



Town Council MEETING MINUTES

Monday, November 1, 2021 - 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

Roll Call.

Mayor Robert C. Willey
Mr. Al Silverstein
Mr. Don Abbatiello
Mr. Ron Engle
Rev. Elmer Davis
President Megan Cook

Also present was the Town Manager, Mr. Don Richardson, Town Attorney Mrs. Sharon VanEmburch, and Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy M. Ruf.

5:00 PM Closed Session:

General Provisions Article § 3-305(b) (4) To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State.

At 5:00 p.m., President Cook called the meeting to order.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Abbatiello and carried unanimously, President Cook adjourned into Closed Session.

Mayor Willey discussed a pending contract.

It was the consensus of the Council to move forward with the contract.

At 5:09 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, the Closed Session was adjourned.

5:30 PM: Call to Order by President Cook.

At 5:30 p.m., President Cook called the meeting to order.

President Cook advised that a Closed Session had occurred at 5:00 p.m., prior to the regularly scheduled meeting regarding General Provisions Article Section 3-305(b)(4) to consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand or remain in the State.

Opening remarks and Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Abbatiello gave opening remarks and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, minutes of the (insert date) meeting were approved as written.

Approval of minutes of 10/18 and 10/25/21 meetings.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, minutes of the October 18 and October 25, 2021 meetings were approved as written.

Municipal Official Items.

Items by the Mayor.

Mayor Willey stated that he was sorry to inform those present that Mr. Jeff Parks and past Councilmember Nancy Clem have recently passed.

Mayor Willey stated that the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast was held October 29 and was a great success with John Horner, Easton Utilities, and Derick White, VP of Operations at YMCA giving their testimony.

Mayor Willey stated he attended the dedication of St. Peter and Paul School on October 29. Mayor Willey discussed an ongoing pending projects list that will be updated weekly.

Presentation of Easton Rotary Centennial Proclamation.

Mr. Silverstein presented a proclamation on behalf of the Mayor and Council to Easton Rotary for their Centennial Proclamation.

Items by the Town Manager.

1. Approval of bid for Zero Turn Diesel powered Turf Mower.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, the bid for the Zero Turn Diesel Powered Turf Mower from Burke Equipment Company in the amount of \$14,577.22 was approved following a roll call vote. The Town Manager clarified that the bid was obtained through Sourcewell.

Items by the Town Attorney.

The Town Attorney, Mrs. VanEmburch stated that she has nothing at this time.

Police Board.

Chief Spencer was present and discussed personnel and statistics. He stated he is retiring January 4, 2022. Jeannette Whalley has also announced her retirement effective January 3, 2022, after 22 years of service.

On July 7, 7 recruits started the 87th class at the Eastern Shore Criminal Justice Academy and are on schedule to graduate 12/17/21. This will leave five officers short. Chief Spencer discussed recent events and upcoming specialized training.

Everything went well for Halloween last evening.

Waterfowl Festival starts next week.

Beginning in January, all officers receive self-defense and de-escalation training. He extended an open invitation for those interested.

Chief Spencer thanked everyone for his 44 years at the Easton Police Department.

Mr. Silverstein and Rev. Davis thanked Chief Spencer for his service to the town.

Public Hearings:

5:35 PM PUBLIC HEARING to discuss the request of The Estates at Gannon Farm for a proposed Planned Unit Development located at 29659 Matthewstown Road on property owned by Gannon Family, LLC.

At 5:46 p.m., President Cook opened the Public Hearing to discuss the request of The Estates at Gannon Farm for a proposed Planned Unit Development located at 29659 Matthewstown Road on property owned by Gannon Family, LLC.

Mr. Thomas discussed the memo recently sent regarding the process for Planned Unit Developments. He stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommends approval of the PUD and is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Thomas stated he would entertain any questions.

Zach Smith, Esq., 114 Bay Street, on behalf of DR Horton, discussed the 200 lot subdivision of 76 acres of land. owned by Gannon Family, LLC. Mr. Smith stated that the property is destined for growth. He stated that the proposal has received a unanimous vote from the Planning and Zoning Commission that states that it is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Smith also stated that it is consistent with R-10A zoning.

Mr. Smith stated that the property was annexed to the town in 2001. He discussed the improvements that have occurred on Rt. 328.

He stated that they have worked with the Planning Commission and made changes.

Mr. Smith stated that the traffic study has deemed the level an A and will remain an A.

Mr. Brett Ewing, Lane Engineering, stated that the development proposed is a for a 200 lot subdivision. He stated it received a 5-0 recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission. He discussed the multiple options that comply with architectural standards. Mr. Ewing stated that the proposed development complies with 30% Open Space, and actually haves 11 acres park space.

Mr. Ewing discussed plantings and street layouts.

Mr. Engle asked for clarification regarding green alleys. Mr. Smith stated that there will be asphalt alleys.

Mr. Smith stated that the developer will build roads to town standards as well as the parks.

He stated that the parks and roads will be turned over to the town.

Mr. Smith stated that DR Horton prefers the front loaded products, driveways off the streets.

Mrs. Cook discussed the design.

Mr. Smith stated that DR Horton preferred not to build alleys but the plan as proposed was preferred by the Planning Commission.

Mrs. Cook stated there is no visual interest, not a lot of variety and all houses are set back the same.

Mr. Smith stated that DR Horton proposed three connections; Rt. 328, a tie in to Hunter's Mill and a tie in to Swann Haven.

The price point for the proposed homes is middle housing costs which are approximately \$370,000 to low 400's.

Mr. Silverstein stated he has concerns regarding alleys and impervious surfaces. He stated that it is hard to maneuver emergency equipment with street parking and narrow streets.

Rev. Davis stated that his number one concern is safety.

Mr. Engle stated that three of the five councilmembers do not prefer the alleys.

Mr. Silverstein stated his preference would be for a contribution to the Affordable Housing fund.

Mr. Abbatiello asked for more information regarding the traffic study.

Mr. Mike Lenhart 645 Baltimore Park Blvd. Severna discussed MD 328, Black Dog Alley Fisher Range Road operating at level service A. He stated with the buildout of the development, it would remain a level of A.

Mr. Abbatiello discussed traffic concerns on Rt. 328 and Elliott Road.

Mr. Engle discussed a contribution to the Affordable Housing fund.

Mr. Silverstein discussed the apartments coming to Easton and their price points.

Mr. Smith asked for the formula for contributions that Chairman, Affordable Housing Jim Bent has provided for other developments.

Mr. Talbot Bone, 204 Brookletts Avenue asked if there are any townhouses or duplexes. It was confirmed that there are not.

Mr. Lenhart discussed the database with traffic count and the intersection of Matthewstown and Rt. 50. He stated that on Sunday in July 2018, the level decreased to C and D.

Mr. Ewing discussed the sidewalks. He stated that a connector road can be added if the council prefers.

Mr. Abbatiello asked how the 200 homes would affect the wastewater treatment plant and the schools' capacities.

At 7:03 p.m., there being no further comments, President Cook stated that the public hearing would be continued November 15.

5:45 PM PUBLIC HEARING concerning the proposed new Zoning Code and Map.

At 7:04 p.m., President Cook opened the 5:55 p.m. scheduled public Hearing regarding the proposed new Zoning Code and Map.

Mr. Thomas stated they have been working through Zoning Code based on the changes suggested by the council.

He outlined the seven changes.

President Cook asked if there are any questions.

The revisions were discussed.

President Cook asked for any questions or comments.

Talbot Bone, 204 Brookletts Avenue, discussed discouraging shot nose houses.

Mr. Engle stated that some of the plans require those types of houses.

Paul Weber, Chair of Planning Commission, 514 S. Aurora discussed amending the Zoning Ordinance. He stated the review has taken over a year. He stated that most of the planners prefer garages in the back.

Mr. Engle stated that he doesn't diminish all the work the Planning and Zoning Commission has done. He asked the council to look at the subject again.

At 7:39 p.m., President Cook closed the public hearing and stated it is eligible for a vote at the next meeting.

5:55 PM PUBLIC HEARING for the purpose of discussing Ordinance Number 769, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AMENDING PORTIONS OF ARTICLE II OF CHAPTER 2 REGARDING THE POLICE BOARD."

1. Ordinance No. 769, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF EASTON AMENDING PORTIONS OF ARTICLE II OF CHAPTER 2 REGARDING THE POLICE BOARD."

At 7:40 p.m., President Cook opened the 5:55 p.m. scheduled public hearing for the purpose of discussing Ordinance No. 769. She asked for comments.

At 7:42 p.m., President Cook closed the Public Hearing and stated that Ordinance No. 769 is eligible for a vote.

Upon motion by Mr. Silverstein, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, Ordinance No. 769 passed.

Public Participation/Comments.

Mr. Richard Covell, Colony Circle stated he has sent letters regarding residences with multiple vehicles

Mr. Covell stated he recommends that however many cars you have should be parked on a conventional driveway.

Review of invoices.

Review of invoices totaling \$3,619,270.20.

Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Rev. Davis and carried unanimously, invoices totaling \$3,619,270.20 were approved.

Items by Members of the Council:

Mr. Silverstein asked if there are any additional applicants for ARPA funds.

Mayor Willey stated there are approximately eight more applicants. He stated that the next distribution of checks will occur at the November 15 meeting.

Mr. Engle reminded everyone that Public Works will begin picking up leaves and asked that they not be placed in the street.

Adjournment.

At 7:52 p.m., upon motion by Rev. Davis, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, President Cook adjourned the regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk