

Douglas S. Wright, Jr., chair, called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., on Wednesday, September 12, 2012, in the Conference Room, Fourth Floor, City Hall. Also present were commission members M. Brubaker, D. Gysberts, J. Stone, and J. Wheeler. The following staff members were present: K. Maher, Planning Director; S. Bockmiller, Development Planner/Zoning Administrator; A. Rohrbaugh, Planner; and D. Calhoun, Secretary.

REGULAR MEETING

Roll Call

Commissioners D. Miller and R. Thomas were absent.

Approval of Minutes: August 29, 2012 - Regular Meeting

The minutes were not ready for approval.

AutoZone - 609 Dual Highway, Site Plan, Case No. ZS-2012-02 and Final Plat, Case No. S-2012-02

Staff Presentation: This site plan is for the construction of a freestanding retail store on a leased area between the two driveway entrances on Dual Highway into the Hagerstown Shopping Center (Aldi/Wonderbooks). The site is 0.665 acres. The proposed one-story building is 94.66 feet by 70 feet. Twenty parking spaces are required and 35 are provided in the lease area. By removing former parking spaces from this area, the overall total parking for the shopping center does decline, but all of the parking to be provided exceeds current parking requirements by 37 spaces. A new drive aisle will be created across the rear of the new building. To accomplish this, new landscaped islands will be installed on the south side of the new drive aisle, creating a defined channel across the back of the AutoZone site. A sketch plan for this development was approved by the Planning Commission on May 30, 2012.

The development is not large enough to require compliance with the Forest Conservation Ordinance. A number of landscaping waivers were previously reviewed by the Planning Commission regarding unique site configurations and constraints. The Planning Commission expressed no objection to the waiver requests at the May 30 meeting, and this site plan is in substantial conformance with the previously discussed requests. Street trees will be infilled as necessary along the entire 722-foot frontage of Dual Highway, and not just in front of this development site.

In addition, the entire shopping center site is being replatted to remove a 25-foot building restriction line across all public street frontages and replace them with the current 15-foot front setback requirements. The plat will also include easements for the provision of utilities to this building, formalize an access easement for the Burger King (only access is through the shopping center parking lot), and implement other minor clean-up issues that have developed since the property was platted over 50 years ago.

All agencies have approved with the exception of the Water and Wastewater Divisions (specific comments are identified in the staff memo in the meeting file).

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Mr. Stone noted that the previously discussed waivers are not enumerated in the memo. Mr. Bockmiller listed the following waiver requests by the applicant:

- use of a six-foot, rather than a ten-foot planting bed around the new building;
- elimination of a landscaped bed at the end of the parking aisle in the lease area; and
- installation of irregularly shaped landscaped islands at the ends of parking aisles in the main parking lot.

MOTION: (Stone/Wheeler) I make a motion that we approve the site plan, the waivers in the memorandum of May 25, and the accompanying subdivision plat, subject to the outstanding comments of the Water and Wastewater Department.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Brubaker asked where on the site plan is a reference to the street tree planting plan. Mr. Bockmiller stated that the site in question is a lease area of a larger development. The surrounding improvements include all the buildings on the site. The developer plans to look at the Dual Highway and insert street trees wherever they can. Where there are holes they will be filling in along the Dual Highway. Carmen DiDiano, engineer for the project, said there is a note on the site plan that street trees are required along the public right-of-way, subject to consent of the State Highway Administration (SHA) and City Planners. Eleven new street trees are proposed; there are three existing street trees. Concerning the treatment of the dumpster, the masonry enclosure will match the new building and will face away from the Dual Highway. The loading area is on the east side of the store. Mr. Brubaker asked if any design requirements apply in this zoning district. Mr. Bockmiller stated that at this time there are no design standards in the C2 zoning district. The proposed Land Management Code amendments include design criteria for the C2 district. Signage is allowed

as long as it is not located in the right-of-way and if it is within the height limitations for the C2 district.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

Memorial Park - 561 South Potomac Street, Site Plan, Case No. ZS-2012-03

Staff Presentation: This site plan is for the improvement of a new city park which will consist mostly of a paved walking trail system with some benches and architectural focal points. Work will include grading and the installation of walkways, landscaping ornamental features, and minor work around the Marsh Run culvert. No parking facilities are proposed at this time, although long-range plans consider the addition of parking in the area to the west of the project site, which will be a future phase of park development. Existing concrete slabs that enclose Marsh Run totaling 3,567 square feet will be removed. In addition, 24,727 square feet of existing asphalt paving near the center of the site will be removed. The tract is 3.93 acres, however Phase One only includes 1.76 acres. All agencies have approved with the exception of the Water Division, which has given conditional approval.

This development is subject to the Forest Conservation Ordinance. Given that the southern portion of this site is the West Memorial Boulevard right-of-way, the City plans to comply with the Ordinance by crediting trees within the right-of-way. Mr. Bockmiller provided a memo with the forest conservation requirements calculations (meeting file). Thirteen trees will be installed along the right-of-way and a number of additional trees beyond this list will be planted, which will handle most of the required trees in Phase I. Staff recommended that the trees for the remaining 42 square feet be handled during Phase 2.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Mr. Stone asked what kind of barrier will be installed around Marsh Run since the cover is proposed to be removed. Jim Bender, Assistant City Engineer, said a railing will be installed which will match the existing railing at the intersection of Memorial Boulevard and South Potomac Street where the run opens up.

Ms. Maher noted that the City is seeking grant funds to pay for the memorial features in future phases. Mr. Bockmiller added that the trees along the alley are being planted now to give them time to grow a bit before the parking lot is constructed. Existing City employee parking will remain on this site for the time being. Commission members noted that once the park is built, the City will have to re-think how it will dispose of large amounts of snow. The commission also wondered whether the stone wall on the north side of the run could be replicated rather than installation of an ornamental fence. Mr. Bender could not predict whether the stone wall will be salvageable once the cover is removed.

MOTION: (Gysberts/Wheeler) Move to approve the site plan and forest conservation plan as presented, with the said conditions.
DISCUSSION: None.
ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

Professional Center (former Food Lion) - 246 Eastern Boulevard - Waiver Request for Trash Enclosure Doors

Mr. Toft was not present. This item will be discussed at a future meeting.

Washington County Permitting/Development Forum

Planning and Code Administration staff members attended a forum sponsored by Washington County. The purpose of the meeting was to gather feedback from the development community about the County's permitting and development review processes. City staff members took comments about the County's processes and evaluated them against the City's system. For the most part, there was not much the City would need to improve in response to comments raised at the County's meeting. In fact, the City's processes were mentioned a few times as favorable. One item did seem apropos: the engineers mentioned being able to bring the Planning Commission into the process at the sketch plan level. The City already does that to a degree with the Plan Review Committee (PRC) since Mr. Wright and Mr. Miller are currently commission representatives to that committee. Staff asked whether there would be value to copy all Planning Commission members on PRC agenda; however, commission members would have to coordinate to make certain quorum requirements would not be violated (only three members could be in attendance at a time). Mr. Stone felt it would be useful for all members to get a copy of the PRC agenda. Staff will begin forwarding copies of the PRC meeting agendas to all Planning Commission members.

Adjourn: It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn at 7:47 p.m.

10/10/2012
Date

DC Calhoun
Debra C. Calhoun - Secretary