



Planning Commission MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 20, 2022 - 1:00 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

Call to Order

Members Present: Chair- Mr. Paul Weber, Ms. Victoria McAndrews Mr. William Ryall, Mr. Phillip Toussaint and Ms. Jennifer Dindinger

Staff Present: Mr Lynn Thomas- Town Planner, Mr. Joseph A. Mayer- Plan Reviewer, Mr. Nicholas Johnson-Planner, Mrs. Sharon VanEmbrugh-Town Attorney, Mr. Rick VanEmburgh- Town Engineer, Ms. Samantha Smith- Administrative Specialist.

Staff Absent: Miguel Salinas, Director of Planning and Zoning

Approval of Minutes.

Approval of Minutes from the September 15, 2022 meeting.

Minutes of the September 15, 2022 meeting were delayed with revisions, and for correction of the motions.

Old Business

Applicant:

Casey Rauch - Rauch Inc.

Owner:

Chesapeake Community Development LLC

Location:

Port Street Lot 1, Parcel 77

Nature of Request:

The site is located in the **MXW District**. The Arc is proposing affordable/workforce housing for low- and moderate-income households. Areas within the building will be reserved for job training, counseling, and behavioral health services. The building will be 3 stories high and have a square footage of 24,917 sf. A sidewalk will surround the building with 44 parking spaces and would require a Parking Waiver reduction of 14 parking spaces. A submerged gravel wetland facility will be provided to manage stormwater due to poor soil conditions. There are existing non-tidal wetlands and trees on site with a portion of them getting cleared and grubbed. Afforestation will be provided off site.

Mr. Zachary A. Smith, Mr. Casey Rauch and Mr. Paul Rodgers of Rauch Inc. were present to request approval of the proposed site plans, architecture, designated parking, landscape buffering waiver, and substitution of the impervious surface on the parking lot. Mr. Smith and the Commission discussed designated parking for visitors and staff as part of Section 28-312.3.5 under Off Street Parking Standards Item C. Mr. Rauch discussed amended changes to the outfall elevation to ensure that proper drainage is managed for the submerged gravel wetland. Mr. Rauch and Mr. Rick Van Emburgh also addressed the use of an impervious surface on the parking lot as all stormwater management requirements have been met and are acceptable to the MXW code. The Applicants and the Commission discussed access points along Meadow Drive and to Rails-to-Trails. The Staff recommended a principal entrance that connects from the west side of the building.

The Commission opened for comment to the public. There were no comments.

Vice Chairperson Jennifer Dindinger moved to approve the site plan, parking waiver, architecture, landscaping and buffering waiver subject to compliance with the marking of dedicated parking for staff and residents. Upon motion by Vice Chair Dindinger and seconded by Mr. Ryall and carried unanimously, Applicant: Casey Rauch - Rauch Inc. Owner: Chesapeake was approved.

New Business

Applicant:	Zachary A. Smith
Owner:	Robert G. Shannahan & Talbot Lane LLC
Location:	106, 108 and 110 Talbot Lane
Nature of Request:	The Applicant requests a Parking Waiver in connection with a potential project to build an "annex" to the Academy Art Museum on the properties known as 106, 108 and 110 Talbot Lane.

Mr. Zachary A. Smith and Ms. Sarah Jesse were present on behalf of the Academy Art Museum to request a Parking Waiver related to the properties known as 106, 108 and 110 Talbot Lane pursuant to Section 28-1001.3 K of the Town Code. Mr. Smith clarified from the original proposal letter that the parcel should also reflect Lot 108. The Applicant is intending to use the properties specifically as curatorial storage space to accommodate and protect the Academy's exhibits and other private collections. The Applicant believes that this facility will not create any additional parking needs. Ms. Jesse discusses the historic significance of the existing house on Lot 106, and the intended use of the building as an exhibition honoring the Freeman family and use as administrative offices. The Council and Applicant discussed seeking an exemption for the bicycle parking requirements. The Applicant agreed to add an additional fourth bicycle rack.

The Commission opened for comment to the public. Ms. Nancy Batey-Kelly, a resident of Hanson Street, voiced concern about maintaining the historic architectural aesthetic, and shared a noise complaint with the building's current HVAC system.

Upon motion by Ms. McAndrews, and seconded by Mr. Toussaint, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the Parking Waiver request with the condition of adding an additional fourth bicycle rack.

Discussion Item

Review and Approval of Subdivision Regulations

Chairman Weber opened the discussion in regard to Subdivision Regulations and noted the need to remove subset item 2 on page 24 of Alleyways. The Commission and the staff agreed to strike Item 2. The Commission and staff decided to hold a discussion regarding the use of driveways in Multi Unit Family Homes for another session. Mr. Van Embraugh spoke of partnering with the Maryland State Highway Administration to draft the standard of how the Town of Easton presents the percentage of traffic impact within traffic studies. Mr. Ryall suggested an traffic impact study summary for residents to view. The Commission and staff discussed the criteria to define a community park for developers; specifically the public benefit to the town vs. private parks in subdivisions. Vice Chairperson Dindinger and the Commission discussed a variety of housing uses and occupancies pertaining to page 24 - Section 501.2 in House Types. Mr. Nick Johnson advised that these uses are permitted by right to avoid multiple Special Exception requests. This item is to be discussed again during the November 17, 2022 meeting. Mr. Philip Toussaint acknowledged that he would be absent for the November meeting. Mr. Lynn Thomas and Mr. Miguel Salinas will continue amending the Comprehensive Plan as scheduled.

Continue discussion of Amendments to Zoning Ordinance.

The Commission and staff scheduled a Zoning Workshop to be held on Tuesday, November 29th, 10 AM-12 PM. Attendance may be in person, or by Google Meet. Mr. Thomas highlighted the top priority Zoning Code Amendments: the Critical Area Chapter and the MXW Chapter have both since received Town Council approval and are effective. Mr. Thomas also outlined other various pending Zoning Code Amendments: Mr. Thomas first outlined the Short-Term Housing Amendment and an allowance of use in the MXW Zoning District. He indicated that the Short-Term Housing code is currently permitted under a Special Exception in all residential Zoning Districts excluding R-10M. Vice Chairperson Dindinger spoke in favor of the proposed permitted use as an allowance via Special Exception in the Waterview, Inland and Port Street subdistrict. Mr. Thomas next brought into consideration ways to increase the supply of Middle-housing types. The use is currently permitted in the R-7A district with Special Exception for the R-10A district. The staff and Commission considered the language used for "Special Exception" versus "Outright Permittable". Chairman Weber and the Commission suggested restricting Household Living, Duplex Side-by-Side, Duplex Stacked and Cottage Court as permissible to develop as A-1 Household Units with the exception of Live/Work Units. The staff and Commission agreed to revisit consideration of density in order to appropriately cross-reference prior reasoning for Middle-housing type definitions. In the R-10M District, the Commission recommended permitted use under Manufactured Housing as well as Accessory Dwelling Units. Chairman Weber and the Commission agreed to revisit aspects of the R-7A and R-10A as Special Exception for future discussion.

Adjournment.

At 3:13 pm, upon motion by Vice Chairperson Dindinger and seconded by Mr. Ryall and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned.