

Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting

A meeting of the Pocomoke City Planning and Zoning Commission was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall on Wednesday, April 20, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM.

Present: Commissioners: Chairman Vacant
Steven Mills, Rebecca, Skorobatsch and Nola
Tullar, Ryan Hurley
Director of Planning: Dan Brandewie
Planning & Zoning Attorney: James Porter
City Clerk: Michelle Beckett-El Soloh

Preliminary Plan Review: Re-subdivision/Re-plat of Butler Village. Section 1 Phase II: To re-subdivide 2.23 acres with 28 existing lots (recorded, but not built-on) to a 36 new building lots for townhouse/multi-family development and 3 existing lots (under construction) with lot line adjustments. The property is zoned R-3. Filed by: Parker and Associates (Engineer-Surveyor). Developer: DR Horton. Owner: Ambridge Ridge II LLC:

Butler Village representatives have requested to table discussion until Wednesday, April 27, 2022. Planning & Zoning Commissioners agreed to the date.

Preliminary Plan Review: The Waterfront Cottages at Pocomoke City, to construct 39 multi-family dwelling units on a combined 1.56- and 1.62-acre tract located at the west side of Clarke Avenue adjacent to the Pocomoke River. The property is zoned R-3, Multi-Family Residential. Project engineer is Solutions IPEM, LLC. Filed by Candise B. Dunlevy on behalf of Terrence F Blades Family Trust.

This site is on a partially regulated flood plain. Dwellings will be 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. There are 2 plan versions. There is a proposed 39 total units. 16-2 bedroom and 23-1 bedroom in 4 different separate building complexes. 59 parking spaces. The City owns adjacent property. There are single-family residences across the street. There is a tree line to the west of the property. There is a drainage ditch located on the edge of the property entrance. Currently, the site is vacant. It was thought to be used as an active stone storage site as late as the 2000's. There was rail access and barge traffic. The property is zoned R3. It is in a designated plan redevelopment zone. That is a special zone in the City Zoning Code. It would allow the developer to apply for increased design flexibility. It is our understanding that the developer will not apply for that flexibility. The property is adjacent to M1 zoning to the west and to the south. The other part of the south and east are adjacent to R2 and R3 zoning. It is served with 8" sewer main and 10" and 6" water main from Clarke Avenue. The comprehensive plan and land use plan does recognize the development as high density residential. It doesn't specify density but it does mention accommodating single-family dwellings. There are several developmental standards they will have to comply with. Subdivision regulations, forest conservation regulations, stormwater management regulations and flood plain development standards. Staff recommendations are making sure sidewalks are developed along Clarke Avenue. The City would request a 20-foot easement access. The waterfront area is a community asset and should be considered available to all residents of the City. The City doesn't know if there are plans for future docks or boat ramps. The City does have docks and a boat ramp closer to the bridge east of that site. Some additional recommendations are the City will ask that architectural drawings and a

concept plan are submitted. The plans that have been submitted show some elevations. The City asks that those plans come back before the Planning Commission. The comprehensive plans have some community standards that appear in the plans that came from American Planning Association journals that provide a good standard for development. The City suggested that they do a residential market analysis. They might consider other options such as a 55 and over community or a townhouse with ownership. Due to flood plain requirement, they might have to elevate certain areas of the site. Drainage requirement must also be met.

Steven Fuller, Land Surveyor, 3003 Merritt Mill Rd, Salisbury, MD, with Solutions Integrated Planning and John Davis, 110 Unionville Rd, Pocomoke City, MD spoke about the property. It was left to his niece. He suggested talking to the City and see what the best use for the City would be. They thought about rental units or units for sale. Mr. Fuller drew up a preliminary site plan. Once they get an idea of what will be allowed on the site, they will do some financial planning and decide to rent or sell.

Planning Director, Dan Brandewie, said he would like to get feedback on the plans from the Mayor & Council too.

Commissioner Tullar said anytime someone wants to develop on the waterfront, it is a good thing. This idea sounds very promising.

Commissioner Hurley said it sounds like a great idea. It is nice to have a structure that will blend in to existing properties and be near the restaurant. The overall concept is a good idea.

Motion to accept preliminary concept plan and bring plan before Mayor & Council (Hurley, Tullar)

Acclamation: Skorobatsch-aye, Tullar-aye and Hurley-aye; none opposed, motion carried

The matter will be scheduled to bring back to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Brandewie asked if they had a chance to research any other options such as fee simple or senior living apartments. Mr. Davis said it would depend on what the family decides and what the City will allow. Fee simple is more desirable. The location is more suitable for rentals but is there isn't a need for rentals then another plan will be considered. Mr. Brandewie said there is a gap for dedicated senior living rentals in the City. In Salisbury, there is a development that could be similar to this concept plan behind Tokyo Steak House on Rt 13. There was a need for fee simple housing and they sold fast. There is a need for more projects like that.

Mr. Porter said the square footage of the apartment, for the proposed concept are 750 to 760 sq ft. 1 bedroom are approximately 756 and 2 bedrooms are 766 sq ft. That size may not be desirable for some people in the area. Proposed projects at Wallops have shown that there is a lot of interest in single-family or fee simple housing. People didn't have an interest in living in Virginia. It might be worthwhile to consult with a local realtor instead of doing a market survey. A local realtor would be familiar with the current trends. Mr. Brandeis said a possible drawback with this property is it might not be large enough to have amenities such as a swimming pool. Mr. Davis asked if there has been any discussion to redevelop the area between Clarke Avenue and the river front. Mr. Porter said the most valuable land in Pocomoke is on the river. The highest and best use of land for the City should be concentrated along the river. Once something is developed, the City loses control over the property. There have been several projects, such as the townhouses, but issues such as land control, funding, bankruptcies and personal disputed arose. What goes on those properties will directly

influence the improvement of the City for the next 100 years. That's why input from several sources will be valuable. Mr. Davis said they will base their decision on input from the City and be cooperative.

Approval of Minutes: March 23, 2022

Tabled

Motion to adjourn meeting (Hurley, Tullar)

Acclamation: Skorobatsch-aye, Tullar-aye and Hurley-aye; none opposed, motion carried

Approved: *K.M. Beckett-El Soloh*
City Clerk