

**NORTH EAST PLANNING COMMISSION**  
106 South Main Street, North East, Maryland 21901  
Tuesday, January 7, 2025  
7:00 P.M.

**-CALL TO ORDER-**

Chairman Dobbins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present for the meeting included Commissioner Hilary Crothers-Moore, Members Judy Duffy, Calvin Wilson and Neil DeMatt. Also present were Betsy Vennell, Director of Planning and Lisa Rhoades, Planning and Zoning Assistant. Melissa Cook-Mackenzie were absent from the meeting.

**-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-**

June 4, 2024

Ms. Duffy made a motion to approve the June 4, 2024 Planning Commission minutes. Commissioner Crothers-Moore seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

**-OLD BUSINESS-**

None.

**-NEW BUSINESS-**

1. Election of Chairman

Ms. Duffy nominated Mark Dobbins to be re-elected as Chairman of the Planning Commission. Commissioner Crothers-Moore seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

2. Election of Vice-Chairman

Mr. DeMatt nominated Ms. Duffy to be re-elected as Vice-Chairman of the Planning Commission. Commissioner Crothers-Moore seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

3. Riverwoods At North East, Phase 2 Concept Plan

Riverwoods At North East Phase 2: Concept Site Plan, 48 Units, Applicant: Enterprise Community Development Incorporated. Property Owner: Alvin Russell and Pamela Russell, 2665 Pulaski Highway, North East, Maryland 21901-2710. Map 25H; Parcel 95, Zoning District: RM-C, Multi-family Residential District.

Mr. Mitch Ensor, Bay State Land Services, 2012 Rock Spring Road, Forrest Hill, Maryland, presented the application for the Riverwoods At North East Phase 2, Concept Site Plan. Mr. Ensor stated that Riverwoods At North East, Phase 1 was approved by the North East Planning Commission in 2014 with annexation of the property which took place in 2013. The current zoning is RM-C Multifamily Residential District. Phase 1 was fully developed in 2014 consisting of (4) residential buildings and one clubhouse. The Concept Plan for Phase 2 proposes two residential apartment buildings, although the original Concept Plan was for three buildings. After reviewing

North East Planning Commission  
January 7, 2025

the parking regulations it was determined that there would not be room for three buildings and the required parking spaces. Chairman Dobbins inquired if the required parking spaces have been met. Mr. Ensor replied yes. Mr. Ensor reported that Bay State Land Services met with the Town in September of 2024 to discuss the proposal of building two new apartment buildings. Mr. Ensor stated that there had been a traffic study done during Phase 1, in 2013, which also included the original Phase 2 Plan including the third building which has since been removed from the Concept Plan. In addition other approvals for the entire site include: an approved Forestation Plan, Department of Natural Resources approval and a Stormwater Management Plan, the water and sewer infrastructure was installed at that time. Mr. Ensor reported that road improvements were also done at the time Phase 1 was built keeping in mind that Phase 2 would be constructed sometime in the future. Mr. Ensor stated that Phase 1 & Phase 2 will share the existing amenities such as the clubhouse, playground, fire hydrants, and bike racks.

Mr. Ensor reported that he and the Town attended a Technical Advisory Commission (TAC) meeting on November 6, 2024. Mrs. Vennell added that there were some concerns regarding some of the comments from EMS and therefore a meeting was scheduled. The representatives from EMS explained that their letter is a form letter which is now issued because in the past EMS was not consulted on projects. Mrs. Vennell reported that the Town of North East has always consulted with the Fire Department on projects within the Town. Mr. Ensor reported that one of the items discussed was the preferred location of Electric Charging Stations and EMS suggested that they be positioned as far away from the buildings as possible as they can be a fire hazard. Mr. Ensor reported 20 charging stations were proposed and added that they are considering moving the entire parking lot over a little to provide an additional buffer from the charging stations.

Chairman Dobbins inquired if a different developer is building Phase 2 of Riverwoods. Mr. Ensor replied that Enterprise Community Development, who built Phase 1, will also be the developer for Phase 2. Mr. Ensor explained that Enterprise Community Development will retain 51% ownership until such time as the project has been completed and then will turn ownership over to Riverwoods Limited Partnership. Mr. Ensor reported that this project is being funded by a CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) which is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Chairman Dobbins suggested going over the December 19, 2024 letter from ENEngineering and Mr. Ensor replied with the following comments:

1. Mr. and Mrs. Russell are the current legal owners of the parcel however, Mr. Ensor has a copy of purchase agreement available if needed.
2. Previous annexation, zoning district, Highway Corridor Overlay District and required Buffer Yard notes will be added to the Preliminary Site Plan and landscaping, buffer yards, site lighting and architectural plans will be submitted with the Preliminary Site Plan.
3. Reciprocal agreements for Lot 1 and Lot 2 are being drawn up.
4. The heights of buildings will be noted on the Preliminary Site Plan and also listed in the notes. Mr. Mink confirmed that the maximum height limit is 45 foot at the peak.
5. Landscape, buffer yards, site lighting and architectural plans: will comply with all regulations.
- 6 All labels for the Building, lot and parking setbacks shall be noted on all future submittals.
- 7 Mr. Mink, the water department and Mr. Ensor will coordinate to determine if a new water service line should be installed.

- 8 Floodplain comments: Mr. Ensor reported that the developer has an elevation certificate and will show the floodplain elevation and zones on the Preliminary Site Plan.
- 9 Forest Conservation Area: Mr. Ensor reported they have a revised Forest Conservation Plan which has been approved. In addition, the site will retain more Forest Conservation Area than the minimum required threshold.
10. TAC comments are being addressed.
11. A Stormwater Management Plan: A plan was submitted September 20, 2024 and comments were received on Nov 26, 2024 stating that they are technically complete.
12. Sidewalks: they will install additional sidewalks. There will be additional handicapped spaces added to the Preliminary Site Plan as well.
13. Landscape Plan: A Landscape Plan will be submitted.
14. Signage: no new signs are proposed, however, they will install a plaque, with the address, on each building.  
Mr. Mink commented to acknowledge in the notes on the Preliminary Site Plan that no sign plan is needed.
15. Lighting detail will be shown on the next submittal.
16. A fire flow test has been performed and sprinkler plans are being designed.
17. The Fire Department was part of the EMS meeting that took place December 17, 2024.

Ms. Vennell read from Article 10, Section 10-2 Site Plan Review Required for Certain Uses and Section 10-3 Requirements of Preliminary Site Plans, which details what a Concept Plan should contain. Mrs. Vennell also suggested that should the Planning Commission know of any improvements they would like to see added to the plan, it would be advantageous to let Mr. Ensor know as they could be added prior to the next submittal.

With no further comments, Mr. DeNatt made a motion to approve the Concept Site Plan subject to the ENEngineering letter from Mr. Mink dated December 19, 2024. Ms. Duffy seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

**-COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC-**

None.

**-REPORT-**

North East Comprehensive Plan

Ms. Vennell reported Mrs. Dahlstrom (consultant) will be forwarding the next chapter that they would like to review and some possible meeting dates. Ms. Vennell also reported that Mayor Benson will join the steering committee and plans to be at the next meeting.

Old Town of North East Lock-Up

Chairman Dobbins inquired if there were any updates on the renovation of the old Town lock-up. Mrs. Vennell replied not at this time.

Gilpin Falls Plaza

Mrs. Vennell reported that the property owners of the property (previously known as Gilpin Falls Plaza) across from North East Plaza Shopping Center entrance on Route 272, are proposing to develop several pad sites. A traffic study is currently being done. The entrance for this site will be directly across from North East Planning Commission  
January 7, 2025

the North East Plaza Shopping Center entrance and a pedestrian traffic signal has already been requested by the Town. Ms. Duffy inquired if the property was currently within Town limits. Mrs. Vennell replied yes.

Walmart Gas Pumps

Mrs. Vennell reported that Walmart is proposing to install gas pumps on their vacant North East Plaza pad site. This property is outside of Town limits therefore the Town will only be involved with public water to the site.

The Martha Lewis Skipjack

Mrs. Crothers-Moore reported that the Martha Lewis, a Chesapeake Bay Skipjack, is docked at the North East Community Park temporarily. The Town is currently working with the owners for the Martha Lewis to be located at the North East Community Park for rides and educational purposes on a more permanent basis. Chairman Dobbins replied that would be a great addition to the Town.

Ms. Duffy inquired if the pontoon recently docked at the North East Community Park would be back in the Spring. Commissioner Crothers-Moore replied yes, however public access to the floating docks will also be maintained.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

Cecil College

Chairman Dobbins inquired about the clearing of land adjacent to Cecil College. Mrs. Vennell replied that this property is outside of Town limits however, the Town does supply water to Cecil College. The property being cleared is for a new maintenance building for the college and a tractor trailer driving school.

Chesapeake Club Apartments

Chairman Dobbins inquired if there were any updates on the Chesapeake Club Apartments project. Mrs. Vennell reported that the latest Concept Plan was not approved by the Cecil County Planning Commission.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 4, 2025. The Planning Office has not receive any applications for this meeting and it appears this meeting will be cancelled. However, a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee workshop may be scheduled sometime toward the end of February.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business, Ms. Duffy made a motion to adjourn at 8:25 p.m. Commissioner Crothers-Moore seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Respectfully Submitted:

Lisa Rhoades  
Planning and Zoning Assistant  
North East Planning Commission  
January 7, 2025

Attest:

Mark Dobbins  
Chairman