

St. Michaels Planning Commission
St. Michaels Town Office
300 Mill Street

Remote Meeting
June 17, 2020 - 2:00 P.M.

Present: Planning Commission Chairman Jefferson Knapp and members Helen Herman, Carol Parlett, Chris Thomas and Paulette Florio, Zoning Officer Kymberly Kudla.

I. Call to Order:

Chairman Knapp called the remote meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. in St. Michaels, Maryland.

II. Approval of Minutes – May 18, 2020 meeting

Discussion of the May 18, 2020 minutes was postponed to the next meeting.

III. Discussion Items

1. Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive Plan - Parks

Chairman Knapp supplied photos of incomplete and inappropriate work done on the portion of the trail from the Marea development to the completed Nature Trail. The members discussed remedies to make the extended trail and park area useable. Chairman Knapp explained that the Marea Development was responsible for that portion of the trail and the release of their construction bond was predicated on the satisfactory completion of that work. The members agreed to do further research on the project to determine how to move it forward. Member Florio said the completed trail and park, with a proper maintenance plan, would be a very useful and lovely spot for residents and visitors. The members also discussed the potential of the Canton Farm park area. Chairman Knapp asked Member Helen Herman if she was willing to do further research on the Marea trail extension. Member Herman said she would.

The members discussed access from the Perry Cabin property to the Museum property that has recently been blocked by a fence which does not allow bicyclists and walkers to pass through. Chairman Knapp said he would study the matter. The members also agreed to have a meeting with the Parks & Recreation Committee to discuss park improvement issues. Member Florio and Member Parlett said they would participate.

Member Herman said she thought there should be a Frederick Douglas museum in St. Michaels. The members discussed the possibility of utilizing one of the Town-owned properties for a museum location. Member Florio questioned whether the name of Muskrat Park could be re-named for Frederick Douglas. Member Florio said she would research the origin of the name of Muskrat Park.

2. Parking Committee – Report from members Helen Herman and Chris Thomas

Chris Thomas referenced the committee's report and provided an overview of its research. Member Thomas said there was money in the parking budget which perhaps could be used for Geo-tagging parking lots on Google and properly marking the lots for maximum efficiency and use. Member Thomas also said that if the Fremont Street lot is not used for a town office, perhaps it could be used for parking. Member Herman said marking curbs, walking lanes, and parking spots, developing walking and biking tour maps with times, and unifying signage would be very helpful to visitors. Member Herman also said that whatever the cost of wayfaring signage, it was worth it to get design consistency and simplicity. Member Thomas suggested that the parking committee's report should be submitted to the Commissioners. Chairman Knapp agreed and said the report should be put in the form of recommendations.

Chairman Knapp raised the issue of the time B&B's must terminate events (9:00 p.m.) vs. Restaurants, which is 10:00 p.m. Chairman Knapp said the time should be the same, given that events are bound by the noise ordinance. The members agreed the time limit should be consistent. Chairman Knapp asked Zoning Officer Kudla to write up the change and submit it to Zoning Consultant Peter Johnston so that he could make the change in the draft code re-write before the next listening session.

Chairman Knapp made a motion to change the ordinance for B&B's to have events until 10:00 p.m., being bound by the noise ordinance. Member Florio seconded it and the motion passed on a show of hands vote of 5-0 in favor. The members praised the work of the parking committee for their fresh approach to longstanding parking problems.

The members briefly discussed the future of electric cars and whether there should be more charging stations in Town. Chris Thomas said it remains to be seen whether electric cars will become more viable but noted that he would include the Town's current charging station in the geo-tagging. Member Florio also suggested that additional parking lots should be referenced as "free weekend parking" to make them more palatable to the "no more parking" residents, and if the lots are used and working efficiently, then they could be made permanent later on. Member Thomas said he would include the suggestion in the recommendations.

Zoning Officer Kudla said a draft ordinance for preserving historic trees would be on the agenda for the next planning workshop tentatively set for July 7th at 2:00 p.m.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Minutes approved by 5-0 vote in favor on 24th day of August, 2020.

Jefferson Knapp, Chairman