

St. Michaels Planning Commission
Thursday, November 21, 2019
Regular Meeting - 6 pm

1. Call to Order

Chairman Jefferson Knapp called to order the regular meeting of the Planning Commission at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the Edgar M. Bosley, Jr. Municipal Building, 300 Mill Street, St. Michaels, Maryland. Also present were Commission members Paulette Florio, Carol Parlett, and Helen Herman, and Zoning Officer Kymberly Kudla, and two members of the public.

II. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Knapp called for review of the minutes of October 24, 2019, noting one typographical change. Member Paulette Florio made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Member Carol Parlett seconded it, and the motion passed on a voice vote of 4-0 in favor.

III. Special Exception – 209 N. Talbot Street (Erkiletian/Parker Counts)

Two (2) principle uses on a single parcel located at Five Gables Inn & Spa – Hotel and Restaurant Use.

Chairman Knapp invited the owner of Five Gables, Mr. Erkiletian, his attorney Peter Cotter, and architect Charles Nobel to make their presentation. Attorney Cotter said the reason for the request for a special exception was to add a restaurant use for the property. Mr. Cotter said that there would be interior changes to the building to accommodate the restaurant addition, but there would be no exterior changes, or additional square footage. Mr. Erkiletian said his family was looking to purchase the Five Gables Inn from the Booth family and continue to operate it as an Inn and Spa. He said plans included rehabilitation of the interior space and re-adaptation of unused interior spaces. Mr. Erkiletian said changes to the exterior of the building would be minimal and no new structures were planned. The architect noted that they would be working with the Historic District Commission regarding four of the five buildings on the property, with plans to “refresh” the look, but remain within the HDC guidelines. Mr. Gobel said the former spa areas of the interior, as well as the indoor swimming pool, would provide the space for construction of the restaurant.

Chairman Knapp said that the restaurant was an approved use with the zone, and the Planning Commission’s goal for this evening was to determine if the plans fit with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, and appropriate uses, and, if so, the Commission would forward the project on to the Board of Zoning Appeals for review and approval. Chairman Knapp said he thought the project does generally comply with the Comprehensive Plan, and especially the upgrade of the building on Fremont Street. Member Parlett asked about the extent of the restaurant. Mr. Gobel said the plan was to have a oyster type bar area, serve lunch and dinner, and possibly continental breakfast, but specifically for use by guest of the Inn. Mr. Gobel said he believed the plans are consistent with preserving the community as a tourism destination and compliant with the requirements of the Historic District. In answer to a question, Mr. Gobel said that on-site parking should be sufficient to support both uses and there was public parking down the street. The Commission members said they generally agreed that the concept, felt the project was

important and fundamentally sound. Chairman Knapp then made a motion to recommend to the Board of Zoning Appeals that the proposed use is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Comprehensive Plan, i.e., Chapter 7, Economic Development, and 7.2, utilizing incentives that encourage investment and development in a commercial zones, and that a restaurant is an allowed use in the CC Zone. Members Carol Parlett, Helen Herman, and Paulette Florio seconded the motion, which passed on a voice vote of 4-0 in favor. The members thanked the applicants for their presentation.

IV. Sketch Plan Review - 124 Fremont Street, Commissioners of St. Michaels

Construction of a new Town Office building

Chairman Knapp referenced the project as noted above. Town Manager Jean Weisman began the presentation on behalf of the Commissioners, noting that the Town's engineer was running late due to traffic on the Bay Bridge. Mrs. Weisman referred the members to the site plan provided by the engineer, and invited questions from the members. Chairman Knapp said the members should feel free to ask questions and make suggestions for anything they would like to see in the Preliminary Site Plan. Chairman Knapp said he would like to see traffic impact details from the applicant, both for vehicle and pedestrian traffic, as well as how storm water management issues will be dealt with. There was a discussion specifically of the potential for increased traffic on Canton Street and how it will affect pedestrians. Mrs. Weisman said Chief of Police Anthony Smith had suggested a flashing light and/or signage at that intersection. Member Florio said her concern was people walking or driving to and from the Farmers' Market. Mrs. Weisman said that there would be additional parking available in the Town Office parking lot on Saturdays for the Farmers' Market, which could alleviate some of the congestion. As there were no additional comments or questions, Chairman Knapp made a motion to move the sketch plan forward to the Preliminary Site Plan review. Member Parlett seconded the motion, which passed on a voice vote of 4-0 in favor.

Member Helen Herman requested a scaled drawing of the new building in relation to other buildings in the area, not as a requirement, but for reference at the site plan review. Chairman Knapp called for public comment. There were no public comments.

V. Matters from the Commission or Staff

There were no additional comments.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.