

NORTH EAST PLANNING COMMISSION
106 South Main Street, North East, Maryland 21901
Tuesday, February 4, 2025
7:00 P.M.

-CALL TO ORDER-

Vice-Chairman Duffy called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Present for the meeting included Commissioner Hilary Crothers-Moore, Members Judy Duffy, and Calvin Wilson. Also present were Betsy Vennell, Director of Planning and Lisa Rhoades, Planning and Zoning Assistant. Chairman Mark Dobbins, Member Neil DeMatt and Melissa Cook-Mackenzie, Town Administrator were absent from the meeting.

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

January 7, 2025

Commissioner Crothers-Moore made a motion to approve the January 7, 2025 Planning Commission minutes. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

-OLD BUSINESS-

None.

-NEW BUSINESS-

1. Maryland Department of Planning Annual Tour 2025-Priority Letter

Mrs. Vennell presented a draft of the Maryland Department of Planning Annual Tour 2025 Priority Letter with a priority list specific to North East. Mrs. Vennell inquired if the Planning Commission had any comments or additional items they would like added to the letter. Mrs. Vennell reported that after the Planning Commission's comments/revisions, the letter would be forwarded to the Mayor and Commissioners with any recommendations, before sending to the Maryland Department of Transportation.

The Planning Commission did not have any additional comments other than any completed items on the list should be removed.

Ms. Duffy inquired if there were any further comments and the Planning Commission had no further comments.

2. Traffic Impact Study Policy – Adoption

Mrs. Vennell reported that the Town Administrator suggested that the Town write their own Traffic Impact Study Policy as there are some items in the Cecil County Traffic Impact Study Policy that do not apply to the Town. Ms. Duffy and Commissioner Crothers-Moore concurred and both stated that after reading the document they found several items that did not apply to the Town of North East. Ms. Duffy inquired if the Traffic Impact Study Policy would be coming back before the Planning Commission once a final document has been written. Mrs. Vennell replied that as this is a policy it could be done

APPROVED
April 1, 2025

administratively, however, the Planning Office would welcome any comments the Planning Commission may have.

Mr. Wilson inquired what current projects have required a traffic impact study and who asked who will pay for the study. Mrs. Vennell replied that the 700+ housing development called, The Chesapeake Club, located south of Town has had a traffic impact study. In addition, the new Middle School and High School project has had a traffic impact study. A project which the Planning Commission has not yet reviewed, which a shopping center across from North East Plaza is just finishing up a traffic impact study. Mrs. Vennell reported that the developers pay for the traffic impact studies for their own projects. Surrounding streets and highways are typically included in the scope of work, along with existing traffic lights, lack of traffic lights, and potential problem intersections. Mr. Wilson wondered if all of the requirements might drive business away.

Mrs. Vennell commented that the Town had not been informed of some pre-traffic impact studies which have occurred, such as the Chesapeake Club, mentioned earlier, which led the Town Administrator to the conclusion the Town should adopt their own Traffic Impact Study guidelines. Commissioner Crothers-Moore commented that the traffic light proposed for Irishtown Road and Route 272 may increase the amount of traffic on Irishtown Road and is concerned that the traffic may cut through the adjacent parking lot to avoid the light. Commissioner Crothers-Moore commented that it is imperative that the Town be apprised of Traffic Impact Studies done for projects in and around the Town. Ms. Duffy concurred and added North East is a tourist Town and since Main Street is a one lane, one way road through Town, adding that Friday afternoon and evenings in the spring and summer are extremely busy. Mrs. Vennell replied that the Town has specifically asked to have Friday and Weekends studied during the most recent Scoping meetings for Traffic Impact Studies.

Commissioner Crothers-Moore inquired what determines the need for a Traffic Impact Study. Mrs. Vennell responded that would be determined by the project and projected vehicular trips to and from the location during peak hours. Traffic Impact Studies would be required for projects that have the potential for a relatively high traffic volume and not for smaller businesses or projects such as a small retail store or gym. Mrs. Vennell stated that the Town's goal is for the developer to have the Traffic Impact Study done before they come to the Planning Commission.

-COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC-

None.

-REPORT-

North East Comprehensive Plan

Mrs. Vennell reported that the Planning Office was working on reviewing the updates to Chapter 3. Transportation Plan, including the Transportation Maps. Mrs. Vennell also stated that Mayor Benson reported that he will be joining the Comprehensive Plan Workshops and will be submitting North East comments/requested changes for the Transportation chapter. In addition, the Planning Office has been reviewing the Proposed Land Use Plan Map the Planning Office and found several items which needed

to be updated for accuracy.

The Martha Lewis Skipjack

Ms. Duffy inquired if there were any updates on the Martha Lewis Skipjack. Mrs. Vennell reported the lease agreement came in the mail today. Commissioner Crothers-Moore stated that the boat made out well during the very cold temperatures.

New County Executive

Mrs. Vennell reported that the Town has had one meeting with the new County Executive, Adam Streight, which was very productive.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Radar Speed Checker

Ms. Duffy inquired if the radar speed checker which had been previously placed on Mauldin Avenue would be installed again soon because the speed of traffic seems to be increasing again. Commissioner Crothers-Moore replied that she would speak to Chief Yates to see if there are any future plans for installing the radar speed checker again.

Greyhound

Mr. Wilson commented on the Greyhound Bus stop not being well marked and that many people may not be aware that Greyhound has a bus stop in Town. Mrs. Vennell concurred and replied that the Town could contact Greyhound directly and inquire about better signage.

NEXT MEETING:

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 4, 2025. The Planning Office has not receive any applications for this meeting and it appears that this meeting will most likely be cancelled. However, a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee workshop may be scheduled later in March if the latest drafts were available from the Town's consultant.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business, Mr. Wilson made a motion to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. Commissioner Crothers-Moore seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:

Lisa Rhoades
Planning and Zoning Assistant

Judy Duffy
Vice Chairman

APPROVED
April 1, 2025