

St. Michaels Planning Commission
St. Michaels Town Office
300 Mill Street
Virtual Session
November 16, 2021 - 1:00 P.M.

Present: Planning Commission Chairman Jefferson Knapp and Commission Members Carol Parlett, Chris Thomas and Helen Herman, Zoning Officer Kym Kudla, and Commissioners Aida Khalil and Tad duPont.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Knapp called the Planning Commission’s remote workshop to order at 1:07 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

- November October 19, 2021

Chairman Knapp asked if there were any comments or changes on the minutes of November 2, 2021. There were no changes. Member Chris Thomas made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Member Carol Parlett seconded it and the motion passed on a voice vote of 3-0.

III. Items for Discussion

- Trash Services (continued)

Member Thomas provided a history of the trash service. Chairman Knapp said the Planning Commission had had previous discussions of the trash issue and was proposing a one trash can/one recycle can for both businesses and residents for no additional charge. Any resident or business who wanted expanded service would need to pay extra for it – \$45 dollars per can. The Commissioners wanted to contract out the trash service and charge residents for it. Member Thomas said this solution would not please everyone, but it was as close to equitable as possible. The Town’s public works would continue to pick up on weekends, along with brush and bulk items. After some discussion, Chairman Knapp said the Planning Commission would continue to fine-tune a plan and recommendations. Chairman Knapp said there would be another discussion of trash at the next meeting on December 7th.

- Request for permanent tents – Awful Arthur’s Restaurant

Chairman Knapp said it was never the Town’s intention to continue the use of temporary tents beyond the pandemic relief. Chairman Knapp said he did not favor creating “a tent city” in St. Michaels, but the current zoning regulations do not disallow making tents permanent and therefore the Planning Commission has no reason to deny the request. Member Parlett said she did not think the pandemic is completely over and it would not be unrealistic to continue the temporary use of tents for outside dining for another year to help businesses and provide for public safety. Member Parlett also said she was offended by the reference to “tent city” and would like to eliminate it from any future discussion.

Chairman Knapp addressed owner Arthur Webb, noting that the Planning Commission appeared to be in consensus would more than likely approve his request, but he suggested that Mr. Webb seek a more permanent solution to the tents for the long term.

Chairman Knapp then called for a motion. Member Thomas made the motion to approve the sketch plan as presented and referenced in Zoning Officer Kudla's report. Member Parlett seconded it and the motion passed on a voice vote of 3-0 in favor.

- Preliminary Site Plan – Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, multi-purpose building at Fogg's Landing on the museum property

Brett Ewing, engineer for the Maritime Museum project, said that the Planning Commission had approved the sketch plan in June 2021 and since then, minor adjustments were made to the overall layout based upon staff comments and input from the Critical Area Commission. Mr. Ewing noted the changes for the members. Chairman Knapp said he thought that the changes were sensible. He said he had no issues and that Ms. Kudla's staff report had been very thorough. Additionally, Zoning Officer Kudla asked that before final site plan review, any replacements are noted on the plans and that the tree bank is delineated. She added that the plan would again be reviewed by Rauch Engineering and Critical Area to ensure their requirements have been met. Chairman Knapp asked if any signage would be on the building. Brent Ewing said yes, there would be something on the building and elsewhere. Ms. Kudla said she would need to see the signage plans when finalized, and a lighting plan.

As there were no other comments or changes from the members or the public, Chairman Knapp made a motion to approve the preliminary site plan for the multi-purpose building incorporating the notes from the zoning staff report. Member Parlett seconded it, and the motion passed on a voice vote of 3-0 in favor. Kristin Greenaway, President of the CBMM, said the museum hoped to begin construction in the new year.

- Potential Grant Opportunities

Chairman Knapp mentioned the two initial grants that the Planning Commission was hoping to apply for. He asked the members to think about the grants for the next meeting and noted that the applications had to be submitted by January 2022 or the deadline will have passed for another year. Chairman Knapp also said he would follow up with the Commissioners about the Nature Trail/Rotary project and where it stands.

Mike Estrella of E. Chew had final public comments. Kym Kudla announced that a sketch plan would be coming December 21st for the gas station property and a minor subdivision for 105 and 107 Talbot Street also on the 21st, and there would be a TAC meeting on the December 1st.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

Minutes approved by 5-0 vote in favor on 7th day of December, 2021.

Jefferson Knapp, Chairman