

St. Michaels Planning Commission

St. Michaels Town Office

300 Mill Street

Regular Meeting

September 21, 2021 - 1:00 P.M.

Present: Planning Commission Chairman Jefferson Knapp and Commission Members Carol Parlett, Cynthia Allen, Chris Thomas and Helen Herman, and Zoning Officer Kym Kudla.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Knapp called the Planning Commission's in-person and remote workshop to order at 1:05 p.m. via Zoom. Chairman Knapp acknowledged Michael Hannon, who said he wanted to listen in on any discussion of parking, as he was planning to suggest a project at a future Planning Commission meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes

- August 17, 2021
- September 7, 2021

There were no changes to the minutes of August 17th. Member Chris Thomas made the motion, which was seconded by Member Cynthia Allen and which passed on a voice vote of 4-0. The members then took a few minutes to review the September 7th minutes. Member Parlett said she wanted to add Rotary International to the sentence about potential grant contacts to assist with the Natural Trail extension. Member Allen made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Member Parlett seconded it and the motion passed on a voice vote of 4-0 in favor.

III. Items for Discussion

- Trash Service Update

The members had questions and discussed the pending changes in the trash service. Member Chris Thomas said a lot of the details had not been resolved and there had been a recent change in the proposed trash pickup day from Friday to Monday. Member Thomas suggested tuning into the next Commissioners' meeting on Wednesday evening.

- Changes in Commissioners' meeting structure – public comment rules

The members then discussed changes in the public comment rules at Commissioner's meetings. Ms. Kudla explained that the Commissioners had decided that zoom meetings would be treated as "public access" type broadcasts with no public input and that public comments would be taken in live meetings, at which members of the public wishing to comment would be present in person at the meeting. The members also discussed technical difficulties with the zoom meetings.

- Update – State Highway Administration (SHA) Walk-about

Chairman Knapp rejoined the meeting and provided highlights of the second meeting with SHA on September 10th. He said he also had recently joined a walk-about on Talbot Street with SHA, Commissioner Bibb and Town Manager Jeff Rhodes. Chairman Knapp said the group looked at the potential parking spaces to be removed and where signage changes needed to be made between Grace and Marengo Streets. He noted SHA requested a letter from the Fire Department Chief on the safety issues to help support the changes. Chairman Knapp said there was still no start date for the project and he anticipated the job might take two years to complete due to material delays and other issues, including daily traffic disruptions. Chairman Knapp also said his company had taken on the deck replacement on Honeymoon Bridge. He noted that the work was completed in just a few days and the bridge had been re-opened to foot traffic.

- Fee-in-Lieu changes

Chairman Knapp said that the changes in the Fee-in-Lieu language had been passed by the Commissioners and would become effective in a couple of weeks.

- Update - Michael Hannon's project

Ms. Kudla said that Mr. Hannon had submitted amended plans to her for his changes to the property at 310 S. Talbot Street. The project would now only require a simplified site plan. Ms. Kudla said Mr. Hannon's proposed wine bar was required to serve food and would therefore be considered a restaurant under the Town's Code.

- Update – Rotary Club

Member Carol Parlett provided an update on her conversation with the Rotary Club regarding their interest in the Nature Trail project. Member Parlett said the Rotary had noted that an engineering study would cost about \$5,000.00 and it would want the Town to pay for the study as a gesture of good faith before they would move forward. Member Parlett said she would pursue inquiries with former Commissioner Windon, who had been the Rotary's contact with the Town. Chairman Knapp said he would bring up the matter with the Commissioners, as the trail extension was the first goal in Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive Plan. Member Parlett said she would send along any additional information she obtained from Rotary.

- Pursuit of Grants

Ms. Kudla said she was looking in to grants, and she would send to members any information on potential grants, including information on the Sustainable Communities program.

- Parking Update

Ms. Kudla said Casey Rauch of Rauch Engineering had supplied updated plans for the Fremont Street parking lot and she had scheduled a site plan review for a Planning Commission meeting in October.

Ms. Kudla and Member Chris Thomas said that they had heard from residents who reported that the parking changes on Water Street appeared to be working. The members agreed that while there were still parking problems in St. Michaels, that parking as an issue could be tabled until it was necessary to re-activate it.

- Sidewalk update

The members said they thought the new Commissioners had voted to accept responsibility for all sidewalks. Ms. Kudla said she didn't think an ordinance had been passed making that change but she would research it and report back. Later in the meeting, Ms. Kudla read from the minutes of the Commissioners' meeting in January 2021, where a vote was taken to have the Town pay for the brick sidewalks as part of the SHA's sidewalk/curb/ADA project. Ms. Kudla said it was a vote specific to the SHA project and not all sidewalks in the Town. The members wanted to do an ordinance that would delete text from the Code to make the Town responsible for all sidewalk improvements.

- Signage

Chairman Knapp said the signage discussion would be postponed to the next meeting on October 12th.

Member Parlett inquired again about the signage and progress for the safety issue at the Post Office. Ms. Kudla said that SHA had suggested extending the curb at the Post Office exit so that it did not look like a two-way thoroughfare. The members said that suggestion and signage improvement should help.

IV. Adjournment

Chairman Knapp said the next meeting would be October 12th at 1:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Minutes approved by 3-0 vote in favor on 19 day of October, 2021.



Jefferson Knapp, Chairman