



CITY OF HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

Planning & Code Administration Department

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PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Date: Wednesday December 13, 2023
 Time: 7:00 p.m.
 Location: Council Chambers, City Hall, 1 East Franklin Street
 Attendance:

Name	In-Person	Remote	Absent
Christina Davis, Chairperson	X		
James W. Stone, Vice Chairperson			X
Judy Wheeler			X
Ronald Thomas	X		
Tamara Martinez	X		
Sean Flaherty	X		
Matthew Schindler, Ex-Officio	X		
Staff			
K. Maher, Director, PCAD	X		
S. Bockmiller, Development Review Planner and Zoning Administrator	X		
J. Wu, Planner	X		
M. Revilla, Recording Secretary	X		

Call to Order and Instruction from the Chair –

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Approval of Minutes –

Minutes of November 8, 2023.

Motion - Mr. Thomas moved to approve the minutes of November 8, 2023, with no changes. Mr. Schindler seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 4-0-1. Mr. Flaherty abstained.

Development Review –

ZS-1983-11 – Dual Highway Car Wash – 313 East Franklin Street – Site Plan Revision for Change of Use – Hagerstown Builders (C. Horst).

The proposal is a redline revision to the plan to delineate 13 parking spaces, and add some additional landscaping to bring the site closer to current design requirements of the Ordinance. The number of spaces more than meets the required parking for a three-bay service garage. The spaces adjacent to East Franklin Street will be designated for employee parking.

This is being treated as an "alternate landscaping plan" per Schedule A of the site plan application. No specific waivers are sought, but approval of the plan as submitted or may be amended. Most of the landscaped islands will not be provided. Parking will be within 10 feet of the right of way and property lines. No new landscaping is proposed around the base of the building. The added landscaping proposed includes:

1. Widening the landscaped island between the sidewalk and the front of the building,
2. Adding shrubs between the five parking spaces facing KFC and the adjacent building,
3. Adding landscaping to the area between East Franklin Street and the on-site retaining wall that is currently only grass.

Clarence Horst of Hagerstown Builders was present to answer any questions or concerns of the Commission. There was no conversation or questions that were not addressed in the staff report.

Motion – Mr. Schindler moved to approve the revised site plan for the change of use. Mr. Thomas seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0-0.

SA-2023-07 and FENCE-2023-10 - EleanorChristine Motors – 1 East Wilson Boulevard - Minor Site Plan for Change of Use – Applicant Drawing.

In a previous workshop with the applicant, the Commission stated it was amenable to waiving all of the landscaping requirements with the exception of some sort of fencing that would create a barrier between the public sidewalk and the inventory display area along both South Potomac Street and Wilson Boulevard, and a site drawing showing where all parking and display of for-sale inventory would be located. The site would contain the auto sales and an auto detailing operation. This plan calls for construction of a barrier consisting of round guardrail material, 42 inches tall and painted yellow to reflect an automotive theme on the property. It will be located on the subject property along South Potomac Street, and in the right of way of East Wilson Boulevard per the license agreement, just back of the sidewalk. Two employee parking spaces are designated along the east side of the building, shown in purple. One customer space for the auto sales business is located along the west side of the building, shown in dark blue. Four customer parking spaces are shown between the sales operation customer space and South Potomac Street, shown in medium blue. For sale inventory will be displayed along the two street frontages, behind the railing, shown in orange. Two two-way driveway entrances will be located along Wilson Boulevard and one will be located along South Potomac Street. Two-way traffic will be maintained throughout the site. ¹ Given the very limited amount of work being required by the Commission to commence auto sales on the property (a fence), this application is being processed as a fence application, however in order to track its compliance with the ordinance regarding the use, the completed file will be filed and tracked as a minor site plan.

Randy Tyrrell of Eleanor Christine Motors was present. Only one question was asked by Mr. Thomas for clarity.

Motion – Ms. Martinez made a motion to approve subject to the three conditions:

1. Employee spaces
2. Customer service spaces
3. All commercial signage

S-2022-06 – Martin Heights – Noland Drive – Re-Approval of the Subdivision Plat – FSA (F. Frederick).

The site plan and plat for this development was approved by the Commission in November, 2022. However, a plat is to be recorded within six months of approval or it is void. The plat has not been recorded yet, therefore it is brought to you for re-approval. Nothing has changed since the approval 13 months ago.

Being there were no questions or comments, the Commission was in favor of the reapproval.

Fred Frederick was in attendance to answer any questions. There were no questions.

Motion – Ms. Martinez moved to re-approve the plat. Mr. Flaherty seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0-0.

C-2023-02 – The Towns at Reese Farm – 706 Beaver Creek Road – Sketch Plan – FSA (D. Trostle).

After years of grappling with parking issues in townhouse developments, the Commission and the elected body amended the subdivision ordinance to codify a strong preference for townhouse developments where parking is to the rear, served by alleys. This is due to developments in the City and region being developed with front loaded garages, or just front yard driveways, which consistently fails when it comes to parking in the City's experience (ie. Pangborn Park and Collegiate Acres). Commonly with single-car-width driveways and very limited on-street parking, residents and guests often park on lawns and across sidewalks. Sometimes vehicles are seen extending into streets – attempting to create a driveway space where none exists, blocking sidewalk use and creating traffic hazards. This issue was discussed in Planning Commission workshop as it pertains to this property in 2021 and the Commission decided to permit this development to move forward with front yard driveways, given the site's distance from the urban core and that rear load would be out of character for this area.

David Trostle of Frederick, Seibert and Associates was present to represent this project. He addressed concerns regarding on street parking, ample driveway parking for more than one vehicle, satellite parking lots, landscaping, and parking for the end units in the development, after much discussion, Mr. Thomas had questions and concerns about Homeowners Association implementation to parking restrictions.

Steve Oder of Cavalier Development spoke as to the Homeowners Association's enforcement and accountability for maintaining the development property.

Motion – Ms. Martinez moved to approve the sketch plan, as revised to include the side-by-side driveway parking and the open space at the end unit lots, subject to providing revised drawings to show the new parking configuration. Also, this approval is subject to the conditions of the Fire Marshal, Engineering, and the Water & Wastewater departments. Mr. Flaherty seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0-0.

ZS-2023-07 – East Coast Express- 905 Mt. Aetna Road – Site Plan - FSA (A. Hager).

The applicant seeks approval of a waiver regarding street trees along Mt. Aetna Road. The area along Mt. Aetna is mostly paved with access driveways for multiple purposes, there are overhead power lines in this area, and site's frontage from the City substation property to Antietam Creek is only about 70 feet, which would require two street trees. Given circumstances, staff have no objection to the waiver. They seek approval for a Declaration of Intent waiver to the Forest Conservation Ordinance, citing the "existing paved surface" exemption. Given that this was the site of the MELP plant until its recent demolition, staff recommends approval of the waiver.

David Trostle was present to discuss the project with the Commission.

Mr. Flaherty asked about the Chief Code Official's comments.

Motion – Mr. Schindler moved to approve the waiver due to Reason of undue hardship per criteria A. Ms. Martinez seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0-0.

Motion – Mr. Schindler moved to approve the Forest Conservation Plan exemption. Mr. Flaherty seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0-0.

Motion – Mr. Schindler moved to approve the Site Plan. Mr. Thomas seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0-0.

ZS-2022-02 – Currwood Warehouses – 210 and 242 Breaker Drive - Redline Revision to Existing Site Plan and Waivers to Certain Landscaping Requirements Due to Field Conditions – FSA (T. Frederick)

David Trostle of Frederick, Seibert & Associates was present on behalf of Trevor Frederick and requested to table this project until the January 11, 2024, meeting.

Workshops –

None.

New Business –

2024 Meeting Schedule.

Motion – Mr. Thomas moved to approve the 2024 Meeting Schedule. Ms. Martinez seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0-0.

Board of Zoning Appeals Agenda – No Cases Received.

Suggestion for use of consent agenda option on meeting agendas. The Commission agreed unanimously to adding a Consent agenda to the meeting agenda. Staff will present bylaws adjustments in order to implement this.

Old Business –

None.

Announcements –

None.

Adjourn –

Mr. Schindler moved to adjourn, and Ms. Martinez seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Mary Revilla

Mary Revilla, Recording Secretary

approved

1-31-24