

DORCHESTER COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING
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Planning Commission
07-07-2021 Meeting Minutes

The Dorchester County Planning Commission conducted a meeting on Wednesday, July 7th, 2021 at 12pm. The meeting was held both in person and virtually.

Planning Commission:

- **Attending in person:**
Robbie Hanson, Chair; Jerry Burroughs, Vice Chair; Commissioners Mary Losty, Ralph Lewis, William Windsor and Laura Layton
- **Absent:**
Commissioner William Giese

Also attending:

Christopher Drummond, Attorney; Herve Hamon, Director of Planning & Zoning; Susan Webb, Assistant Director of Planning & Zoning; Brandon Vermillion, GIS Specialist;; Ryan Showalter, Attorney; Christopher Rogers, AECOM Consultant for the Comprehensive Plan

Chairman Hanson called the meeting to order at 12pm.

Chairman Hanson asked for a motion to approve the agenda as proposed (with revision to hear Community Energy Solar first); Vice-Chair Burroughs made a motion, it was seconded by Commissioner Layton, all approved.

Chairman Hanson asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of the June 2nd Planning Commission meeting as submitted; Vice-Chair Burroughs made a motion, it was seconded by Comm. Losty; all approved.

A- Presentation by Community Solar:

The presentation, focused on the benefits of community solar, is available upon request at the Planning and Zoning Department.

Community Solar is designed to be redistributed to the local community via the Distribution Grid (rather than the Transmission Grid); it is directly related to the Delmarva Service Territory, which only represents 8% of the land area of the state of Maryland.

There is only a limited capacity remaining for additional Community Solar projects (CSEGS = Community Solar Energy Generating Systems) until the end of the 7 year program defined until 2024, representing about 11 megawatts unallocated. The size of the CSEGS is compatible with the Comprehensive Plan strategies of size control, but the developer asked that some of the upcoming zoning restrictions be looked at carefully as to not make it impossible to develop community solar.

B- Request for Water and Sewer Plan amendment:

Request to change the classification from “no planned service” to S-1 (note: modified from application, which called for S-2), of the Reliance Mobile Home Park, located at 6061 Flamingo Road, Rhodesdale, MD 21659.

Mr. Showalter presented the case, explaining that the 75 mobile homes had various degrees of failing individual septic systems, and that a collective treatment unit with ground water discharge and septic sand mounds system is considered.

The responsibility will lie with the owner to make a determination of which homes should be connected to the new system first. The first phase of the project is to build capacity for 6,000 gallon discharge per day, ultimately reaching 23,000. The available undeveloped filed within the property limit may not be able to handle the totality of the 75 homes discharge.

In order to be able to proceed with the installation, Mr. Showalter on behalf of the Reliance Mobile Home Park, is seeking approval by Council to change the classification from No Planned Service to S-1, after the proper MDE applications and ground water discharge permits are in place.

Based on the information presented, Chairman Hanson asked for a motion to make a favorable recommendation to Council for the change of classification of the Water and Sewer Plan to S-2 for the location aforementioned. Commissioner Lewis made a motion, it was seconded by Comm. Windsor; all approved.

C- Comprehensive Plan

AECOM Consultant Chris Rogers presented a recapitulation of the process that led to the present finalization of the Comprehensive Plan. He and Mr. Hamon will enumerate the number of meetings and periods of public comments in a memo to Council for their consideration.

The Comprehensive Plan at hand, dated July 2021, represents the compilation of all comments and input from agencies and the public; in addition, it provides a compendium of all comments received as an appendix for reference.

Commissioner Lewis confirmed that the rights of owners and applicants would be respected throughout, especially regarding solar installations, in accordance to the language of the current Comprehensive Plan, as well as later on with the zoning regulations still in draft form to be discussed.

Chairman Hanson signed the Resolution adopting the Comprehensive Plan as presented this day: July 7, 2021

Vice Chair Burroughs made a motion to forward the Resolution to Council for their adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, it was seconded by Commissioner Losty. The Council meeting will be a public hearing, duly advertised.

Chairman Hanson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Losty made a motion; it was seconded by Vice Chair Burroughs, all approved.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Herve O. Hamon
Director of Planning and Zoning

Reviewed: 

Date: 10/18/21