

Planning Commission Notes – October 5, 2021 – Submitted by Judd Vickers

The meeting of the Planning Commission was conducted in person and via WebEx.

Support materials related to the meeting can be viewed at:

[Choosecambridge.com/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_10052021-1031?packet=true](https://chooscambridge.com/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_10052021-1031?packet=true)

Old Business

PZ 2022-006 – Planning Commission approved Phase I of Tides at River Marsh (incorporating comments from the City Engineer and Zoning Officer), which will consist of a mix of single-family homes, townhomes and villas. An architectural review committee will be established to review the appearance of residences to ensure compatibility, consistency and quality with existing residences on the Hyatt property (the City Council recommended that a resident be selected to be on the committee). New and existing residential structures on the Hyatt property will be included in the new amenities to be constructed, which will consist of a pool, clubhouse, tennis courts and community garden areas. Amenities will be constructed during Phase I. While the maximum density remains at 311 residential units (combination of single-family, townhomes and villas), there was some concern expressed regarding the reconfiguration of the existing lots.

PZ 2022-004 – Planning Commission approved a signage program and screening for UMMS building. The screening wall will be located on the roof of the building to screen heating, cooling and other equipment located on the roof. An exception was granted allowing a sign on the roof of the building due to the overall size of the building and its medical use.

New Business

PZ 2022-007 – Dollar General presented a proposal for a location at the southwest corner of the intersection of MD16 and Stone Boundary Road. The site plan as presented provided for parking along MD16 in the front of the building. Typically, per UDC guidelines, parking should be in the rear of any proposed commercial/retail building. However, after much discussion and feedback from several neighbors immediately adjacent to the rear of the site, the Planning Commission determined the proposed site plan would likely be sufficient. Access will be from Stone Boundary Road and many concerns were raised with regard to increased traffic volume. The Planning Commission advocated an improved building design as MD16 is a scenic byway and our community is deserving of high standards of design as implemented by Dollar General in other locations. A sub-committee of the Planning Commission (which will also include a representative from the adjacent residential neighborhood) will work with the developer to determine an improved design acceptable to all before final approval.

Judd's observation: The Planning Commission and staff did an outstanding job of 1) Listening to the concerns of the neighboring residents and modifying their course of action accordingly; and 2) Holding the developer to a high standard of architectural design.

It is important to note that Commission members and staff are conducting quite a bit of research to make sure Cambridge receives the highest standard of architectural design. For example, the Planning Officer provided multiple examples of Dollar General store facilities throughout the US as points of comparison to the proposal made. This resulted in the formation of a sub-committee to facilitate an improved design.

Discussion Items

TA – 2022 – 004 – Continued discussion related to a draft text amendment allowing dining in Industrial Zone with conditions. Based on prior comments and discussion, language was clarified that dining could be allowed in the Industrial Use zone when directly linked to a production operation. By way of example, an oyster production facility could perhaps have an oyster shucking bar. Revisions include providing the Planning Commission the ability to impose additional conditions on the restaurant use as it affects health, safety and harmony of uses. Next step will be a public hearing on the draft text amendment.

Deep Harbor update from GMB regarding Beazer Home's plan to move forward to complete development on 57 of the remaining townhomes. Construction will be pursuant to previous approved plats and plans, with some minor architectural changes. The Planning Commission addressed several concerns voiced by residents as to certain issues related to prior construction, specifically roofing related, and how those issues might be avoided on future construction. A Beazer representative indicated the use of improved roofing materials and working with the community to minimize the impact of construction on the residents.