

**MINUTES OF THE ST. MARY'S COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING
ROOM 14 * GOVERNMENTAL CENTER * LEONARDTOWN, MARYLAND
Monday, July 28, 2003**

Members present were John F. Taylor, Sr., Chairperson; Larry Greenwell, Vice Chair; Lawrence Chase, Julie King, Steve Reeves, and Joe St. Clair. Member Jim Raley was excused due to illness. LUGM staff present were Denis Canavan, Director; Jeffrey Jackman, Senior Planner; Phil Shire, Plans Reviewer; Bob Bowles, Planning Specialist; and Peggy Childs, Recording Secretary. Assistant County Attorney Linda Springrose was also in attendance.

A list of attendees is on file in DPZ. The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of July 14, 2003 were approved as recorded.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

CWSP #03-120-008 – DELIBERA SUBDIVISION

Requesting Concept review and approval in order to proceed with a Comprehensive

Water & Sewerage Plan (CWSP) Amendment. The property contains 48.10 acres, is zoned RPD, and is located on the north side of Frischholz Court, at its intersection with Mechanicsville Road; Tax Map 12, Block 22, Parcel 49.

Owner: Gary Heilmeier

Present: James Erdman, of Ben Dyer Associates, Inc.,

Agent

This application is one of the last the Commission will see for Concept approval to change the water or sewer category, as the requirements have changed under the new Ordinance.. Although not required for a subdivision with less than 25 lots, the Applicant has chosen to provide central water for 13 of the proposed 15 lots.. Lots 14 and 15 are isolated geographically and connection for these lots would be impractical. The current CWSP category of NPS (No Planned Service) requires an amendment to Rural Water (RW) to allow connection to the existing central water system. Staff commends the Applicant for his decision to provide central water and recommends approval. The Chair asked if anyone wished to speak regarding the application. Mr. Erdman stated he would be glad to answer any questions.

Mr. Greenwell moved that, having made a finding that the project meets concept plan requirement to allow the administrative CWSP amendment to proceed, and noting that the subdivision plan must return to the Planning Commission for preliminary approval, the concept plan be approved. Seconded by Mr. St. Clair and passed by 6-0.

CCSP #03-132-008 – ST. MARY’S INDUSTRIAL PARK, Lots 13, 14, and 17

Requesting Commercial Concept Site Plan review for a 38,950 square foot office and warehouse buildings. The property contains 3.965 acres, is zoned Industrial (AE Overlay), and is located on the north side of Airport View Road, approximately 3,500 feet west of MD 235; Tax Map 34, Block 1, Parcel 548.

Owner: Davis Office Park II, LLC, c/o W. M. Davis
Present: W. M. Davis

NOTE: For the record, Mr. St. Clair recused himself in this application.

Applicant proposes construction of a 38,950 square foot office and warehouse space for technical and industrial uses in four proposed buildings on this site in the County’s Industrial Park. The Staff Report contains findings meeting the standards of Section 60.5.3 of the Ordinance. The Chair asked if anyone wished to speak regarding the application. Mr. Davis provided photos of his St. Mary’s Business Center development, stating that this project will be similar.

Mr. Reeves moved that, having made a finding that the objectives of Section 60.5.3 of the Zoning Ordinance have been met and noting that the project has met all requirements for concept approval, the Commercial Concept Site Plan be approved as requested. The motion was seconded by Mr. Greenwell and passed by 5-0-1. Mr. St. Clair abstained.

CCSP #03-132-007 – THE GATEWAYS RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Requesting Concept Site Plan approval for a 53,600 square foot, 42-unit condominium Complex. The property contains 5.406 acres, is zoned RH, and is located on the west side of Lexwoods Drive, approximately 1,500 feet from its intersection with MD Route 246 (Great Mills Road); Tax Map 51, Block 8, Parcels 10 & 434.

Owner: St. Mary’s County Housing Authority
Present: Dan Ichniowski, of NG&O Engineering, Inc.,

Agent

Dennis Nicholson, St. Mary’s County Housing Authority

This 3-story residential townhouse development proposed by the County’s Housing Authority will house 42 condominium units and community meeting and learning rooms. The complex will be built on the opposite end of Lot

10, on which the J. Patrick Jarboe Head Start and Family Support Center is currently sited.

Staff has made findings in support of Section 60.5.3 of the Zoning Ordinance and states that all adequate public facilities provisions will be met prior to administrative final site plan approval. Mr. Shire said there is capacity available at Great Mills High School for something like 850 lots as of this date. Staff recommends approval.

Mr. Ichniowski said the next phase of the project is site plan approval and they hope to begin construction in the spring. The units will be 1, 2, and 3-bedroom individually-owned units which will range from \$70,000 to \$100,000. Mr. Nicholson said they are looking at means to reduce the costs of the units based on low-market financing. Two elevators will be provided in the 3-story buildings.

Mr. Greenwell moved that, having made a finding that the objectives of Section 60.5.3 of the Zoning Ordinance have been met and noting that the project has met all requirements for concept approval, the concept site plan be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. St. Clair and passed by 6-0.

PRESENTATION

STATUS OF THE COUNTY'S AQUIFERS

Barne Wheeler, Water Quality Task Force

Mr. Wheeler provided a status presentation of the County's aquifers, stating there is an upper limit beyond which the aquifers will not be able to supply us with water, and the County may be approaching that point. Management levels, or safety buffers, have been set by the Maryland Geological Survey (MGS) to keep us from pumping too much water out of the aquifers and monitoring wells monitor the aquifers on a regular basis, showing the drawdown in each well. When the management level is reached, no new groundwater well permits will be issued. Mr. Wheeler said he thinks this has happened with the Magothy Aquifer in Charles County, where well permits have stopped being granted in the Magothy.

Mr. Wheeler said the Piney Point - Nanjemoy and the Aquia Aquifers are getting stressed, and drawdowns are particularly severe in our major growth area of Lexington Park. Without relief, management levels in these two aquifers are expected to be reached by 2020 or, certainly, by 2025. In addition, the Patapsco Aquifer is getting stressed in the La Plata / Waldorf area because of the huge amount of growth there, so this is a tri-county problem. The Task Force believes we need to start thinking about additional water sources and says that surface water, or gray water, should be used to water golf courses and athletic fields, and for irrigation.

Mr. Wheeler said the Task Force supports the Commissioners' decision that subdivisions of more than 25 units must have central water and said their figures show that it is better to punch one hole into a deeper aquifer to

supply these housing units. For this reason, MetCom plans for the larger subdivisions to access the Patapsco Aquifer and leave the PineyPoint-Nanjemoy and Aquia for the smaller wells, if the Patapsco can be used, and MetCom requested MGS to a study to determine its capacity. The question is whether the Patapsco will turn out to be the aquifer we hope it will be. If it is, it could provide some relief in the designated growth areas of Lexington Park and Leonardtown, but Mr. Wheeler said the problem is not solved, as *no one* knows the maximum pumping rate our aquifers can sustain without reaching the management level and very little is known about our private wells or private sources, which makes up 60% of our water usage. Mr. Wheeler said we need to plan ahead. We must:

- (1) Complete the Patapsco study.
- (2) Collect better data on private wells.
- (3) Investigate public reservoir sites – this recommendation was made 12 years ago and was never acted on. Four sites were identified – McIntosh Run, St. Mary's River, Kilpeck Creek, and Persimmon Creek. However, we are not sure whether development has impacted these sites in the intervening 12 years.
- (4) Do a study to determine how much water each of our aquifers can produce.
- (5) Get our neighboring counties involved.

If we don't do these things, Mr. Wheeler said the County may face a water crisis – our wells may begin to dry up in increasing numbers, the Navy presence may be jeopardized, and orderly growth planning will be disrupted. He said the Navy just hired a national geological survey to do a study and came up with the same information that we have. The Navy is also looking at the possibility of desalinization.

This concluded Mr. Wheeler's presentation. During discussion, it was stated that, when the Private Well Metering Program, the Impoundment Reservoir Study, and the MGS Groundwater Simulation for County Aquifers projects were not approved in the Capital Improvements Program Budget this year, the letters from our County Commissioners to Calvert and Charles Counties requesting their participation were not sent. Mr. Greenwell said he thinks it would still be worthwhile to send the letters to the Calvert and Charles County Commissioners to determine their willingness to participate.

The Chair thanked Mr. Wheeler for what he termed a great presentation. A presentation before the Board of County Commissioners will be scheduled by Mr. Wheeler within the next few weeks.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Peggy Childs
Recording Secretary

Approved in open
session: August 11, 2003

John F. Taylor, Sr.
Chairperson