

WASHINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
WORKSHOP MEETING
April 22, 2024

The Washington County Planning Commission held a workshop meeting on Monday, April 22, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. at the Washington County Administrative Complex, 100 W. Washington Street, Room 2000, Hagerstown, MD.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mr. Kline called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

Planning Commission members present were: David Kline, BJ Goetz, Denny Reeder, and Terrie Shank. Staff members present were: Washington County Department of Planning & Zoning: Jill Baker, Director; Jennifer Kinzer, Deputy Director; Travis Allen, Senior Planner; Meghan Jenkins, GIS Coordinator; and Debra Eckard, Administrative Assistant.

Comprehensive Plan Update

Ms. Baker reminded members that during previous discussions it was recommended that the residential land use categories should be redefined using low density (4 to 6 dwelling units per acre), medium density (6 to 8 dwelling units per acre), and high density (anything over 8 dwelling units per acre). Staff has spent several weeks reviewing both the Town Growth Areas as well as the Urban Growth Area to determine the appropriate designations in order to be consistent with each municipality's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Ms. Baker began with a review of each of the growth areas and the residential designations proposed by staff.

- **Hancock** – Areas around Hancock were given a low-density residential land use due to topography issues and the current lack of sewer capacity. Members specifically discussed Parcels, 18, 20, 37 and 42. Parcels 18 and 20 are mostly floodplain; parcel 42 has steep slopes. Staff proposed a low-density residential use; however, due to the close proximity of these parcels to Interstate 70, Commission members believe these parcels would be better suited for commercial land uses.
 - **Consensus:** Change Parcels 18, 20, 37 and 42 to a commercial land use designation.
 - **Clear Spring** – Due to extremely limited water and sewer resources and the fact that the municipality is not interested in development or annexation of any land, low-density residential is recommended.
 - **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurred with staff's recommendations.
 - **Smithsburg** – Staff is proposing mostly low-density residential which is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Areas reviewed and proposed for low density residential are as follows: parcels along Bradbury Avenue to Stevenson and Eagle Nest Roads; parcels further south on Bradbury Avenue; Parcel 195; parcels along Cavetown Church Road to Federal Lookout and Wolfsville Road (this area currently contains single-family dwellings); parcels along the north side of Cavetown Church Road at Crystal Falls Drive; parcels along the south side of Cavetown Church Road west of Crystal Falls Drive (these parcels are larger with steep slopes and transitions to an area zoned Environmental Conservation); parcels following Mapleville Road toward the Town proper to Cavehill Road and along the back side of Whispering Hills [members discussed this area and believe it would be better suited for a medium-density residential use because it is in close proximity to Whispering Hills with water and sewer availability].
 - **Consensus:** The Planning Commission agrees with all of staff's proposed residential land uses with the following exception: starting with Parcel 355 and all parcels between the Town proper and the business/commercial mix should be medium density residential with Parcels 170, 256 and 246 being commercial/business uses.
- The area around Cavetown behind Georgetown Road is proposed as a medium-density residential designation because it is closer to more densely populated areas with residential and commercial uses.
- **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurred with staff's recommendation.

Ms. Baker noted that Parcel 289 was originally subdivided as Gardenhour Estates as single-family lots. The property has now been rezoned by the Town of Smithsburg for a higher density residential development.

- **Boonsboro** – Ms. Baker noted that most of the property around the Boonsboro Town Growth Area has been annexed into the Town. Parcels that are still within the County's Growth Area are proposed for low-density residential because it is on the edge of the Growth Area, transitioning

to the rural and environmental areas. Areas reviewed and proposed for low density residential are as follows: parcels along Lanafield Circle at Maple Avenue; parcels along Mountain Laurel Road (no water or sewer available); parcels along St. Paul Street; parcels along Boonsboro Mountain Road (steep slopes); smaller parcels with existing residential uses; parcels along Mousetown Road; Parcel 236 has environmental issues; Parcel 11 has no available access; parcels along Appletown Road (road is inadequate); and parcels along King Road that were not annexed.

- **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurred with staff's recommendation.

Members then began a review of the Urban Growth Area and staff's recommendations.

- Parcels on the north side of Hagerstown around the Mason Dixon line close to I-81: single-family homes existing; recommendation: low-density residential
- Pennsylvania Avenue, Parcel 17 (cemetery) and single-family houses; recommendation: low density residential
- West side of Pennsylvania Avenue (Parcels 1020 and 368) contain a mobile home park (Northaven) and the Old Orchard Hills subdivision; recommendation: medium density residential (this area is closer to the city, has available water and sewer access, and good road access)
- Parcels along the east side of Pennsylvania Avenue along Paradise Church Road (North Ridge subdivision); Parcel 1084 was recently sold and there are plans for residential development; recommendation: medium-density residential
- Parcels in the last phase of Paradise Heights subdivision; recommendation: medium-density residential
- Parcel 843 (Harper Park) – recommendation: low-density residential (it is at the edge of the Growth Area and there are environmental issues)
- Parcels along the north side of Longmeadow Road – all existing developments (Maple Valley Estates, Paradise Heights, etc.); recommendation: medium-density residential
- Parcels along Longmeadow Road east of the railroad tracks, Parcel 197; recommendation: medium density residential
- Parcels along the east side of Pennsylvania Avenue and south side of Longmeadow Road at Fountainhead North; recommendation: medium-density residential
 - **Consensus:** Parcels 270, 269 and 267 and a portion of Parcel 1152 on the north side should have a commercial land use designation.

There was a brief discussion regarding Parcels 300, 301, 302, and 303 (at the corner of Maugans and Pennsylvania Avenues). These parcels were the subject of a rezoning application in 2016 which was denied due to significant opposition from neighboring property owners. Following a brief discussion, it was the consensus of the members not to change the land use designation on these properties at this time.

Ms. Baker stated that staff is proposing a Mixed Use Corridor, which would be an overlay for the land use plan. The Mixed Use Corridor recognizes there is an area of transition from residential to commercial uses.

- Existing development – along Longmeadow Road at intersection with Marsh Pike (Emerald Pointe) - medium-density residential; existing development on Hunter Hill Drive –high-density residential; continuing out Longmeadow Road to Leitersburg Pike existing development (Rose Hill Manor) - medium density residential; existing development along Leitersburg Pike (Northbrook) - medium density residential;
- Parcel 350 off of Northern Avenue (past Free Range Café) is landlocked; however access could be gained from the parcel which currently contains the old ATM machine; recommendation: medium-density residential
- Parcels in the Security Boulevard/Potomac Heights area will remain medium-density residential.
 - **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurs with staff's recommendation.
- Jefferson Boulevard at Eastern Boulevard to the Antietam Creek; recommendation: medium-density residential; east of this location to Chewsville – recommendation: low-density residential
 - **Consensus:** Parcel 921 (Wooden Keg) – change to a commercial land use.
- Parcels along Robinwood Drive to Hagerstown Community College – no proposed changes.
 - **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurs with staff's recommendation.
- Parcel at intersection of Jefferson Boulevard and Eastern Boulevard (Eastern Boulevard bisects the property). Staff has received numerous inquiries regarding development of this property. Considering the cost of the land and the current zoning (RS), development is restricted and not conducive to the costs involved. Staff is recommending a high-density residential use for this parcel.
 - **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurs with staff's recommendation.
- East of Dual Highway, Colonial Park, Doey's House, Meritus Hospital, Eastern Elementary and Ruth B. Monroe schools – no proposed changes.

- **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurs with staff's recommendation.
- Robinwood Corridor – in the areas of Rosewood PUD, Woodbridge, King's Crest, and Youngstown (all high-density residential) – no proposed changes.
 - **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurs with staff's recommendation.
- Black Rock Estates, Brightwood Acres, Brightwood Acres East, Fairway Meadows, Greenwich Village, (all low density residential) – no proposed changes.
 - **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurs with staff's recommendation.
- Parcels west of Dual Highway outside the City limits and Town of Funkstown – recommendation: medium-density residential.
 - **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurs with staff's recommendation.
- Parcel 52 is currently designated for high-density residential use. This parcel was the subject of a rezoning application to be designated as Highway Interchange; the rezoning was denied. Staff is recommending that the land use be changed to a low-density residential use with the portion of property along Dual Highway receiving a commercial land use designation.
 - **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurs with staff's recommendation.
- Old National Pike/Poffenberger Road area east side of Antietam Creek – low density residential.
 - **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurs with staff's recommendation.
- Parcel 631 (Roulette Farm) has been subdivided and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places; recommendation: low-density residential.
 - **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurs with staff's recommendation.
- South side of Poffenberger Road at St. James Village and Westfields; recommendation: medium-density residential
 - **Consensus:** The Planning Commission concurs with staff's recommendation.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Reeder made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. Shank and so ordered by Mr. Kline.

Respectfully submitted,



David Kline, Vice-Chairman