

**WORCESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – March 7, 2024**

Meeting Date: March 7, 2024

Time: 1:00 P.M.

Location: Worcester County Government Office Building, Room 1102

Attendance:

Planning Commission

Jerry Barbierri, Chair

Mary Knight, Secretary

Ken Church

Marlene Ott

Betty Smith

Staff

Jennifer Keener, Director, DRP

Matt Laick, Deputy Director, DRP

Kristen Tremblay, Zoning Administrator

Stu White, DRP Specialist

Bob Mitchell, Director, Environmental Programs

Roscoe Leslie, County Attorney

I. Call to Order

II. Administrative Matters

A. Review and approval of minutes, February 1, 2024

As the first item of business, the Planning Commission reviewed the minutes of the February 1, 2024, meeting.

Following the review, a motion was made by Ms. Ott to approve the minutes as written, Ms. Knight seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Board of Zoning Appeals Agendas, March 14, 2024

As the next item of business, the Planning Commission reviewed the agenda for the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting scheduled for March 14, 2024. Ms. Tremblay was present for the review to answer questions and address concerns of the Planning Commission.

No comments were forwarded to the Board.

Ms. Tremblay made a statement of clarification to the Planning Commission for Board of Zoning Appeals case number 24-18. She stated that the request before the Board of Zoning Appeals is merely to approve or deny an expansion of an existing non-conforming campground. She further explained that the Board of Zoning Appeals will not be reviewing design, layout, or setbacks and that those items will be reviewed at a later date by the Technical Review Committee.

**WORCESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – March 7, 2024**

C. Technical Review Committee Agenda, March 13, 2024

There were no items scheduled for review for the March 13, 2024, meeting.

III. §ZS 1-315 Residential Planned Communities

The Elms Townhome Community

As the next item of business, the Planning Committee reviewed a preliminary plat for the proposed construction of 20 townhome units. Located on the eastern side of MD Route 611 (Stephen Decatur Highway) approximately 450 feet south from the intersection with Sunset Avenue, Tax Map 26, Parcel 445, Lot 1B, Parcel 445, Lot 2A, & Parcel 443, Lot E1, Tax District 10, R-4 General Residential District. Brian Zollinger and Steve Engel from Vista Design were present for the review.

Mr. Engel introduced the project. He stated that the project has been before the Planning Commission twice before and that the preliminary plat reflects a twenty-unit townhome community. He stated that the only issue that they are currently working through is with getting approval for the road names, which he is currently coordinating with 911 officials. Mr. Barbierrri noted that the interparcel connection with Mystic Harbor subdivision had been removed, creating a dead end. He stated that in his forty-plus years of experience in the fire service, he recognizes the pitfalls of not having two-way access for emergency vehicles. Mr. Engel stated that county staff felt that the previously proposed interparcel connector would lead to more problems than solutions. Ms. Ott pointed out that there is no cul-de-sac proposed at the dead end. Mr. Engel replied that since the road is less than one hundred and fifty feet in length, this is allowable by Code. Mr. Barbierrri asked for clarification from county staff regarding the removal of the proposed interparcel connector. Ms. Zirkle replied that she asked for a written letter from Mr. Carver approving access to their community. She stated that the applicants will need to request a Planning Commission waiver for the dead-end design. Mr. Barbierrri stated that he would like to see the interparcel connector for a safety standpoint. Ms. Zirkle added that State Highway Administration (SHA) advise should be sought to see if they would approve another major access from Mystic Harbor to Stephen Decatur Highway. She noted that the access point would need to be designed for more than just the twenty proposed units if the interparcel connector was approved. Mr. Engel stated that he had made his initial application to SHA and received comments back. Ms. Zirkle said that the Department does not oppose the interparcel connection but needs documentation from SHA that it can be approved. Mr. Engel added that he has not asked SHA directly if they would approve of the connection and agreed with Ms. Zirkle that they may have an issue with it. Ms. Ott asked if the active open space had been moved to which Mr. Engle responded, the initial phase does not require active open space and that it would be addressed during the next phase.

WORCESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – March 7, 2024

Following the discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Knight to make a favorable recommendation to accept the plat as presented without the interparcel connector. Ms. Smith seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

IV. Code Requirement Waiver Requests

A. Orange Tree Limited Storage

As the next item of business, the Planning Commission reviewed a request to waive the landscape irrigation and paved driveway requirements for a proposed 2,975 square foot, three (3) bay self-storage building and an existing 1,166 square foot building to be used for self-storage. Located on the east side of Holly Grove Road at the intersection with Samuel Bowen Boulevard, Tax Map 26, Parcel 259, Tax District 10 in the C-2 General Commercial District. Frank Lynch, Jr. was present for the review.

Mr. Lynch introduced the proposal. He stated that the property has quite a bit of wetlands and that the water tables are high negating the necessity for irrigation. He then presented an exhibit to the Planning Commission containing literature for the proposed crepe myrtle plantings which indicated that the species is drought tolerant.

Mr. Lynch then addressed the paved driveway waver request. He stated that the developer is proposing to use concrete millings for the driveway which packs tightly, similar to crush and run, and provides a hard durable surface.

Following the discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Church to waive the landscape irrigation and paved driveway requirements as requested. Ms. Ott seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Baywater Landings

As the next item of business, the Planning Commission reviewed a request to waive the paved driveway requirement for a landing, storage, and processing facility for seafood. Located at 3908 Bayside Road, Tax Map 73, Parcel 85, Tax District 02, in the C-2 General Commercial District. Lee Beauchamp was present for the review.

Mr. Beauchamp introduced the proposal. He stated that the property has been an active marina for approximately sixty years and always had a gravel parking lot. He stated that it will keep in the character of the neighborhood and assist with maintaining the quality of the water. Mr. Barbierri added that the area had been cleaned up substantially in recent years. Mr. Church stated that the gravel driveway meets the character of the neighborhood as opposed to putting blacktop over it.

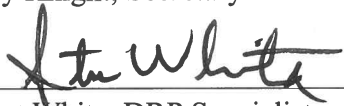
**WORCESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – March 7, 2024**

Following the discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Ott to waive the paved driveway requirement as requested. Ms. Knight seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

V. Adjourn



Mary Knight, Secretary



Stuart White, DRP Specialist