

In the absence of the chair and vice chair, the Director of Planning and Code Administration, Kathleen A. Maher, AICP, opened the meeting on Wednesday, July 13, 2016, in the Conference Room, Fourth Floor, City Hall. Also present were commission members M. Brubaker, R. Campbell, D. Miller, and R. Thomas. In addition to Ms. Maher, the following staff members were present: S. Bockmiller, Development Planner/Zoning Administrator; A. Rohrbaugh, Planner; and D. Calhoun, Secretary.

Election of Chair-Pro-Temp

MOTION: (Thomas/Brubaker) I move Dennis Miller serve as chair-pro-temp.
DISCUSSION: None.
ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

Mr. Miller officially called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

National Road Park – 806 West Washington Street, Site Plan, Case No. ZS-2016-04.

Staff Report: This site plan is for the redevelopment of an existing paved property measuring 150 feet deep by 75 feet wide. A grocery store was located on the property but it burned years ago. The City received this property as a donation and proposes to develop the property for a community park.

The park includes decorative fencing with an archway across the front, a paved plaza area, historic interpretive panel, planting areas, and children’s play equipment. Two parallel parking spaces are located along the back of the property accessed via the alley.

Forest Conservation does not apply to this project because of its size. The plan was routed to review agencies and all agencies except water and wastewater have provided approval. Staff recommended approval, subject to the outstanding Wastewater Division and Water Division comments.

Commission/Applicant Discussion: Rodney Tissue, City Engineer, was present. There will be a berm that separates the plaza from the play area. The play area will have artificial turf that children can roll around on and a slide. Playground equipment is made by Berliner, a European company, which will be different from any of the other City parks. This equipment is all steel and ropes and does not contain any plastic components. Each time the City develops a new park, they try to do something so the new park is unique. Mr. Tissue indicated that his office held two public neighborhood meetings. Neighborhood residents’ comments were taken into consideration

and incorporated into the final plan. Mr. Tissue believed that National Road Park will be attractive to both children and adults. The front of the park will have a vintage looking arch along West Washington Street. Since West Washington Street is the old National Road, Stephen Bockmiller assisted with research for the interpretive sign explaining the significance of the National Road.

Mr. Miller asked if the neighbors on either side of the park had any concerns with this proposal. Mr. Tissue stated that the buildings adjacent to the park are apartment buildings. Comments were received from one of the residents on the east side and that person's concerns were addressed. Because of the elevation, the proposed retaining wall that borders the property on the east and rear sides will be almost ten feet tall in places. Stormwater management is not necessary because the existing impervious surface will be replaced with a mostly pervious surface. Mr. Brubaker noted that in the past this area was identified as having a deficit of park resources. Mr. Rohrbaugh concurred that the west end is an area of high need. This small park will not eliminate the need for additional parks in this area of the city, but it is a step in the right direction. Mr. Thomas added that development of the park will eliminate the blight on the property. Ms. Campbell questioned whether any crossings need to be added for the safety of neighborhood children since West Washington Street is a busy street. The City Engineer's office will investigate the crosswalk situation. In response to questions by Mr. Brubaker and Mr. Thomas, Mr. Tissue clarified that two tables, four seats, and four benches will be provided initially. If a need for additional seating presents itself, they will be added.

Mr. Brubaker stated that by naming the park "National Road Park," the National Road will come up on Google searches and bring people to town. Mr. Bockmiller stated that the interpretive marker will note that this is part of the Hagerstown Conococheague Turnpike which is part of the National Pike and will contain additional material on the history of the "west end."

MOTION: (Campbell/Thomas) I move for approval with the conditions (Water and Wastewater Divisions).

DISCUSSION: None.

ACTION: APPROVED (ABSTAIN - Brubaker)

Comprehensive Plan Update: Water Resources Element.

Due to light attendance, this item was tabled until the next meeting.

Adjourn.

It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn (4:21 p.m.)

7/27/2016

Approved



Debra C. Calhoun - Secretary