

DORCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES – November 2, 2016

The Dorchester County Planning Commission held their regular meeting on November 2, 2016, at 12:00 pm in the County Office Building, Room 110 in Cambridge MD. Members present were: Robert Hanson, Chair, Bill Giese, Ralph Lewis, and Mary Losty. Also present were Rodney Banks, Deputy Director, Brian Soper Critical Area Planner and Christopher Drummond, Attorney. Absent: Laura Layton, Jeffrey King and Steve Dodd, Director.

Mr. Hanson called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

Mr. Hanson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of October 5, 2016. Mr. Giese made a motion to approve the minutes and Ms. Losty seconded. The motion unanimously carried.

OLD BUSINESS

A. None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Prior Approved Subdivisions (Paper Subdivisions) with Expired Road Construction Agreements. Information will be provided at the meeting. Interior roads. Mr. Dodd asked Mr. Forlifer, Health Department if he had any comment about this issue. Mr. Forlifer stated that if a subdivision disappeared now, the Health Department would not be able to approve them. Mr. Dodd reviewed Senate Bill 236, tier maps, a major subdivision which is seven or more lots has to be connected to municipal water and sewer in order for the County to approve them, unless the County has adopted a tier map. Mr. Dodd pointed out that the County Council did not adopt a tier map. This means that if the platted subdivision is vacated, they will not get the lots back because they are all on well and septic.

B. Text Amendment #333-03-2016 – The purpose of the amendment is to modify Section 155, Attachment 1, Table of Permitted Uses of the Dorchester County Zoning Ordinance to add under the Institutional Use Category, new cemeteries, commercial human or animal shall receive growth allocation in the RR-RCA zoning district.

Mr. Banks gave a brief background for the amendment. The Planning Commission had a case before them in June about an expansion to a crematorium in Greenlawn Cemetery in Hudson. This a non-conforming use in the RR-RCA zoning district. The Board of Appeals is given limited authority to expand a non-conforming use and this was not enough for the plan so the text amendment put into place. The text amendment permits a cemetery in the RR-RCA zoning district with a special exception approval. The Planning Commission approved the amendment in June and it was sent to the County Council where it was approved. It was then sent to the Critical Area Commission for their review.

They had no problem with the expansion of this crematorium but any new cemeteries in the RR-RCA zoning district will need growth allocation. Mr. Banks pointed out the new language

C. Board of Appeals Cases – Review and recommendation.

Case # 2600- One Energy Sunnee Bee Solar, Ryan Showalter Esq., Applicant

To request (1) a special exception approval for the establishment of a utility scale solar energy system on lands leased by Applicant along Linkwood Road ("project"), (2) special exception approval for the installation of a substation on one of two proposed sites to deliver the renewable energy to the electrical grid, and (3) a variance to permit construction of 8' tall security fencing around the Project and the substation. Property located at 5722 Linkwood Road East New Market, MD 21613. Zoned AC- Agricultural Conservation.

Based on the information provided, the Planning Commission would like the Board of Appeals to look at these concerns:

1. Provide a detailed State Forest Conservation Plan before the site plan comes before the Planning Commission.
2. The Planning Commission has no problem with the variance for an 8 ft. fence.
3. Consider the impact on the surrounding dwellings.
4. Consider the amount of agricultural land (166 acres) that will be taken out of production.
5. Consider a local mechanism to remove the project once decommissioned.

INFORMATION

With no further business, Ms. Losty made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Giese seconded. The motion unanimously carried. The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Ryan Showalter", written in a cursive style.