North East, Maryland came before the Planning Commission to present the North East Library Final Site Plan, Final Lighting and Sign Plan, Final Landscape Plan and Outdoor Patio Architectural renderings.

Ms. Miller reminded the Planning Commission they are invited to the ground breaking ceremony for the Cecil County Library scheduled for this Saturday, May 11, 2019 at 9 A.M.

Final Site Plan

Mr. Sabatino addressed the items on the comment letter from the Town's Engineer, Chris Mink, CNA dated May 6, 2019.

APPROVED
June 4, 2019

1. Water Allocation: the request for water allocation for the new library will be submitted to the Town.
2. Stormwater and Cecil Soil Approvals: the Cecil Soil and Cecil County Stormwater approvals have been obtained and the plans are being submitted for signature. Mr. Mink confirmed he has received the approval letters.
3. Water Utility Easement Agreement: the Utility Easement Agreement shall be executed pending approval of the water allocation.
4. ECCR Document: An agreement prepared by Cecil County's attorney is currently being reviewed by the North East Shopping Center owner, DK Kline.
5. Tree details regarding the demolition of two parking islands have been added to the site plan.
6. Knox Box: Mr. Morgan and Mr. Sabatino are working with the North East Fire Company to determine the best location for the Knox Box.
7. Monument Sign: the monument sign, an electronic message board sign, is being contracted separately. Therefore Mr. Sabatino would like to inquire if the Planning Commission would agree to the electronic sign being presented at a future meeting. The Planning Commission concurred.

Ms. Duffy made a motion to approve the Final Site Plan for the Cecil County Library-North East Branch with the following conditions:

1. Water Allocation approval.
2. Letter from Chris Mink, CNA dated May 6, 2019.
3. Digital Monument Sign shall be presented to the Planning Commission at a later date.

Commission Mitchell seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Final Lighting and Sign Plan

Ms. Miller reported that the new library sign will be very similar to the Perryville Library sign however, the materials will be in compliance with the materials of the new proposed North East Library.

Mr. Morgan confirmed that bringing the digital sign to the Planning Commission for review at a later date will not hold up signing of the Final Site Plan. Mrs. Vennell concurred that it would not.

Mr. Morgan reported that there will be lighted bollards along the walking paths surrounding the library as well as a well-lit rear terrace and front entrance. The stair treads will also have recessed lighting.

Ms. Duffy made a motion to approve the Final Lighting and Sign Plan for the Cecil County Library-North East Branch with the following conditions:

1. Letter from Chris Mink, CNA dated May 6, 2019.
2. Digital Monument Sign shall be presented to the Planning Commission at a later date.

Commission Mitchell seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Architectural: review of outdoor patio features

Mr. Morgan displayed an architectural rendering of the outdoor patio/terrace. There are two elevations on the terrace. The entrance to the terrace is located on the upper level. The upper level features a collection pool for the cascading water feature, an ADA accessible ramp, safety railing, a wooden bridge and stairs to the rear yard. The lower terrace features a cascading water feature with granite line channels, stairs to the rear yard, and a wooden bridge. The intent is to create a tranquil, peaceful area.

Chairman Dobbins inquired what type of railing would be used on the 2nd floor balcony. Mr. Sabatino replied there will be clear panels for safety surrounding the balcony.

Ms. Duffy inquired if Ms. Miller foresees the grassy area utilized as a play area in the future. Ms. Morgan replied yes, they have many ideas for this area such as an area for a story walk.

Ms. Duffy made a motion to approve the architectural outdoor patio features with the following conditions:

1. Letter from Chris Mink, CNA dated May 6, 2019.

Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Final Landscape Plan

Mr. Morgan addressed the items on the comment letter from the Town's Engineer, Chris Mink, CNA dated May 6, 2019.

1. Landscape Scheduled Value Worksheet was updated and submitted to CNA for review.
2. Items 2, 3 and 4: The underdrains have been relocated under the drive isle and will be added to the Landscape Plan. The underdrains are no longer located under trees.
5. Tree protection fencing shall be added to both the Site Plan and Landscape Plan and shall be in accordance with the Forest Conservation Protection regulations.
6. Drafting notes will be addressed.

Mr. Morgan addressed the comments from the Town's Horticultural Consultant, Jodie Shivery, Ecologically Sound Landscapes, on the comment letter from the Town's Engineer, Chris Mink, CNA dated May 6, 2019.

1. Items 1-6: Drafting related comments will be updated on the Landscape Plan.
7. In reference to, the two trees remaining, after demolition of the two parking islands, Mr. Morgan reported that if any tree should die within a year, due to construction of the library, they will replace them.
8. Mr. Mink clarified that the two perennial plantings in the main parking area peninsula bump outs were requested because the plantings on the current plan only provide visual

interest in the fall. The suggested plantings will provide visual interest throughout the year. This is a change in species of plant not additional plantings.

9. Mr. Mink clarified that items 9, 10 and 11 were all addressing the employee parking area. The employee parking area was not cohesive with other parking areas on the plan and therefore, additional plantings shall be required.
12. The Arborvitae will be relocated and noted on the Landscape Plan.
13. Drafting notes will be addressed.
14. Pre-planting meeting will be coordinated with Ms. Shivery.
15. The Planting detail utilized was taken from the Town of North East Zoning Ordinance and the site note shall address the location and depth of the mulch.
- 16 Items 16 thru 21: Mr. Morgan shall coordinate with Ms. Shivery regarding the comments and plant selection on items 16-21.

Mr. Mitchell made a motion to approve the Cecil County Library Final Landscape Plan with the following conditions:

1. Letter from Chris Mink, CNA dated May 6, 2019.
2. Mr. Morgan, GPI shall coordinate with Mr. Mink, CNA and Ms. Shivery, Ecologically Sound Landscapes regarding the perennial plant selections and planting detail.

Ms. Duffy seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Maryland Department of Transportation 2019 Priorities Request Letter

Ms. Vennell reported that each year, the Town of North East is invited to participate in the Maryland Department of Transportation Tour Meetings. During the Tour Meetings, representatives from the Maryland Department of Transportation and State Highway Administration, along with State representatives meet with Counties and Towns throughout Maryland to review the upcoming projects which will be funded in the future. The Planning Office requires input from both the Planning Commission and the Mayor and Commissioners to complete the priority request letter.

Chairman Dobbins referenced the “Interim Plan” to install a Route 7 Pedestrian Signal on both sides of the North East Creek Bridge, which was on the prior year’s priority request letter to SHA, and inquired if there were any comments from State Highway regarding this item. Mrs. Vennell reported that the State Highway has not commented on this specific item.

Ms. Duffy commented on implementing a new I-95 Interchange near Principio Business Park and how this would be a good priority due to the future increase of traffic with the development of North East Gateway. Ms. Duffy would like to see this item moved to the top of the list.

Mrs. Vennell reported she would pass along the recommendation to the Mayor and Commissioners during their meeting, May 8, 2019.

2018 Annual Planning Report - Adoption

The Planning Commission reviewed the Annual Planning Report, which compiled data from the prior calendar year. The report is a requirement of the Maryland Department of Planning and will be sent to them after approval.

Ms. Duffy made a motion to approve the 2018 Annual Planning Report. Commission Mitchell seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Ms. Duffy and Commissioner Mitchell inquired about the temporary stop sign on Mechanic's Valley Road and Cecil Avenue, coming into to the town. Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie stated she will look into it as the sign is intended to be permanent.

-REPORTS-

Ridgely Forest Development: Section 3B and 5 B Housing Type

Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie reported that Ryan Homes, the builder for Ridgely Forest Development, has submitted numerous construction authorization applications, for new home construction, over the last few months. The developers have recently met with the Town to inquire about changing the duplexes in Section 3B and 5B to smaller single family homes. Per Ryan Homes the duplexes are not selling and are not desirable to seniors as the price is too high and outdoor property maintenance is not offered. Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie reported the developer has introduced the "Carriage" style home, as an alternate option. The Carriage style home is a smaller single family home that they would like to install on a smaller 4,000 square foot lot.

Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie stated that the proposed 4,000 square feet is of concern because homeowners may want to install a deck and/or utility building, which is of concern due to approximately 75% lot coverage. Chairman Dobbins stated his concern would be Stormwater management with lots that are 75% covered.

Mr. Mink stated that Ridgely Forest is currently at 65% Single Family Homes. If additional single family homes are requested, the Mayor and Commissioners would have to approve an amendment to the Master Planned Community (MPC), which was approved April 2018, and then an amendment to the Town of North East Zoning Ordinance would be required.

Chairman Dobbins recalled that when the developers initially came in well over a year ago, the Planning Commission had required that the developer plan out what the remainder of the development would look like at that time they presented the duplex villa homes. Chairman Dobbins was concerned whether Ryan Homes has even tried to market them for Ridgely Forest.

The North East Planning Commission met on May 7, 2019 and reviewed the package provided by MRA on May 2, 2019 regarding proposed changes to the housing unit types. The package contained the following items for discussion purposes:

1. A revision to the approved April 2018 Ridgely Forest Master Planned Community Plan.
2. Ridgely Forest Section 3B and 5B proposing a change from duplex-villa units to detached single family Carriage Units (114 lots).
3. A submittal of 3 options of Carriage Units.
4. Layout of the proposed lots for the proposed carriage units.
5. Changes to the open space percentage due to a proposed increase in the number of lots in Phases 3B and 5B.
6. Data from Ryan Homes to substantiate the marketability of Carriage units versus duplex-villa units.

After review and much discussion, the Planning Commission had the following opinion:

1. The Planning Commission continues to support the approved April 2018 Ridgely Forest Master Planned Community Plan.
2. This proposal would require an amendment to the North East Zoning Ordinance and the Master Planned Community Design Standards.
3. This proposal, if approved as presented, would not meet the purpose of a Master Planned Community as outlined in the North East Zoning Ordinance. (Example-purpose is to provide for the development of a well-planned mixed-use neighborhood).
4. The Planning Commission is of the opinion that adequate marketing has not been done for the duplex-villas.
5. The Planning Commission reviewed a lot layout plan and based on the size of the home, driveway, sidewalk, potential deck and potential utility building, the lot coverage total would be between 62% and 74%.
6. Based upon the proposed lot coverage, the Planning Commission is not open to any lots less than 5000 square feet.

In conclusion, any future amendments should be based upon an overview of the entire development and not be amended piecemeal, based upon what is selling.

-COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC-

None.

-NEXT MEETING-

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for June 4, 2019.

-ADJOURNMENT-

With no further business, Ms. Duffy made a motion to adjourn at 9:07 P.M. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Respectfully submitted:

Attest:

Lisa Rhoades
Planning and Zoning Assistant

Mark Dobbins
Chairman