



HAGERSTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

AGENDA

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Date: Wednesday May 14, 2025
Time: 4:00 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		
Fred Nugent	X		
Sean Flaherty			X
Staff			
S. Bockmiller, Deputy Director for Planning and Zoning Administration	X		
J. Bender, City Engineer	X		
M. Revilla, Recording Secretary	X		

Call to Order and Instruction from the Chair –

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

Introduction of Jill Thompson, Director of Planning and Economic Development. Ms. Thompson provided some background regarding her career path and history of her time with the City of Hagerstown. She discussed the larger reorganization that is now combining planning and zoning operations with economic development.

Approval of Minutes –

Approval of Minutes of April 9, 2025.

Motion- Mr. Nugent moved to approve the minutes of April 9, 2025, with no changes. Ms. Martinez seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

Consent Agenda –

None.

Development Review –

SA-2025-02 – American Hall – 132 Bethel Street – Prince Hall Masons of MD - Minor site plan.

(Note: Being personally involved in this project, the Deputy Director recused himself from this case and left the room.)

Mr. Bender explained, this is a minor site plan for renovation of and addition to the building. This property has base zoning of R-MED (Residential-Medium Density). The total area of the site is roughly 2,400 square feet. The applicant is proposing to construct a rear addition for a handicapped accessible bathroom. A patio and fencing in the rear yard are shown on the plans.

This property has a double overlay, Local Conversion and Landmark, which became effective August 23, 2024. The landmark status means that any work proposed for the property needs to be reviewed by the Historic District Commission. The Historic District Commission reviewed this minor site plan and approved it at their April 24, 2025 meeting.

The applicant has submitted an alternate landscaping plan. This site has already been developed, and this site offers little opportunity for compliance with current landscaping requirements. The plan shows a proposed rock garden.

Motion – Mr. Stone moved to approve the Landscaping waiver subject to conditions. Ms. Martinez seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0-0.

Motion - Mr. Stone moved to approve the site plan subject to water, wastewater, and code department comments. Ms. Martinez seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0-0.

(The Deputy Director returned to the room).

Workshops –

ZS-2025-04 – Collegiate Acres Apartments – Consultation regarding sketch plan process.

The Chair approved adding this consultation to today's agenda. Staff seeks guidance/input on an odd procedural matter which has come up, as follows:

1. In 2012, the Planning Commission approved a sketch plan for the development of the three apartment pods at Collegiate Acres. After much work with the developer, concepts were approved that moved the buildings as close to the street as possible and created apartment buildings with garages.
2. One section was built near the center of the development. The remaining two pods along Maugansville Road received site plan approval but were never built.
3. A new site plan for these two pods has been submitted (ZS-2025-04) and is in review. The new site plan eliminates the garage apartment design, although the buildings are generally located where the buildings were approved in the expired site plan (ZS-2013-02). The new plan shows four more units than were previously approved.

The ordinance requires a sketch plan to be processed and reviewed for apartment development. The sketch plan for this project is 13 years old, the site plans approved in accordance with that sketch plan have long since expired. The plan currently being processed doesn't generally change the configuration of the site, but there are substantial changes that are not consistent with the previous sketch plan or the one section previously constructed. Staff seeks guidance on how to address these changes early in the process. Staff did not want the currently pending site plan to be seen by the Commission for the first time when it is ready for final approval to then raise questions about why it has not first reviewed a sketch plan. There were three options presented by staff to the applicant:

- a. The site plan moves forward with notice by staff in the staff report that the plan has significant deviations from the 2012-approved sketch plan, which may cause issues when put in front of the Commission for approval.
- b. The developer stops the currently pending site plan, processes a new sketch plan for Commission approval and then restarts the site plan process.
- c. This issue is placed before the Planning Commission (the purpose of this meeting) for guidance and direction. Upon review of this issue by the Commission:
 1. it directs the applicant to submit a sketch plan for the pending site plan, or
 2. allows the pending site plan to move forward based on the 2012 sketch plan.

The applicant chose the third option. Therefore, this is in front of you for guidance on whether moving forward with the previously approved 2012 sketch plan is acceptable, or whether a new sketch plan should be required. The City Engineer has been consulted and given the prior development of the community, the provision for stormwater management already in place and other factors, the City Engineer has no objection if the site plan moves forward without a new sketch plan.

Mr. Stone asked if eliminating the garages affects the configuration of parking. Gordon Poffenberger of Fox and Associates Inc. stated all the parking is surface parking, so it does not affect the configuration. If allowed to move forward using the 2012 sketch plan, it is possible that a waiver to the provisions of Article 5 may be technically necessary and would be presented to you when the site plan is put in front of you for final approval.

Motion - Mr. Nugent made a motion that no new sketch plan be required. Mr. Stone seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0-0.

New Business --

None.

Old Business --

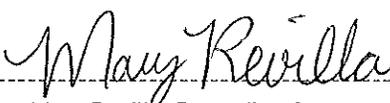
None.

Announcements --

None.

Adjourn --

Mr. Stone moved to adjourn, and Ms. Wheeler seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.



Mary Revilla, Recording Secretary
Approved 7.30.25