



**Town of Easton Planning Commission
Final Decision Summary**

Thursday, March 20, 2025 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](http://eastonmd.gov)
 [\(eastonmd.gov\)](http://eastonmd.gov)

Attendance:

Commission Members:

Philip Toussaint, Chairperson
Michael Ports, Vice Chairperson
Tom Klein
William Ryall

Staff:

Lynn B. Thomas AICP, Town Planner
Joseph Mayer, Plan Reviewer
Nicholas Johnson AICP, Planner
William Chapman *Esq.* Asst. Town Attorney
Sierra Clem, Engineering Technician
Samantha Smith, Administrative Specialist

Absent:

Commission Members:

Victoria McAndrews
Laurie Forster, Alternate

Staff:

Miguel Salinas, Planning and Zoning Director

1. Call to Order — The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm. As per the Planning Commission Bylaws, any motion to pass requires a majority vote of the full five members of the Commission. Chairperson Toussaint offered all Applicants the choice to proceed, or to continue their application to a future meeting with the presence of a full Board. All Applicants agreed to proceed with their applications.

2. Decision Summary Review —

a. February 20, 2025 - The Commission noted the following correction to the draft decision summary:

i. Line 177: Strike "*bird strike mitigation*", Add "*bird building collision*".

Commissioner Ryall moved to approve the February 20, 2025 Decision Summary with amendments. Vice Chairperson Ports seconded the motion.

Vote 4 - 0 - 1

FOR: 4 - Toussaint, Ports, Klein, Ryall
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
ABSENT: 1 - McAndrews

3. Old Business

a. File No.: 2023 - 0989

Applicant: Far Eastern Shore Winery

Location: 8370 & 8374 Ocean Gateway, Easton, MD 21601
Tax Map 0103, Grid 00EA, Parcel 2952

Zoning: CG

Request: The Applicant is seeking an amendment to a previously approved master signage plan for a freestanding sign located on a multi-building property. The readerboard attached to the freestanding sign will be replaced with three (3) horizontal panels. Additionally, the Applicant is proposing changes to the building lettering including the removal of the lettering on the awnings to be replaced with a solid color, and to change the lettering of the front building sign to read “Far Eastern Shore Winery * Distillery”.

Background: On September 21, 2023 the Commission voted unanimously to approve a master signage plan application to permit a 19’ non-conforming freestanding sign with a 156” x 46.15” sign, and a 108” x 18” readerboard sign subject to the condition that the Applicant shall obtain the appropriate building permits for the installation of the signs.

Staff recommends the following condition:

1. Obtain the appropriate building permits for the installation of the signs, and to coordinate with the Planning and Zoning Department for the proposed illumination of the sign prior to final signage approval.

Staff Presentation:

Joseph Mayer, Plan Reviewer
Lynn Thomas, Town Planner

Applicant Presentation:

Tien Seng-Chiu,
Tara Seng-Chiu,
Carol Prettyman, Rejoice LLC

Public Comment — None

Public Comment Written — None

Commissioner Ports moved to approve the amended master signage plan subject to the following condition:

- 1. The Applicant shall obtain appropriate building permits for the installation of the signs, and shall coordinate with the Planning and Zoning Department for the proposed illumination of the sign prior to final signage approval.**

Commissioner Klein seconded the motion.

<u>Vote</u>	<u>4 - 0 - 1</u>
FOR:	4 - Toussaint, Ports, Klein, Ryall
AGAINST:	0
ABSTAIN:	0
ABSENT:	1 - McAndrews

4. New Business

- a. File No.: 2025 - 1480**
Applicant: Rauch Inc.
Location: 9095 Mistletoe Drive, Easton, MD 21601
Tax Map 0025, Grid 0016, Parcel 0138, Lot 8
Zoning: I
Request: The Applicant is seeking a landscape and buffer waiver from Section 28-1014.7.E.5(c)1-3 of the Zoning Code. In order to mitigate potential fire and safety hazards, the Applicant is seeking to remove the existing trees along the southwest property line of the new Easton Volunteer Fire Department training facility that borders the Talbot County Airport.

Staff recommends the following condition:

1. Upon Planning Commission approval, the Applicant is required to submit a revised site plan for review and approval prior to the removal of any trees.

Staff Presentation:

Joseph Mayer, Plan Reviewer
Lynn Thomas, Town Planner
Sierra Clem, Engineering Technician

Applicant Presentation:

Brian Fitzgerald, Rauch Inc.
Daryl Caldwell, Easton Volunteer Fire Department

Public Comment — None

Public Comment Written — None

Commissioner Ryall moved to approve the waiver request subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The Applicant shall submit a revised site plan for review and approval prior to the removal of any trees.**
- 2. Any subsequent change in ownership of the property shall require that the new owner complies with the minimum required landscaping and bufferyard screening.**

Chairperson Toussaint seconded the motion.

Vote	<u>4 - 0 - 1</u>
FOR:	4 - Toussaint, Ports, Klein, Ryall
AGAINST:	0
ABSTAIN:	0
ABSENT:	1 - McAndrews

- b. File No.: 2025 - 1369**
Applicant: Lane Engineering LLC
Location: 28580 Mary's Court, Easton, MD 21601
Tax Map 0025, Parcel 0046, Lots 16 & 20
Zoning: BC
Request: The Applicant is seeking sketch site plan and architectural approval for the development of Phase I of this proposal, including the construction of two (2) 9,700 square foot pole buildings (Buildings 'A' and 'B') with associated stormwater management facilities and other facility improvements.

Background: On January 2, 2024 a growth allocation request was adopted by the Town Council (*Ordinance No. 807*) and on April 23, 2024, the Talbot County Council adopted *Bill No. 1551*, granting a supplemental growth allocation to the Town. On July 29, 2024 the Critical Area Commission received the Town's request to reclassify the 8.348 acres of land via growth allocation from Resource Conservation Area (RCA) to Intensely Developed Area (IDA).

At their September 19, 2024 meeting, the Planning Commission forwarded a positive recommendation to the Town Council for the zoning reclassification of the subject property from Agricultural zoning district (A-1) to Business Commercial zoning district (BC). A map amendment for the zoning reclassification of the property was adopted by the Town Council on November 18, 2024 (*Ordinance No. 836*).

Staff recommend the following conditions:

1. The Applicant will address all remaining Easton Staff Development Review (ESDR) comments, and submit a development site plan for review.
2. The Applicant will coordinate with the Critical Area Commission and meet all required conditions set forth within the November 6, 2024 growth allocation determination.
3. Phase II of the sketch site plan will require the Planning Commission's review and approval.

Staff Presentation:

Joseph Mayer, Plan Reviewer

Applicant Presentation:

Brittany Wallace, Lane Engineering

Sean Callahan, Lane Engineering

Public Comment — None

Public Comment Written — None

Vice Chairperson Ports moved to approve the sketch site plan and architecture subject to the following conditions:

1. **The Applicant shall address all remaining Easton Staff Development Review (ESDR) comments, and submit a development site plan for review.**
2. **The Applicant shall coordinate with the Critical Area Commission and meet all required conditions set forth within the November 6, 2024 growth allocation determination.**
3. **Phase II of the sketch site plan shall require the Planning Commission's review and approval.**

Commissioner Ryall seconded the motion.

<u>Vote</u>	4 - 0 - 1
FOR:	4 - Toussaint, Ports, Klein, Ryall
AGAINST:	0
ABSTAIN:	0
ABSENT:	1 - McAndrews

- c. **File No.:** 2025 - 1391
Applicant: Lane Engineering LLC

Location: 8275 Ocean Gateway, Easton, MD 21601
Tax Map 0103, Grid 00EA, Parcel 2861

Zoning: CG

Request: The Applicant is seeking architectural approval for the redevelopment of the existing property and structure located at 8275 Ocean Gateway to be converted to a fast-food establishment (Zaxbys). The Applicant is also seeking a supplemental waiver from the minimum landscaping and bufferyard requirements of Section 28-1014.6.E.1 and Section 28-1014.7.E.2.a&b of the Zoning Code.

Staff recommend the following conditions:

1. The Applicant is to address all remaining Easton Staff Development Review (ESDR) comments and submit a development site plan for review.
2. The Applicant will coordinate with the Talbot County Health Department and Building Inspection Division for all applicable permits prior to construction.

Staff Presentation:

Joseph Mayer, Plan Reviewer
Lynn Thomas, Town Planner
Nicholas Johnson AICP, Planner
William Chapman *Esq.* Asst. Town Attorney
Sierra Clem, Engineering Technician

Applicant Presentation:

Brett Ewing, Lane Engineering
Curtis Snyder *Esq.*, Delmarva Real Estate Management Group, LLC
Tom Mitchell, Franchisee Owner

Public Comment:

Jay Corvan, AIA

Public Comment Written — None

Vice Chairperson Ports moved to approve the supplemental waiver requests as submitted. Chairperson Toussaint seconded the motion.

<u>Vote</u>	<u>4 - 0 - 1</u>
FOR:	4 - Toussaint, Ports, Klein, Ryall
AGAINST:	0
ABSTAIN:	0
ABSENT:	1 - McAndrews

Vice Chairperson Ports moved to table the request for architectural approval. The Applicant shall return to the Commission with colored elevations for an alternate design. The elevations shall indicate the materials of the new scheme. Commissioner Ryall seconded the motion.

<u>Vote</u>	4 - 0 - 1
FOR:	4 - Toussaint, Ports, Klein, Ryall
AGAINST:	0
ABSTAIN:	0
ABSENT:	1 - McAndrews

5. Recess — Chairperson Toussaint called for a brief recess at 2:26 p.m. The meeting was called to Order at 2:31 p.m.

6. Discussion Items

- a. Pattern Books and Design Guidelines — Mr. Jay Corvan was present before the Commission to introduce the concept of an architectural pattern book, and to seek the Commission’s consideration. Mr. Corvan discussed how pattern books as a design tool can help to establish community character guidelines and streamline the development process. Additionally, Mr. Corvan touched on form-based zoning, and how pattern books can offer guidance on preferred architectural styles and building types.

The Commission expressed their hesitation, suggesting that pattern books could restrict design creativity by stifling the opportunity for developers to explore new concepts and design approaches. Additionally, the Commission suggested that that pattern books primarily focus on historical architectural styles, rather than planning concepts of the Comprehensive Plan such as mixed-use developments, diverse housing types, multimodal transportation, pedestrian safety, and density management to reduce urban sprawl. In lieu of an overall community plan, the Commission indicated their interest in seeing examples of how a pattern book could be incorporated on specific areas of Easton such as the Ocean Gateway corridor, Marlboro Avenue, and the Historic District. The Commission sought input from the Historic District Commission, and advocated for the opportunity for public feedback. The Commission will continue their consideration for an architectural pattern book in subsequent meetings.

7. Adjournment — Chairperson Toussaint moved to adjourn. Commissioner Ryall seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:24 p.m.