

Planning Commission Notes – December 8, 2020 – Submitted by Judd Vickers

The meeting of the Planning Commission was conducted via WebEx.

Support materials related to the meeting can be viewed at:

https://www.chooscambridge.com/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_12082020-853?packet=true

Old Business:

PZ 2021-003 Planning Commission approved Preliminary Site plan for 221-229 Washington Street for Crossroads Community – Behavior Health Facility.

From 8/4/2020 meeting:

PZ 2021-003 – Concept plan for Crossroads Community located at 221-229 Washington Street. Mission to teach skills and assist individuals with behavioral health needs to live productive lives. This will not be an overnight facility and would replace an existing facility located at 404 LeCompte Street, operating in that location for 15 years. Proposal is for a new 7,000 square foot facility, constructed on an assembly of smaller lots to comprise approximately ½ acre. Crossroads will meet with Planning staff to further discuss details, including parking lot matters, after which Crossroads will move forward toward a preliminary plan.

Public Hearings:

PZ 2021-004 Hearing to admit additional information to the Planning Commission for the Master Plan Amendment to allow up to 200 multi-family units on a parcels designated as RP-2, Map 31, Grid 19, Parcel 27, 2.16 acres. Additional public comment was received in opposition to the proposal. Property owner indicated that it is not specified as to whether or not any of the units would ultimately be time-shares, hotel rooms, rental units, or owner occupied. Planning Commission indicated no change in their determination from 10/29 meeting. Final decision deferred to 1/5/2021 due to schedule conflict with the City Attorney.

From 10/29/2020 meeting:

Planning Commission voted unanimously to forward a recommendation of denial to the City Council based on compatibility and economic value (findings of fact to be drafted and approved by Planning Commission) for a proposed Master Development Plan Amendment for the RP-2 designation at the Residences at River Marsh at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Resort.

As discussed at previous meetings, Quadrangle Development, one of the original Hyatt partners, is the owner of a parcel immediately adjacent to the hotel and requested a change to the master plan that would allow 200 multi-family type units. This is a zoning change request only and

there is currently not a development plan pending, or even conceptualized. The change to the master plan was requested to make the property more marketable.

The HOA's for the adjacent Willow Oak Condominium, Persimmon Condominium/Townhouses, several property owners and representatives from MEDCO (another original Hyatt partner) all spoke against the change, citing density, parking, traffic and the absence of a current proposal that would reflect the ultimate outcome of the zoning change.

Only 1 single family home, 48 condominiums and 20 townhomes have been constructed since the project was developed over the last 20 years. The ability to construct 135 single family homes and 415 multi-family units currently remain in place, raising questions as to the need, and /or demand on the site for 200 additional multi-family units.

P&Z 2021-005 – Rezoning and Map Amendment for parcel within the NC-4 Zoning District, Map 302, Grid 15, Parcel 2088. Zone Request for a change from a residential zoning to a commercial zoning to allow for a new Dollar Store to be located on the site. Neighborhood input sought regarding the proposal, which included a poll in which the majority of respondents were opposed. Opposition cites potential damage that larger franchises can bring upon the existing, operating small businesses serving the existing neighborhood. Substantial public opposition was voiced during the meeting, including by two incoming City Commissioners. Staff recommends against the zoning change, given the public input. Change is substantive, going from a low impact residential, to a higher impact commercial with parking, etc. The developer and their counsel asked for more time to consider the public comments, and address at a future meeting. The proposal was deferred to a future meeting.

From 10/29/2020 meeting:

Discussion and feedback only for a proposed Dollar Store at the corner of Washington and High Street, which would be cited on several parcels (currently all vacant parcels). Portions of the proposed site are zoned General Commercial, Downtown Waterfront General and NC4. Staff would likely recommendation that all parcels should potentially be converted to Downtown Waterfront General zoning district. Zoning changes could be justified due to the substantial redevelopment of the area, and absence of any current retail services for the adjacent neighborhoods. There were historically commercial uses at this intersection. Planning Commission members indicated they were supportive of moving forward to further consider this project.

Discussion Items:

Planning Commission moved forward to draft language to consider a Text Amendment related to Professional Offices in CMU and GC zones. Currently, these zones do not allow for professional offices in these zones and the proposed change would allow those uses in those

zones. In addition, professional office uses would be clarified and combined under one definition in the code.