

St. Michaels Planning Commission
Thursday, January 23, 2020
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, Chris Thomas, and Helen Herman, Town Manager Jean Weisman, Zoning Officer Kymberly Kudla, and eight members of the public, including Commissioners William Boos, Michael Bibb, and Dennis Glackin.

II. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Knapp said he had no changes to the minutes of November 23, 2019 and made the motion to approve. Member Carol Parlett seconded it, and the motion passed on a voice vote of 2-0 in favor. Chairman Knapp said he had no changes to the minutes of December 4, 2019 and called for a motion. Member Parlett made the motion, which was seconded by Member Paulette Florio. The motion passed on a voice vote of 3-0 in favor. Chairman Knapp had one change to the minutes of December 17, 2019. Member Florio made the motion, which was seconded by Member Helen Herman. The motion passed on a voice vote of 3-0 in favor. Chairman Knapp had no changes for the December 19, 2019 and called for a motion to accept the minutes as written. Member Florio made the motion, which was seconded by Member Herman. The motion passed on a voice vote of 3-0 in favor.

III. Election of Officers

Member Helen Herman nominated Jeff Knapp to continue as Chairman. Member Florio seconded it and the motion passed on a voice vote of 5-0 in favor. Member Parlett nominated Helen Herman as Vice Chairman. Member Florio seconded it, and the motion passed on a voice vote of 5-0 in favor.

IV. Final Site Plan Review – 124 Fremont Street

Construction of new office building
Commissioners of St. Michaels

John Gonzales, Engineer, Landmark Engineering, reported that he was finalizing the storm water management plan and he was working with Jeff Richardson on the water and sewer connections. He added that spot elevations had been added to the plans where additional grading was necessary, down along the west edge of the parking lot and driveway. Chairman Knapp said he thought grading was also necessary on the side abutting the Adams property to prevent run-off. Mr. Gonzalez said he expected that the run-off on that side would be handled by the storm water system, but that the system could be re-configured to handle more water, along with the construction of a gentle berm to help prevent sheeting onto the neighboring property. He said he would add features as discussed, including filters and trash-guards.

Chairman Knapp said he and Member Paulette Florio had done a survey of the residents on Fremont Street, Conner Street and Glory Avenue. Member Florio said they had knocked on doors and left a brief survey about their use of Canton Street and whether closing Canton Street would cause hardship. Ms. Florio said 23 responses were received (out of a total of 35 homes), 15 said yes, there would be a hardship and 8 said no, there would not. Ms. Florio said when she had an opportunity to explain other access/egress options, those who had objected seemed to be ok with the closing. Ms. Florio said those residents who use Canton Street know to creep to the intersection and are aware that pedestrians on the Talbot Street sidewalk are oblivious to a vehicle exit between the two stores. Member Chris Thomas said the Fire Department had authorized him to say that they are adamantly opposed to the physical closing of Canton Street because any limiting of access to that area impedes the ability to respond to emergencies. Member Thomas said the Fire Department was not opposed to signage that redirects traffic elsewhere but does not want the road actually blocked to emergency vehicles. Chairman Knapp said he was not opposed to a removable barrier, as the Town has similar barriers on the Nature Trail. Member Florio agreed that was a reasonable compromise. Mrs. Weisman suggested that the Planning Commission could make a recommendation to the Commissioners.

Chairman Knapp then redirected the discussion to the site plan conditions. Member Parlett made a motion for conditions as follows:

1. The final plan should include updated stormwater plan, the location of the berm for water runoff, light pole protection, and the pipe connection detail.

Chairman Knapp said that the recommendation to the Commissioners and designation of no parking (yellow curb and signage) could be dealt with at final approval. Member Chris Thomas seconded the motion, which then passed on a voice vote of 5-0 in favor.

V. Matters from the Commission, Staff, Public

Member Herman asked what the recommendations to the Commissioners should be regarding the closing of Canton Street and eliminating parking on one side of Fremont Street. Member Parlett agreed that that needed to be done. Chairman Knapp said the Planning Commission would make recommendations to the Commissioners that the parking on Fremont Street be on the West side only (including yellow curb and signage for ticketing purposes), and that Canton Street be closed with a removable barrier and appropriate signage. Member Chris Thomas made the motion, as stated by Chairman Knapp. Member Florio seconded it. The motion passed on a voice vote of 5-0 in favor.

After some additional discussion, Chairman Knapp suggested that as many of the Planning Commission members as possible attend the Commissioners' meeting with this issue on the agenda to provide as much input as possible.

Tad duPont of Locust Street had questions about the parking capacity on Fremont Street for a Town meeting attended by the maximum of 80 people, and about the storm water plan in relation to the old church. Mr. DuPont added that all the details of the stormwater and site plans should be nailed down and nothing left to "maybe" or "somewhat."

Mr. Gonzalez said he would get as much additional information on the efficacy of the storm water plan as he could to address concerns.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.