

Submitted February 21, 2021

Approved February 24, 2021

**MINUTES OF THE ROCKVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING NO. 2-2021
Thursday, January 13, 2021**

The City of Rockville Planning Commission convened in regular session
via WebEx at 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday, January 13, 2021

PRESENT

Suzan Pitman - Chair

Anne Goodman Sam Pearson
Charles Littlefield John Tyner II
Rev. Jane Wood

Absent: Sarah Miller

Present: Nicholas Dumais, Assistant City Attorney
Jim Wasilak, Zoning and Development Manager
David Levy, Assistant Director
Andrea Gilles, Comprehensive Planning Manager
Clark Larson, Principal Planner
Manisha Tewari, Principal Planner

Chair Pitman opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m., noting that the meeting is being conducted virtually by WebEx due to the coronavirus pandemic. Rockville City Hall is closed until further notice to reduce the spread of the virus, based on state directives. The Chair asked newly appointed commissioner Sam Pearson to introduce himself. Commissioner Pearson thanked the Mayor and Council and his predecessor Don Hadley for his sage advice and promised the citizens of Rockville that he would do his utmost on the Commission.

I. PRESENTATION

A. Presentation and Review of Annexation Petition ANX2021-00146 and Preliminary Annexation Plan for the Annexation of 11.96 Acres Located at 16200 Frederick Road into the City of Rockville; Victor, Inc., Applicant

Manisha Tewari presented the annexation petition and preliminary annexation plan for the property at 16200 Frederick Road. She noted that the annexation is from the property owners Victor, Inc. represented by potential developers EYA. The annexation includes a portion of the MD 355 right-of-way adjacent to the property frontage. The property will be combined with adjacent property owned by Frederick Road Limited Partnership for future residential development.

Ms. Tewari noted that the role of the Planning Commission at this stage in the process is recommend an annexation plan for the property as required by state code, and which will include a statement of consistency with the City's Municipal Growth element of the Master

Plan, confirmation of recommended zoning for the property and will detail how public facilities will be provided for the property once annexed into Rockville. The draft Master Plan calls for ORCM (Office Residential Commercial Mix) and the recommended zoning is the MXCD (Mixed Use Corridor District) Zone. She noted that the Montgomery County Council must approve zoning on a property to be annexed if the proposed zone allows for different land use or density from what is permitted on the County zoning. The impact on public school capacity, sewer and water facilities and transportation systems will be evaluated as part of the development review process. The development of the property as proposed is expected to have new positive fiscal impact for the City.

The recommended public hearing date for the annexation plan and petition is February 10. Ms. Tewari outlined ways for the public to provide testimony. David Levy noted that staff will make a concerted outreach effort to make sure the community is aware of the public hearing, particularly the King Farm community.

Commissioner Goodman expressed concern about the site plan and the amount of open space provided, and she expects the provision of trees to be an issue. Ms. Tewari confirmed that the City was responding to a petition for annexation, and that the developer was interested in developing the combined properties within the City.

Bob Youngentob of EYA and the potential developer of the property to be annexed, presented a summary of their company and past developments, including Fallsgrove and Tower Oaks in Rockville and Park Potomac and Westside developments just outside the City limits, as well as their rationale for developing the property.

Commissioner Goodman asked about potential amenities to serve the adjacent King Farm Farmstead, and Mr. Youngentob responded that the developer is proposing a revised property access and potential parking that is being discussed with City staff.

Commissioner Littlefield asked whether the applications should be considered in the context of the existing plan and zoning. Ms. Tewari and Mr. Levy responded that the current Master Plan governs currently, but that the Master Plan process and annexation process is running parallel, noting that it is likely that the new Comprehensive Plan may be adopted before the annexation process is complete. Nick Dumais noted that the annexation is not being reviewed from a regulatory perspective but that this will come into play when the project plan comes before the commission. Commissioner Littlefield also expressed some concern over parking adequacy in light of some recent correspondence from a resident of a townhome community, and that this would be considered as part of the project plan review.

Commissioner Pearson stated that he will wait until the public hearing to hear what the community thinks before expressing an opinion on the annexation. Commissioner Tyner will have questions at the site plan stage. Commissioner Wood asked about the pricing noted in the report for MPDUs, and Ms. Tewari responded that the market rates pricing is shown. Mr. Youngentob provided more detail on the pricing.

Commissioner Wood moved, seconded by Commissioner Pearson, to approve the Preliminary Annexation Plan, subject to the data corrections, for release for the public hearing on February 10, 2021. The motion passed 6-0, with Commissioner Miller absent.

**B. Work Session 5: Planning Commission's Draft Comprehensive Plan, Volume II:
Planning Areas**

Chair Pitman stated that she would like to use this time to make sure every commissioner has had an opportunity to weigh in on any issue in the plan, even though the Commission had worked through the entire document as of the last meeting.

Chair Pitman raised several issues. She wanted staff to reach out to communities that might be affected by a potential Metro station at the Montgomery College campus so that those communities could have an opportunity to weigh in on the topic. She also raised the issue of whether additional language should be added to the plan text that recommends that certain areas with significant tree cover be designed to be compatible with that tree cover. She wondered if there was an opportunity for a different type of historic district that preserves not only the structure but the historic use of the structure. She also stated that areas that are similar to Town Center such as Twinbrook Metro and North Stonestreet should have an emphasis on pedestrian orientation.

Commissioner Wood stated that she is not in support of the Metro station at Montgomery College, and strongly suggested that staff contact the West End Citizens Association for input on the station. Commissioner Tyner stated that he is pleased with the draft and incorporation of the commission's comments into the draft. Commissioner Pearson deferred to the Commission and staff expertise and process for the plan.

Commissioner Littlefield likes the idea of increased tree preservation with new development and hoped that additional text could be incorporated into the document. He stated that the document represents a good product resulting from the staff recommendation, public input and Commission discussion. He appreciated staff's efforts in producing the document.

Commissioner Goodman also praised the staff involvement and appreciated the interaction between staff and the Commission.

Mr. Levy responded to the comments to commit that staff will reach out to the affected communities near a potential Metro station at Montgomery College. Staff will review Chair Pitman's comments regarding tree preservation to see if there is some additional text that might be appropriate. Chair Pitman clarified that she would like to see the encouragement of adaptive uses of historic homes, such as those that have been divided into apartments, within a non-traditional historic district.

The Commission further discussed the Montgomery College Metro station location. Commissioner Wood noted that there are many buses that currently serve the campus. Ultimately the Commission decided to retain the recommendation on the plan.

II. COMMISSION ITEMS

A. Staff Liaison Report – Jim Wasilak reported that the next meeting will be on January 27, and there will be a Special Exception for an accessory apartment on the agenda for recommendation to the Board of Appeals. On February 10, there will be a public hearing on the King Buick property annexation. He further noted that staff was conducting additional outreach on potential changes to the accessory building standards and allowing accessory dwelling units as potential amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

B. Old Business

1. Open Meetings Act violations – Commissioner Goodman asked if there had been any follow-up with the Mayor regarding a response to the Commission’s request. Chair Pitman volunteered to call the Mayor to ask about a response.

C. New Business – None.

D. Minutes – None.

E. FYI/Correspondence – None.

III. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Commissioner Wood moved, seconded by Commissioner Littlefield, that the meeting be adjourned at 7:26 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously, with Commissioner Miller absent.

Respectfully Submitted,



Commission Liaison