

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

June 11, 2019
1:30 P.M.

Present: Planning Commission Chairman Jefferson Knapp, and members Carol Parlett, Helen Levin, and Paulette Florio, Commissioners Joyce Harrod, Dennis Glackin, and William Boos, Town Manager Jean Weisman, Zoning Officer Kymberly Kudla, and Zoning Consultant Peter Johnston

1. Call to Order:

Vice Chairman Knapp called the zoning re-write workshop to order at 1:30 p.m. in the meeting room of the Edgar M. Bosley, Jr. Municipal Building, 300 Mill Street, St. Michaels, Maryland. Chairman Knapp said today's workshop would focus on signage, and that business owners from the HR District were present to discuss their needs and offer comment.

II. Zoning Re-write (Con't)

Consultant Peter Johnston reviewed the regulations for signage for the HR zone, and noted that a provision in the regulations states that no tenant shall be permitted more than one single faced sign exceeding 20 square feet in area, and that the sign must be mounted on the occupied building. Mr. Johnston said that while he had already revised this section based on earlier workshop discussions, the 20 square foot size limit may have to be eliminated depending on whether the members decide that extra signage is needed for the HR zone. The members agreed that the current signage limit should come out and then discussed what should replace it. Mr. Johnson said he had already added definitions to the section.

Member Florio said she favored the joint-tenant signage for the Mill property, rather than a lot of little signs that no one can see from any distance, and similar to what is used in the Town of Berlin. Mr. Johnston read the specifications for joint-tenant signage, which included larger signage and both free standing and building signs. Chairman Knapp said he also felt that signage should be consistent in terms of font and style.

Tad DuPont of Locust Street, and a Mill property owner, said signage should be consistent and comprehensive, preferably on a building rather than free-standing, and make sense for both foot traffic and visitors in cars. Mr. DuPont added that the signage problem was not just for the Mill, but was universal through the whole town. Commissioner Bill Boos agreed, and said there was excessive signage in Town and favored removing redundant, ineffective, poorly located, and faded/old signage. Commissioner Boos suggested utilizing the Town's existing sign poles and consolidating all signage on them.

After some additional discussion, Mr. Johnston said for the Mill Property, under the new joint tenant signage regulations, the Planning Commission would sign off on a master signage plan submitted by the tenants, and that the Planning Commission should decide on the size of on-building, hanging, and free-standing signs. Chairman Knapp suggested that the Mill business operators come back to the Planning Commission with ideas on what they want for signage so that regulations can reflect their needs. Member Dennis Glackin suggested that Barney Kastel, owner of the Sewing Factory, be included in the signage discussion for the Mill shops. Tad DuPont said the businesses in the Mill would get together and formulate a plan which they would

then present to the Planning Commission. Chairman Knapp suggested that two directional/wayfaring signs saying “Old Mill Shops” on either end of the Mill complex would be appropriate on Talbot Street and could be attached to the Town street signs.

Mr. Johnston summarized that the members favored the master sign plan approach, and he said he was eliminating sign size pending input from the businesses. Chairman Knapp thanked the businesses for coming and said that whenever they were ready to present their plan, to contact Ms. Kudla to be added to a meeting agenda.

The members then discussed Town signage, including what is allowed, what is prohibited, and what is temporary. The members agreed that Mr. Johnston should edit the list of prohibited signs. Mrs. Weisman said she would provide Mr. Johnston with a copy of the recent ordinance providing relief for temporary real estate “open house” signs.

The members agreed that a “best practices” presentation to businesses on Talbot Street via the Business Association meeting would be a way to improve the consistency of signage on the main street and reduce sign clutter. The members decided to send a revised version of the signage regulations to the businesses to involve them in the discussion. There was then a discussion of sign lighting and event signage. The members agreed the section on event signage should be completely re-written with distinct definitions and size limitations, and keeping in mind the temporary nature of event signs.

The members then concluded the workshop, noting that the next meeting on June 18th at 1:30 p.m. would continue discussion of the signage section. Mr. Johnston said he would make revisions and send to all members.

III. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Minutes approved by a 3:0 vote in favor on 27th day of June, 2019



Jefferson Knapp, Chairman