

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

Remote Workshop
November 24, 2020 - 2:00 P.M.

Present: Planning Commission Chairman Jefferson Knapp and Commission Members Helen Herman, Carol Parlett, and Paulette Florio, Zoning Officer Kymberly Kudla, Zoning Consultant Peter Johnston and Meeting Coordinator Kimberley Weller. Also present were Douglas Rollow of Water Street and Thomas Byrne of Green Street. Member Chris Thomas joined the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

I. Call to Order:

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

II. Approval of Minutes

- November 10, 2020

Chairman Knapp said he had no issues with the minutes of November 10th and asked if there were any comments or changes from members. There were none. Member Paulette Florio made a motion to approve the November 10th minutes. Member Carol Parlett seconded it and the motion passed on a voice vote of 4-0 in favor.

III. Changes to Chapter 340 of the Revised Code of St. Michaels

Chairman Knapp opened the discussion and introduced Thomas Byrne, who provided background on the history of his purchase of two properties on Connor Street. Mr. Byrne said he had restored the properties in accordance with State historic specifications, and his intent to have the houses be short-term rentals when complete. Mr. Byrne said changes in the updated Code now prevented him from renting short-term other than on the second floor and that a retail use must exist on the first floor. Mr. Byrne said he was seeking guidance and a remedy from this change in the Code. Mr. Byrne then answered questions from the members. Mr. Byrne explained that the houses are small – 1100 and 900 square feet – and ideal for short term rental by couples or a couple with one child. Members Parlett and Florio said they favored having the properties continuing as short-term rentals. Chairman Knapp said that in making the Code changes, the members had been focused on limiting short term rentals overall in residential zones like R1 and R2, maintaining the existing single family units on Connor Street, and encouraging the existing retail in that area. Chairman Knapp said Mr. Byrne;s houses meet all other criteria for the zone, and that the updated code should be changed to allow small, short-term rentals in the CC Zone. Doug Rollow of Water Street said if small short-term rentals were allowed in the CC Zone, it would take the pressure off the zones where short-term rentals were not desired or allowed.

After some additional discussion, the members agreed Mr. Byrne should be allowed to go forward with his licenses for the two small short-term rental properties on Connor Street and directed Mr. Johnston to make the changes to include properties like Mr. Byrne's so that the members could vote on the change. Zoning Office Kimberley Kudla said the changes will need

to be made expeditiously to meet Critical Area deadlines. Mr. Johnston said he could make the changes by the next meeting.

IV. Parking

Residents Doug Rollow and Marion Brown of Water Street had comments and thoughts on the parking problems on Water Street. Ms. Brown identified three spots on Water Street that were used for parking which, if they were made “no parking”, would alleviate most of the public safety access problems faced by emergency vehicles. Ms. Brown also addressed the problem of residents not being able to park near their homes on busy weekends. Member Chris Thomas said the parking committee had addressed the parking issues on Water Street as well as other streets and areas in Town, as requested by the Commissioners. Chairman Knapp said the members would be discussing an updated draft of parking solutions as time permitted during this meeting and beyond. He encouraged residents to submit any suggestions on parking issues to the committee for consideration.

V. Chapter 340 Revisions/Subdivision site plan (con’t)

The members and Mr. Johnston then discussed the recommended amendments Mr. Johnston had made since the last workshop. The members found Mr. Johnston’s changes appropriate and had no other comments or changes, with only a typographical correction in the subdivision site plan section.

Chairman Knapp and the members set up their next meeting date for December 9th at 2:00 p.m.

VI. Parking (con’t)

Mr. Johnston weighed in on the parking issue by suggesting that the Town should have a number of public forums to have a dialogue with the residents about all the aspects of parking in Town, including safety. Chairman Knapp asked Ms. Kudla to prepare for a meeting that would include residents and the Fire Department.

Chairman Knapp addressed a question from Commissioner David Breimhurst about when parking signs would be ready. Chairman Knapp said he would share a sign mock-up hopefully in about three weeks.

Chairman Knapp praised the members for their work in identifying hydrants, determining where signage should go, as well as identifying the parking spaces to be added or eliminated in the sections of Town they reviewed. Member Herman said she would work on a kiosk for the parking area on Mill Street with Kim Weller.

Chairman Knapp said he would put resident sidewalk charges on an upcoming agenda so that the Planning Commission could make recommendations to the Commissioners.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

Minutes approved by 4:0 vote in favor on 9th day of December, 2020.

Jefferson Knapp, Chairman