

**Planning Commission
MINUTES – Regular Meeting**

**February 10, 2021
City of Hagerstown, Maryland**

Douglas S. Wright, Jr., chair, opened the meeting at 4:00 p.m., on Wednesday, February 10, 2021. This was a virtual meeting. Also participating via Zoom were C. Davis, J. Stone (late), R. Thomas, and J. Wheeler. The following staff members were present at City Hall: S. Bockmiller, Development Planner/Zoning Administrator; M. Flick, Planner (remote); and D. Calhoun, Planning Commission Secretary.

REGULAR MEETING

Roll Call.

Commission member S. McIntire, and C. Ploscaru, were absent.

Approval of Minutes:

January 13, 2021 and January 27, 2021.

The minutes were not ready for approval.

Development Review:

43-45 West Washington Street – Hager5, LLC, Final Plat, Case No. S-2020-13.

Staff Report: (Copy of the staff report is in the meeting file.) The historic Updegraff clothing manufacturing complex consisted of two attached buildings on adjoining lots. The first lot contained a circa 1830s building which was recently demolished and is currently unimproved. The second lot consists of a circa 1880s multi-story combination retail and factory building commonly known today as the former home of the “Potomac Bead Store.”

The City has arranged to purchase the area where the recently demolished 1830s building was located for the purpose of extending the Cultural Trail from West Antietam Street, past the District Court Building, and through this space to West Washington Street. A site plan is pending for the improvements at this time. The owner obtained approval for the construction of an elevator/stair tower on the property which is under construction at the rear of the bead store building.

The purpose of this plat is to reconfigure the property line that currently divides these two tracts into two rectangular-shaped parcels (per the original city plats), and creates an irregularly shaped

new interior property line in order to account for the stair/elevator tower, plus trail improvements planned to cross Library Alley behind the 1880s building. The owner will retain the property with the 1880s building. There are no building setbacks in the C-MU zoning district. There is a ten-foot 0.05-acre area along District Court Building Parcel B that will be used for the Cultural Trail.

The plat was routed and all agencies have approved it. Staff recommended approval.

Commission/Applicant Discussion: Jeff Swan of the City Engineering Department was present representing the City of Hagerstown. (Mr. Stone joined meeting.) Commission members had no comments on the final plat.

MOTION: (Wheeler/Davis) I will move approval of the final subdivision plat for 45-47 West Washington Street.

DISCUSSION: None.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

Mr. Bockmiller stated that the site plan will be coming up soon for approval; however, staff asked if the commission had concerns about the City starting construction of the proposed street wall prior to having an approved site plan. The entire disturbed area will be less than 200 square feet. Mr. Bockmiller explained that one of the conditions of the Historic District Commission’s approval of the demolition of this building was tied to keeping the street wall. This project involves building a street wall to roughly simulate the building that was torn down. It will be two stories tall and will have “window” and “door” openings that mimic the original configuration of the building. The City would like to get started quickly. The HDC is scheduled to review the plans for the street wall at its meeting on February 11.

Commission members had no issues with the wall aesthetics, being more interested in the proposed landscaping and site improvements. The City may begin work on the street wall prior to an approved site plan.

South End Shopping Center Bank – 1107 Maryland Avenue, Site Plan with Waivers, Case No. ZS-2020-12.

Staff Report: (staff report and waiver request application are in the meeting file): This site plan is for the construction of a free standing bank building on a pad site in the parking field with a canopy covering three drive-through lanes. The proposed building would be 4,200 square feet in area. The total number of parking spaces required for this shopping center with the new bank building is 452 spaces. The net reduction in parking on the site will result in 458 spaces—or six

more than the ordinance requires. Since this is an existing paved surface, this site is exempt from the requirements of the Forest Conservation Ordinance.

This project was reviewed conceptually by the commission on August 12, 2020 (copy of the minutes in the meeting file) and waivers were discussed due to the existing nature of the site and landscaping requirements. Accompanying this application is a waiver request to modify certain landscaping requirements based on the commission’s prior conversation with the developer’s engineer. The most notable is the absence of street trees due to the topography along the front of the site and the omission of trees in the landscaping islands being installed across the front of the site’s parking bays (the parking is perpendicular to Maryland Avenue). Staff noted that the number of deviations is substantial enough that this could be considered an “alternate landscaping plan” in conformance with the results of the workshop conducted on this issue. Access into the site will not change. Part of this request is to not require sidewalks which is based on a swale in the state right-of-way. A similar waiver was also granted to Great Southern Wood on the next property to the south.

The site plan was submitted for review and all agencies have approved it with the exception of the Planning and Code Administration Department and the Wastewater Division, both of which provided approvals subject to minor corrections.

Staff recommended approval of the waivers and the site plan, subject to the conditions cited by Planning and the Water Division.

Commission/Applicant Discussion: Trevor Frederick was present for Frederick, Seibert & Associates. The commission had no questions of the developer, however, Mr. Wright expressed his displeasure that sidewalks are not part of the plan, but he added that he understood the reason for not providing them.

- MOTION:** (Thomas/Stone) I make a motion that we approve the site plan including the waivers requested and subject to the conditions from Water and Planning.
- DISCUSSION:** None.
- ACTION:** APPROVED (Unanimous)

1329 Pennsylvania Avenue – Waiver Request to Design Standards for a Fence (Tabled on January 27).

Staff Report: (staff memo from January 22 is in the meeting file) This case was tabled at the last meeting so the owner of the property could participate in the discussion.

Commission/Applicant Discussion: Dr. Brenna Ranieli and Nick Enciu of Landmark Fence were present via Zoom. Mr. Wright indicated he drove by the site and noticed the parking lot was packed. The existing dumpster is a small commercial-grade dumpster. He asked if part of the problem is that there is too much trash and the existing dumpster is not big enough to handle the trash generated by the building. Mr. Wright admitted that he was not a fan of the one-foot spacing between the fences due to maintenance issues that arise in these situations.

Dr. Ranieli explained the purpose of the fence is to protect an existing area that is a tight space. The dumpster is there and they want a fence to make sure they do not encroach on the neighbor's property. Dr. Ranieli stated that the trash is not necessarily overflowing. The fence would provide an extra measure of protection. There are dogs in the yard adjacent to the dumpster and a fence would minimize the disruption to the dogs next door. Mr. Wright stated that the one-foot spacing between the fences will be difficult to maintain. Mr. Enciu stated that parking spaces would be lost with a larger dumpster. The length of the fence will be between 45 and 56 feet across the edge of the parking lot. Mr. Bockmiller stated that the waiver request is from the buffer space and the need for plantings in the buffer area. Mr. Enciu asked if the owner agreed to apply weed killer between the two fences to knock back any vegetation if that would be acceptable. The fence would shield the homeowners from the noise and traffic on the site. In response to a question by Mr. Stone, Dr. Ranieli agreed that the fence would help to calm the dogs and startle her patients less.

MOTION: (Stone/Davis) I will make a motion that we approve this waiver request.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Wright stated that he had concerns with the request but will vote in favor of granting the waiver.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

Planning Commission Business:

None.

Announcements.

Mr. Thomas asked if it is a requirement for Planning Commission members to take "the course." Mr. Wright stated it would be beneficial for all members to take "the course" but it is not required. Mr. Thomas and Ms. Davis indicated that they would be participating.

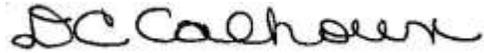
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Adjourn. It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn (4:32 p.m.)

2/24/2021

Approved



Debra C. Calhoun – Secretary