

St. Michaels Planning Commission Workshop
St. Michaels Town Office
300 Mill Street
June 18, 2019
1:30 P.M.

Present: Planning Commission Chairman Jefferson Knapp, and members Helen Herman and Paulette Florio, Town Commissioner Dennis Glackin, Town Manager Jean Weisman, Zoning Officer Kymberly Kudla, and Zoning Consultant Peter Johnston.

1. Call to Order:

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 continue discussion of signage regulations and Peter Johnston's revisions from the last meeting.

II. Zoning Re-write (Con't)

Consultant Peter Johnston continued the discussion beginning with Section 340-162, Page 15, Temporary Signage. Mr. Johnston said the revisions he supplied to the members included the suggestion to strike all the existing regulation of Temporary Signage and replace it with a time limit for the type of sign, i.e. event, real estate, and election signs. The members agreed that most temporary signage was regulated by a required event permit, and that vertical banners on telephone poles should remain subject to approval by the Commissioners. After a discussion of portable/sidewalk/sandwich board signs, Mr. Johnston agreed to re-integrate the appearance standards for portable signs. Mr. Johnston said he had expanded the prohibited sign section on Page 26, and on Page 29, had included wayfaring signs as government signage to make them exempt.

The members also discussed informational signage specifically related to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum and the St. Michaels Museum. Mr. Johnston said that most of this section would remain, except for definitions that he felt were redundant or no longer necessary.

The members also discussed the section on landscaping, environmental standards, and lighting. Mr. Johnston said that most landscaping requirements were in Chapter 110 under site plans review, and should be moved to Chapter 340. Ms. Kudla noted that there would need to be a text amendment to complete such a transition at some point. Mr. Johnston agreed and he noted there could be other necessary text changes for information moved out of Chapter 110.

Chairman Knapp raised the issue of the recent gas station project, which had encountered design conflicts, landscape and parking problems, and public opposition. The members wanted to think about ways to adjust the zoning code to encourage compliance with the Town's Comprehensive Plan guidelines. Mr. Johnston said he would try to write something with that goal in mind. The members also discussed project landscaping, including parking areas. The members agreed to give the Planning Commission greater discretion to find alternatives where compliance with regulation would create undue hardship.

Mr. Johnston raised the issue of buffer yard requirements where two zones abut each other. He noted that St. Michaels had a variable requirement as to number of feet and planting intensity, depending on which two zones were next to each other. The members agreed that this section did not need to be changed. Dennis Glackin raised the issue of other buffers for streams, non-tidal wetlands, and floodplains. Mr. Johnston said that the Critical Area regulations govern most of St. Michaels' buffer areas, and he recommended deleting regulations that are not requirements of the Town, but rather are State requirements. The members agreed to take them out, but left in the wildlife habitat/sensitive species guidelines. Mr. Johnston said the definitions of the various types of buffers would remain in the Code.

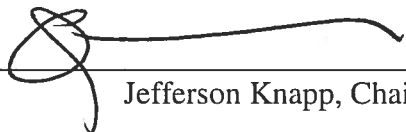
Mrs. Weisman reminded the members that their next workshop would include members of the Critical Area staff to review their requirements for the town code. Mr. Johnston said that a topic of discussion with Critical Area would be the notion of growth allocation as a floating zone, instead of the way the St. Michaels Code is set up now. Mr. Johnston added that mitigation was also of topic for the Critical Area, and that he would ask them for a clarification of COMAR. Mr. Johnston said he would have language on architectural review for the next meeting, and the sections the members had already reviewed on districts would need to be revisited.

Chairman Knapp said the next meeting would be July 9th and that a reminder should go out to Member Parlett, who was not present for today's meeting.

III. Adjournment

Member Florio made the motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Member Herman, and which passed on a voice vote of 3-0 in favor at 3:30 p.m.

Minutes approved by a 3-0 vote in favor on the 6th day of September 2019



Jefferson Knapp, Chairman