



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

Thursday, April 17, 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
Tom Klein
Victoria McAndrews
William Ryall
Laurie Forster, Alternate

Staff:

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

Absent:

Commission Members:

Michael Ports, Vice Chairperson

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

2. **Decision Summary Review** —
 - a. March 20, 2025 - The Commission noted the following corrections to the draft decision summary:
 - i. Call to Order: Revise language for clarity.
 - ii. Line 270: Add: *Tom Mitchell, Franchisee Owner* to Applicant Presentation.
 - iii. Line 304: Strike "*Adoption of one*".
 - iv. Strike Lines 308 - 311; Add additional language as provided by the Chairperson.

Commissioner Klein moved to approve the March 20, 2025 Decision Summary with amendments. Commissioner Ryall seconded the motion.

Vote 5 - 0 - 1
FOR: 5 - Toussaint, Forster, Klein, McAndrews, Ryall
AGAINST: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
ABSENT: 1 - Ports

3. Old Business

- a. **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).

Background: This project was first seen by the Commission at the March 20, 2025 meeting with an additional request for a supplemental waiver from the minimum landscape and bufferyard requirements of Section 28-1014.6.E.1 and Section 28-1014.7.E.2.a&b of the Town of Easton Zoning Code. The Commission unanimously voted (4-0) to approve the supplemental waiver requests as submitted, and the request for architectural approval was tabled via a 4-0 vote. The Applicant was asked to return to the Commission with colored elevations for an alternate design indicating the materials of the new scheme.

Staff Presentation:

Joseph Mayer, Plan Reviewer
Lynn Thomas, Town Planner
Miguel Salinas, Director of Planning and Zoning

Applicant Presentation:

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

Public Comment — None

Public Comment Written — None

Commissioner Ryall moved to approve the architecture as submitted. Chairperson Toussaint seconded the motion.

Vote 5 - 0 - 1
FOR: 5 - Toussaint, Forster, Klein, McAndrews, Ryall
AGAINST: 0

ABSTAIN: 0
ABSENT: 1 - Ports

4. New Business — None

5. Discussion Items

- a. Continued Discussion of the Comprehensive Plan Update — Mr. Lynn Thomas provided an update on the ongoing efforts to update the current Comprehensive Plan. Subsequent to the workshops held on January 23, 2025 and February 20, 2025, the Commission has finalized the second set of Draft Comprehensive Plan chapters including: *Municipal Growth, Historic Preservation, Sensitive Areas, Water Resources, Parks, Recreation & Open Space, and Sustainability*. Staff is now drafting preliminary versions of five (5) additional chapters including: *Economic Development, Housing, Community Facilities and Services, Transportation, and Implementation*. A special workshop to review these new draft chapters has been scheduled for Thursday, May 29, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.
- b. Legislative Update — Mr. Miguel Salinas provided the Commission with an update on the implementation of recent State comprehensive planning policies and planning principles. Mr. Salinas introduced House Bill No. 286 (HB286). This departmental bill updates the requirements for local Planning Commissions by replacing the twelve "visions" - that a local jurisdiction must implement through a Comprehensive Plan - with eight "planning principles" including: *Land, Transportation, Housing, Economy, Equity, Resilience, Place, and Ecology*. Effective July 8, 2025, HB286 aims to establish sustainable communities and protect the environment in order to improve the overall quality of life. The Commission discussed integrating the features of HB286 into the Introduction and/or the Implementation chapter of the updated Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Salinas also introduced House Bill No. 1446 (HB1446), which redefines an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) as a secondary dwelling on the same lot as a primary single-family detached home. The ADU cannot exceed 75% of the primary home's size, and must be subordinate in use. Effective October 1, 2026, HB1446 mandates the creation of ADU laws, and prohibits local governments from imposing unreasonable restrictions on ADU development. The Commission will examine the current Supplemental Standards for ADUs to identify any potential conflicts.
- c. Pattern Books and Design Guidelines — Mr. Jay Corvan continued the ongoing discussion regarding the incorporation of a Town architectural pattern book. During the March 20, 2025 meeting discussion, the Commission requested feedback on architectural pattern books from the Town of Easton Historic District Commission (HDC). Mr. Corvan provided a summary of his presentation to the

HDC from their April 14, 2025 meeting, in which the Commission suggested that a pattern book would be more appropriate for commercial corridors outside of the Historic District. The HDC also recommended that a pattern book for those surrounding areas should not conflict with the existing Historic District guidelines.

Mr. Corvan's presentation to the Planning Commission highlighted the utilization of form-based zoning to establish community character and design guidelines, and how pattern books can be used to improve communication with developers and streamline the approval process. While the Commission expressed a desire for better quality proposals, concerns were raised regarding a streamlined approval process. The Commission suggested that the current planning process is efficient, and acknowledged the importance of public feedback through the review process as a beneficial form of communication. The Commission also expressed hesitation regarding the timing of the Comprehensive Plan update, but indicated their interest in seeing an example of how a pattern book could be integrated along the Ocean Gateway corridor. The Commission requested a draft proposal, and for staff to provide a recommendation. The Commission will continue their consideration for an architectural pattern book in subsequent meetings.

Public Comment:

Greg Zimmerman
Maury Schlesinger

- 6. Adjournment** — Commissioner McAndrews moved to adjourn. Chairperson Toussaint seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:56 p.m.