

Douglas S. Wright, Jr., chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., on Wednesday, July 28, 2021, in the Council Chamber, Second Floor, City Hall.

REGULAR MEETING

Roll Call

Members present:

- C. Davis – via Zoom
- R. Thomas
- S. McIntire, ex-officio

Members absent:

- J. Stone
- J. Wheeler

Staff present:

- K. Maher
- S. Bockmiller
- M. Flick
- A. Haught

Rule of Procedure: Ms. Davis made a motion to extend the Rules of Procedure by another 60 days. Mr. Thomas seconded, and the motion passed.

Approval of Minutes:

June 30, 2021 – On page three remove repeat of ‘property’. Motion to approve by Ms. Davis, seconded by Mr. Thomas. Passed with Ms. McIntire abstaining.

July 14, 2021- Minor revision to page 1, 2nd paragraph, last sentence. Aboveground to be revised to above ground, as two separate words. Motion to approve by Ron Thomas, seconded by Ms. McIntire. Passed. Ms. Davis abstained.

Development Review

Workshop – Proposed Local Conversion District – Potomac Avenue at Cypress Street (4 Cypress Street)

Applicant represented by: William Wantz, Attorney.

Applicant presentation: This building was previously a bakery built around 1920. The building has an upper level accessible by interior and exterior stairway. They are here at the invitation of the Zoning Administrator to discuss a potential local conversion district on this property, moving it from a nonconforming mixed-use building to uses permitted in the overlay district. The property owner moved their dental office (the use of the property in recent decades) up the street and they are looking to prepare this property for sale. The building is a mixed-use structure that meets the Ordinance's age and construction/configuration requirements. It is a plain building with little in the way of historic architecture or detailing. Advised by Zoning Administrator to seek the Commission's feedback on the parking proposal.

Staff comment: Staff pointed out the main issue of discussion here is the issue of adding a parking lot. The Zoning Ordinance specifically exempts Local Conversion Districts (LCDs) from having to comply with current parking requirements, although existing parking below current requirements cannot be removed. Here, they propose adding a parking area – something that the process has not encountered in any LCD processed to this point. There is nothing in the Ordinance prohibiting adding parking to a LCD. See staff memo of July 23 in the meeting file.

Commission discussion: Mr. Wright suggested that the LCD would benefit from the addition of the marking. The Commission expressed no concern with the issue of adding parking to a LCD as there is nothing that prohibits it and it will get parking for the use off the streets. Parking lot standards are part of the site plan process, and would be addressed, among other things, with the site plan review. Staff noted that there have been conversations with the owner periodically in the past about adding parking to this nonconforming use, but nothing moved forward and there are issues of expansion of nonconformity to address if the LCD is not involved. Dr. Eklund has not spoken to the neighbor regarding this proposed parking lot.

Sidewalk and curb details provided by FSA on schematic. The Commission stated that the parking lot would need to be appropriately landscaped, but this would make a nice condition to N. Potomac. It was noted that access to the parking would be on Cypress Street and not Potomac Avenue. Mr. Wright, Mr. Thomas and Ms. McIntire all expressed general favor for the proposed plan.

Planning Commission Business

Field Trip Report on Staff trip to Walden, Cumberland County, PA.

Staff presentation: Mr. Bockmiller presented the powerpoint which is in the meeting packet. This was a summary of a staff field trip to the Walden community near Mechanisburg, Pennsylvania. Walden is a mixed-use development similar to what would be seen as a PUD Mixed Use development for both residential and commercial development. Staff suggest this development has many features which we should encourage in Hagerstown, such as traditional streetscapes with small front yards and porches and with support activity behind the buildings. Different housing products are located in close proximity to one another rather than in isolated pods. It includes some housing units that front parks rather than streets, with alleys at the rear for access. Interesting features include rows of garages on the alley, some detached from the house

but attached to neighboring garages and some attached to the housing units. For safety, the rear yard fencing on townhouse units include gates between yards. For traffic calming, the streets are fairly narrow and include 90 degree, two-legged intersections. The alleys are wide enough for two-way traffic and trash trucks. In this development, the HOA maintains the streets, alleys, and parks.

Commission discussion: Commission members observed that there are some good quality points to this style of development. Staff will arrange a field trip with Commission members, the Fire Chief, and City Engineer for the near future.

Rules of Procedure

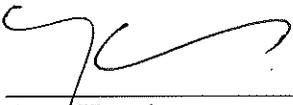
Mr. Bockmiller has drafted revisions and emailed the members who were and were not present. Staff asked the Commission to be prepared to discuss it at the next meeting.

Other Business

Updates on training opportunities: Mr. Wright informed the Commission of an upcoming Workshop on Comprehensive Plans (there are handouts available) and the MPCA Annual Meeting on October 27, 2021 at Solomon's Island in Calvert County.

Adjournment – 8:04 pm.

January 12, 2022
Approved


for Amy Haught