Planning Commission
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 17, 2022 - 1:00 PM
Council Chambers, Easton Town Office
14 S Harrison Street

Call to Order
Members Present: Chair- Mr. Paul Weber, Vice Chair- Ms. Jennifer Dindinger, Ms. Victoria McAndrews, Mr. William Ryall,

Members Absent: Mr. Phillip Toussaint

Staff Present: Miguel Salinas- Director of Planning and Zoning, Mr Lynn Thomas- Town Planner, Mr. Joseph A. Mayer- Plan Reviewer, Mr. Nicholas Johnson-Planner, Mrs. Sharon VanEmburgh- Town Council, Mr. Rick VanEmburgh- Town Engineer, Ms. Samantha Smith- Administrative Specialist.

Approval of Minutes.

Approval of Minutes from the September 15, 2022 and October 10, 2022 meeting.

Upon motion by Ms. McAndrews, and seconded by Ms. Dindinger and carried unanimously, minutes of the September 15, 2022 meeting were delayed with revisions to the Four Seasons project and correction of the motions to be reviewed.

Upon motion by Ms. McAndrews, and seconded by Ms. Dindinger and carried unanimously, minutes of the October 20, 2022 meeting were delayed with correction of the motions and revisions to be reviewed.

New Business

Applicant:	Casey Rauch, RAUCH Inc.
Owner:	Donald Carter
Location:	521 August Street
Nature of Request:	The Applicant proposes to develop lot 0102 (521 August St) and lot 0303 (523 August St) as one consolidated lot, 521 August.

Chairman Weber addressed the Commission, town staff, representatives of the applicant, and members of the public in attendance about the complexity of the application in consideration to recent changes to the Zoning Code. The applicant is seeking site plan and architectural approval, as well as a landscaping buffering waiver on a mansion-style apartment.This application falls under the purview of the Plan Redevelopment Overlay District, the Central Business District and the Historic District. Chairman Weber asked the staff to formally address the respective requirements for each district as they would pertain to parking requirements, landscaping buffer requirements, scale of the building in respect to height, setback requirements and density requirements.

Mr. Lynn Thomas, Town Planner, opened by discussing the recent implementation of the "Missing Middle" housing types definition to the Zoning Code in 2021, and defined the housing type of this application as a "Mansion Apartment". Mr. Thomas indicated that this application has the option to proceed as a Special Exception; as a PUD infill project; and as a Planned Redevelopment Overlay. The applicant is proceeding as a Planned Redevelopment Overlay, and will be required to seek architectural approval by the Historic District Commission. The Planned Redevelopment Overlay District is most flexible in limitation to density. Mr. Miguel Salinas, Director of Planning and Zoning, noted that under developmental standards the proposal does not meet building dimension requirements, and rear and front facing setback requirements.Mr. Rick Van Emburgh, Town engineer, commented on double-sided parking and traffic on August Street.

Mr. Casey Rauch, Civil Engineer of Rauch Inc., addressed the demand for work-force housing, and the appropriateness of the proposal as an infill project. The applicant previously went before the Easton Staff Development Review where off-street parking recommendations were made. Mr. Rauch mentioned that the proposal is within the Tanyard Branch, and the intention to enhance existing stormwater requirements. Mr. Rauch noted that Bufferyard requirements cannot be met and therefore they are seeking a Bufferyard Waiver. Mr. Rauch and Vice Chair Dindinger discussed town approved parking spaces available, and the actual count was calculated as 39 Town approved parking spaces. Mr. Donald Carter, Project Developer of B.H.B.C. presented the proposed interpretation of a Middle Mansion apartment as a complex with 12 stacked units, with the inclusion of 3 ADA units on the ground floor, elevator accommodation and the inclusion of a rooftop deck. The Commission, Town staff and representatives for the applicant discussed this interpretation as applicable to the definition of "Missing Middle, Mansion Style" to the Zoning Code. The Historic District Commission will continue to review design concepts for continuity in the architectural aesthetic. Commissioner Ryall inquired about the addition of a turning circle analysis and a parallel parking analysis, and for resolution to recent ESDR comments addressing the outfall elevation of the stormtank. The Commission and Mr. Carter further discussed the proposed 20' height variance of homes currently within the R-7A District, and the affordability of the rental rate. Mr. Van Emburgh returned to address stormwater management comments submitted on November 7 approving the sketch stormwater plan with the condition of: the inclusion of an ESD summary chart; a quantity chart; and further addressing the existing gas main and stormdrain pipe. Mr. Van Emburgh then discussed parking spaces in the town right-of-way and proposed language to clarify public use for the town, and maintenance as the responsibility of the property owner.

Chairman Weber then opened the floor for public comment. Dudley Guier, of 524 Goldsborough Street, shared concern about property value loss, architectural character within the Historic District, and parking. Mr. Guier submitted a petition to oppose the project for the record.

Joe Minerech of the Easton Neighborhood Association, asked for a detailed, eye-level height rendering for August Street, Easton Park and Goldsborough Park. Mr. Minerech shared a concern for parking, and about maintaining the historical architectural character of the neighborhood. Reverend Larry Willimanson, residing on the corner of August Street and Park Street, voiced a concern for property value loss and taxes, and grievances about commercial monopolies.

Mrs. Joyce DeLaurentis, of 215 Talbot Street, founding member of the East End Neighborhood Association, shared a concern for quality of life, and reminded the Commission to consider the density of the proposed units under the PRD guidelines. Mrs. DeLaurentis voiced concern for property value loss, and for the appropriate scale of the proposed unit.

Maryanne Little, of 524 Goldsborough Street, voiced a concern about parking and requested clarity on the number of parking spaces. Mr. Marion Gannon, of 515 August Street, voiced parking and scope concerns. Mr. Ian Williams of 517 August Street, voiced a concern for density.

Ms.Jennifer Selfridge, of 411 Goldsborough Street, voiced concerns regarding the surrounding aesthetic, density and parking. Ms. Linda Redmond, of 410 August Street, voiced her concern about the stormwater management plan.

Mr. Greg Zimmerman of 319 August Street, opposed the project. Mr. Derick Daly commented on the extreme need for affordable housing. Mrs. Rolinda Pierce of 605 August Street, shared safety and accessibility concerns for elderly residents, and voiced concerns for parking, scope, and loss of property value. Mrs. Pierce did acknowledge the housing need.

Ms. Laurie Karll of Keller Williams Realty acknowledged a major housing need in the Town of Easton. Mr. Mike Wood, owner of the 521 August Street property, commented on the need for affordable housing, and advocated for the property to be utilized to support residents of the Talbot Interfaith Shelter.

Mr. Christopher Gillen, of 406 August Street, voiced a concern about property value loss and the aesthetic character. Mr. Joseph Mowery, of 509 August Street, shared concern about parking space availability and traffic flow. Mr. Donald Bowman, of 513 August Street, shared that his family has owned their property since 1910. Mr. Bowman recommended the space to be utilized as a public park. Ms. Megan Cooke, of 113 S. Aurora Street, requested the public record be left open for those unable to attend.

Chairman Weber then opened for additional comments from the Commissioners. Commissioner Ryall agreed to request the reduction of the scale, and requested the withdrawal of the landscape buffer and parking waiver requests. Upon motion by Commissioner Ryall and seconded by Vice Chair Dindinger, the Commission voted 4-0-1 with Mr. Toussaint absent for the vote, deferring the proposal on the premise that the applicant: withdraw the waiver requests for the landscape buffer and parking requirements; that the applicant attempt to reduce the scale of the building with respect to length, width and height; that the proposal attempts to maintain the architectural integrity of the surrounding neighborhood; and that the record is held open for public comment. Aye votes recorded: Chairman Weber, Vice Chair Dindinger, Ms. McAndrews, Mr. Ryall.

Applicant:	Rick Van Emburgh, P.E., Easton Park Board
Owner:	Town of Easton
Location:	Easton Point Park
Nature of Request:	The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the revised site design of the Easton Point Park Plan. The Applicant is requesting the approval of the location, conceptual character, and extent of development as consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Rick Van Emburgh was present on behalf of the Town of Easton to discuss current site design revisions of the Easton Point Park Plan and to verify compliance with the land use as consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The original park plan was reviewed and approved by the Park Advisory Board in 2015 when it moved and received positive review from the Planning Commission and Town Council. Mr. Van Emburgh reviewed the changes since the original proposal. Since 2015, the town has received grant money to purchase the Southern States property. The property is currently in the process of being annexed into town limits. Demolition and clean-up work has since been completed on the Southern States property, and permits are pending for a new boat ramp design and associated parking. Mr. Van Emburgh proposed to restore the non-tidal and tidal wetlands located at the end of a drainage way, and to construct a living shoreline. The town has since planted approximately 300 trees and 200 shrubs/grasses in the park space; seven benches, two water fountains and a block entrance have since been installed off of Glenwood Ave. Mr. Van Emburgh also proposed to design a stormwater outfall restoration near the pedestrian bridge. Mr. Van Emburgh advised the Commission that this is a conceptual proposal to ensure that there are no discrepancies between the previously approved plans. This revision was presented in March to the Park Advisory Board and received a positive recommendation. The Commission and Mr. Van Emburgh discussed coordination between the Town Council and County Council to initiate redevelopment of the existing boat ramp. Mr. Van Emburgh summarized that these revisions were proposed with the objective of expanding public access to the waterfront, and asked the Commission to find them as consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion and questioning by the Planning Commission followed. The Commission and Mr. Van Emburgh discussed the addition of an access road to Taylor Ave within the scope of the plan. Mr. Ryall and Mr. Van Emburgh discussed future changes to the efficiency of the pier with the inclusion of public boat access. Ms. Dindinger proposed the addition of a bicycle rack connecting from Rails-to-Trails.

Chairman Weber opened the floor for public comment.
Mr. Calvin Yowell, of Londonderry on the Tred Avon, shared concerns for conflict with the redevelopment of Port Street, and expressed that the current Easton Point Park plan will displace existing retail amenities. Chairman Weber noted that within the original Port Street Small Area Plan there was continual effort to relocate the boat ramp. However, no recommendations were made to remove the commercial marina and a gas dock. In acknowledgment of Mr. Yowell's concern, Ms. Dindinger noted that these properties are currently zoned in the county.

Ms. McAndrews motioned to accept the project as consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Ryall seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0-1 with Mr. Toussaint absent for the vote. Aye votes recorded: Chairman Weber, Vice Chair Dindinger, Ms. McAndrews, Mr. Ryall.

Old Business

Applicant:	Brendan S. Mullaney
Owner:	Lands of Lot 16, LLC and Mr. Thomas Cohee
Location:	28580 Marys Court
Nature of Request:	The Applicant formally requests an award for Growth Allocation for lots 16 & 20 in the Talbot Commerce Park project to reclassify Lot 20's 8.348 Acres+/- from RCA to IDA.

Mr. Brendan Mullaney was present on behalf of Lands of Lot 16 LLC and Mr. Thomas R. Cohee to request a recommendation for the granting of supplemental growth allocation for the purpose of reclassifying approximately 8.348 acres of lands located in the Critical Area, currently designated as Resource Conservation Area (RCA), to be reclassified as Intensely Developed Area (IDA). Mr. Mullaney reviewed highlights of the revised SWM narrative, the Stormwater report, and comments from the Critical Area Commission staff submitted to the Town and County post-session. Since the applicant addressed those comments, staff and the Engineering Department agreed that the proposal complies with the Growth Allocation requirement for a reduction of 10% on stormwater quality. Mr. Rick Van Emburgh, Town Engineer, clarified engineering staff comments regarding stormwater management, and compliance with calculations for the 10% pollutant reduction rule. Mr. Van Emburgh noted however, that the department has not reviewed water quantity with capacity to be addressed. Discussion and questioning by the Planning Commission followed.The Commission, town staff and representatives of the applicant further discussed additional site plan review in addendum to the approval process. The applicant is scheduled to present before the County Council in December. Additional questioning by Commissioner McAndrews followed concerning the quantity standard of the Growth Allocation should the project not be approved as proposed. Ms. Van Emburgh, Town Counsel, advised that Growth Allocation is typically granted on a project-specific basis, however, in this circumstance the quantity standard would not remain with the property.

Chairman Weber opened comment to the public. There were no comments.

Vice Chair Dindinger motioned to approve the Growth Allocation request as presented. Mr. Ryall seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0-1 with Mr. Toussaint absent for the vote. Aye votes recorded: Chairman Weber, Vice Chair Dindinger, Ms. McAndrews, Mr. Ryall.

Review and Approval of Subdivision Regulations

The review was tabled to the December 15, 2022 meeting.

Discussion Item

Applicant:	Brett Ewing - Lane Engineering, LLC
Owner:	5001 SHR, L.C.
Location:	Oxford Road- Poplar Hill
Nature of Request:	The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the layout and site design of the proposed PUD for 456 residential units, a commercial area consisting of two office buildings and two retail buildings, a public park to be dedicated to the Town of Easton, community open space, walking trails, two community clubhouses and swimming pools and a satellite fire department building with associated utilities and Stormwater Management features. The Applicant is also formally requesting an award of Supplemental Growth Allocation to reclassify 65.977 acres +/ from RCA to IDA on the property.

Ryan Showalter of McAllister, DeTar, Showalter & Walker LLC was present on behalf of the 5001 SHR, L.C. to receive feedback on the site design of the proposed PUD. This discussion will be informative for future Growth Allocation conversations. Hereafter, this project is subject to a joint Planning Commission Growth Allocation hearing, and a Town Council / County Council Growth Allocation hearing. Mr. Showalter further discussed the proposed details for designated land uses, and a variety of mixed housing types. Mr. Showalter presented the findings of a recent traffic study: the northern access point on Oxford Road will encompass acceleration, deceleration and bypass lanes, but these did not meet the threshold for the State Highway Administration's traffic signal requirements. The applicant will provide a full traffic signal at the southern access point at Tristan Drive to accommodate any anticipated buildout and interference. Discussion and questioning by the Planning Commission followed. Ms. McAndrews asked the applicant to consider alternative site plan configurations in the interest of safer traffic flow, and alternative housing type configurations in the interest of variety within the community. She noted Amelia Park on Amelia Island, Florida as an example of how this can be achieved. Additional questioning by Vice Chair Dindinger regarded the existing level of service with the possibility of additional increased traffic. Michael Lenhart, of Lenhart Traffic Consulting, presented the findings of three standards of the traffic impact study: The existing traffic studies received level A; studies for twelve (12) approved but unbuilt background developments received a level C or better; and an overall site study received a level C or better, with the exception of 322 Port Street receiving a level D. The intersection of Trisitan Drive and Washington Bypass also failed as an unsignalized intersection. Commissioner Ryall also agreed with prior discussion regarding the interspersing of housing types; particularly single-family housing.

Chairman Weber opened the floor for public comment.
Mr. Thomas Ledvina, of 7585 Pollys Hill Lane and President of the Papermill Crossing Homeowners Association questioned the dynamics of traffic flow associated with each

intersection. Mr. Lenhart agreed to include those intersections in a synchro model study. Mr. Ledvina also asked for an accurate breakdown of living units to which the applicant agreed to present once it is confirmed. Mr. Ledvina also questioned a positive recommendation by the Easton Park Board for the proposed parks. Mr. Rick Van Emburgh, Town Engineer, confirmed that no formal vote was made by the Park Board, but positive feedback was received in terms of the need for a public park, and the Town's willingness to own and maintain the park. A copy of the prior Park Advisory Board meeting minutes was to be forwarded to Mr. Ledvina once published. Mrs. Lynn Mielke, of Easton Club questioned the incorporation of Tour Drive, Clubhouse Drive and Polis Hill Lane into the traffic study. Mr. Van Emburgh noted that the alignment across from Clubhouse Drive was the most preferred by the State Highway Administration at the time of the October 26, 2022 ESDR meeting. Mrs. Mielke clarified the location and configuration of the deceleration lane.

Mr. Showalter concluded the discussion by addressing the principal intent of the park location; noting the aesthetic of their respective location, consideration of traffic flow, and in the interest of separation between principal development activities and the Critical Area.

Continue discussion of Amendments to Zoning Ordinance.

The discussion was tabled to the December 15, 2022 meeting.

Adjournment.

Upon motion by Commissioner Ryall, and seconded by Vice Chair Dindinger the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.