



**Town of Easton Planning Commission
Decision Summary**

Thursday, August 15, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

Town Hall Chamber 2

14 S. Harrison Street, Easton, Maryland

Archived video of the meeting is available at:

[Town of Easton Agendas and Minutes](https://www.eastonmd.gov/Agendas/Agendas%20and%20Minutes)
[\(eastonmd.gov\)](https://www.eastonmd.gov/)

Attendance:

Commission Members:

Jennifer Dindinger, Chairperson
Philip Toussaint, Vice Chairperson
Tom Klein
Victoria McAndrews
William Ryall
Michael Ports, Alternate

Staff:

Miguel Salinas, Planning and Zoning Director
Lynn B. Thomas, Town Planner
Joseph Mayer, Plan Reviewer
Nicholas Johnson, Planner
William Chapman Esq. Asst. Town Attorney
Rick Van Emburgh, Town Engineer
Samantha Smith, Administrative Specialist

1. Call to Order — Chairperson Dindinger called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

2. Decision Summary Review —

a. July 18, 2024 - The Commission noted the following correction to the draft decision summary:

- i. *Line 149: Add “subject to staff review”.*
- ii. *5.a.: Revisions to the Seafood Processing discussion for accuracy.*

**Commissioner McAndrews moved to table the July 18, 2024 Decision Summary.
Vice Chairperson Toussaint seconded the motion.**

Vote	5 - 0
FOR:	5 - Dindinger, Toussaint, Klein, McAndrews, Ryall
AGAINST:	0
ABSTAIN:	0
ABSENT:	0

55 **3. Election of Officers**

56
57 **Tom Klein nominated Philip Toussaint for Chairperson. Victoria McAndrews**
58 **seconded the nomination. Philip Toussaint accepted the nomination.**

59
60 **Tom Klein amended the motion to nominate Philip Toussaint for Chairperson to be**
61 **effective at the adjournment of the meeting. Victoria McAndrews seconded the**
62 **nomination. Philip Toussaint accepted the amended nomination.**

63
64 Vote 4 - 0 - 1
65 FOR: 4 - Dindinger, Klein, McAndrews, Ryall
66 AGAINST: 0
67 ABSTAIN: 1 - Toussaint
68 ABSENT: 0

69
70 **Victoria McAndrews nominated Michael Ports for Vice Chairperson to be effective**
71 **at the adjournment of the meeting. William Ryall seconded the nomination. Michael**
72 **Ports accepted the nomination.**

73
74 Vote 5 - 0
75 FOR: 5 - Dindinger, Toussaint, Klein, McAndrews, Ryall
76 AGAINST: 0
77 ABSTAIN: 0
78 ABSENT: 0

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81 **4. Old Business — None**

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84 **5. New Business — None**

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87 **6. Discussion Items**

- 88
89 **a.** Potential Revisions to the Zoning and Subdivision Text Amendments - Seafood
90 Processing — In response to recent concerns and other public complaints
91 associated with odor, the Town Council has asked the Commission to provide
92 recommendations pursuant to odor control measures in light industrial use areas
93 with a particular emphasis on seafood processing. During their July meeting, the
94 Commission strongly favored the creation of broader odor control language in the
95 Development Standards of the BC - Business Commercial District that is not
96 explicitly designated to *Seafood Processing* uses. The Commission also favored
97 the creation of broader designations in the *Industry, Light* definition.

98
99 The Commission recommended the striking of the proposed enhanced operational
100 setbacks referred to in item *L.* of the Development Standards for the Business

Commercial District in Article X, Section 28-308.2. The language in the odor control technology standards of item *M*. was also refined from “*if necessary*” to “*as necessary*”, and listed to include vehicles and storage uses as well. The Commission also sought expanding the prohibited nuisance factors referred to in the BC Purpose clause. Mr. Salinas advised that the BC District is still considered an industrial zoning district, and any expanded supplemental standards may unintentionally place any existing uses into a legal non-conforming use.

The Commission weighed heavily on designating odor control measures that are not definitive to *Seafood Processing* uses, and an in depth discussion was held regarding odor control enforcement and compliance under the property maintenance code. The Commission asked for additional testimony from Code Enforcement regarding odor mitigation and the number of public complaints. The Commission will continue to develop these provisions and additional zoning options in subsequent meetings.

Public Comment:
Bruce Cole, 5 Wrightson Avenue
Rennie Gay, Gay’s Seafood
Mitch Hughes

Vice Chair Toussaint moved to table the discussion item. Commissioner Ryall seconded the motion.

Vote	5 - 0
FOR:	5 - Dindinger, Toussaint, Klein, McAndrews, Ryall
AGAINST:	0
ABSTAIN:	0
ABSENT:	0

- b.** Potential Revisions to the Zoning and Subdivision Text Amendments - March 2024 Follow Up — At their March 21, 2024 meeting, the Commission provided preliminary feedback and comments for changes to the following proposed Amendments to the Zoning Code:
- i. Donation Centers
 - ii. Single Family Home Criteria
 - iii. Revised Internal Illumination Standards for Signage
 - iv. Site Triangle Distance
 - v. Minimum Parking Space Requirements
 - vi. Parking Space Dimensions
 - vii. Article 12: Non-conformities
 - viii. Fuel Price Regulations for Freestanding Signs
 - ix. Driveway Materials (Impervious Surfaces)
 - x. Corrections to the Zoning Map
 - xi. MXW Standards

- xii. Food Trucks
- xiii. Parking Standards
- xiv. Sheds
- xv. Swimming Pools and Patios
- xvi. Restaurant Use Types
- xvii. Removal of Parking Districts and “Tree of Heaven” language

At their July meeting, the Commission made minor revisions to the language for *Sheds, Swimming Pools and Patios*, “Tree of Heaven” and the parking standards in *Restaurant Use* types. A correction was noted to add “*not more than*” to the surface area percentage language for the MXW window and door placement standards. The Commission continued their deliberation into the remaining Zoning Code Amendments that required more thorough discussion.

The Commission generally favored the language as presented for internal illumination standards for signage and requested clarifying language to include “*metal or face box signs*”. The Commission requested for feedback and testimony from local sign companies regarding the current standards for internally illuminated signage. Additionally, the revised language regarding signage that is extended beyond the eave line, and the sign regulations regarding freestanding signs that are to be constructed on a solid base were both struck from the proposed amendments. The language for fuel price regulations on freestanding signs was found to be consistent with the language of the Maryland Code for Advertising Signs, and was favored as presented.

The Commission favored the expanded definitions for Donation Bins and Donation Centers, with additional language to be added to require a point of contact (individual or organization) for Donation Bins, and indicated that the proposed one (1) mile radius between occupied Donation Bins or Donation Centers shall be revisited and reevaluated at a later time. An in depth discussion was held regarding the Supplemental Standards for Single Family Detached homes with particular emphasis in the discussion returning to the ongoing topic as to what is to be considered as “desired” in the Town’s Design Principles. The Commission indicated that this proposed amendment could be more appropriately addressed during the redrafting of the *Housing* Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

- c. Continued discussion of the Comprehensive Plan Update — Mr. Lynn Thomas provided a brief update of the chapters to be reviewed and revised in the ongoing effort to update the current Comprehensive Plan. Six (6) chapters of the Comprehensive Plan update have been drafted by staff including: *Municipal Growth, Historic Preservation, Sensitive Areas, Water Resources, Parks, Rec & Open Space, and Sustainability*. Draft versions of the *Housing* chapter and the *Implementation* chapter are anticipated to be finalized by the end of August. The chapters will be formally presented to the Planning Commission at a subsequent

meeting.

- d. Announcements — Mr. Miguel Salinas provided the Commission with a few related announcements. A presentation will be held for the general public on Thursday, August 22, 2024 by consultant Joeseeph Minicozzi of Urban3. Urban3 is a planning and economic development firm which uses revenue modeling to highlight the potential revenue impacts of development scenarios, and creative ways to achieve optimal growth and comprehensive planning.

Mr. Salinas also announced the hiring of a consultant team for the ongoing efforts to revitalize the East End Small Area Plan. Seth Harry and Associates and Townscape Design have partnered in order to assist in the reassessment of the existing plan, and to update the plan in order to reflect the area’s current needs, assets and opportunities. A multi-day design charrette is anticipated to be held for the general public in late October. Public notice will be provided once all event details are finalized.

Mr. Salinas provided an update on the ongoing efforts of the Attainable Housing Task Force to introduce an Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance. The task force is anticipated to provide their feedback and recommended strategies for the draft Ordinance to the Commission.

A moment of appreciation and gratitude was shared for Jennifer Dindinger for her dedicated service to the Planning Commission. Chairperson Dindinger served roughly two terms on the Commission, serving as the Chair since January 2024. Chairperson Dindinger was an advocate for affordable housing solutions, and strongly believed in the importance of community engagement in the Town’s planning and legislative processes. The Commission thanked Ms. Dindinger, and wished her well on her future endeavors.

7. **Adjournment** — Chairperson Dindinger moved to adjourn. Vice Chairperson Toussaint seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.