

Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke Planning Commission was held in Council Chambers on Wednesday, April 16, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 5:21 pm.

Present:

President: Nola Tullar
Chairs: Chip Choquette, Jessmin Durea,
Planning Director: Dan Brandewie
Attorney: Erica Wiltz
City Clerk: Melinda Stafford

Pledge of Allegiance, Call to Order

2132 old Snow Hill Rd: Walmart Expansion and Remodeling Plans:

Steve Fortunato from Bowler Engineering presented plans for a 2,603 square foot expansion to the Walmart building to house a new online grocery pickup operation. The expansion will be on the southeast corner of the building. The parking lot will be reconfigured, resulting in a loss of 18 total parking spaces. The expansion will create a dedicated area for online grocery pickup. The current pickup spaces in front of store will be returned to regular parking. This will create a total of 29 dedicated pickup spaces for customers. The expansion will only have less than 5,000 square feet of disturbance, so no stormwater improvements needed. They will be tearing up the parking lot on that side of the building. They're putting the new signage and striping in to point patrons to the new pickup location so people know where to go. The grease trap will be relocated and replaced. Motion to accept the site plan for the Walmart expansion

Moved by: Chairman Choquette
Seconded by: Chairman Durea
Motion passed unanimously.

153 Market Street - Review of Concept Plans for Renovations

Dan Brandewie presented concept plans submitted by Brent Davis of Davis Strategic Development Company for interior and exterior renovations to include 8 apartments on the second floor and 4 retail spaces on the ground floor. The residential apartments would consist of five two-bedroom apartments and three one-bedroom apartments all exceeding 750 square feet. The building is 15,128 square feet with 22,388 square feet of interior space. The property is zoned B1 downtown shopping district. Off-street parking not required in B1 district. There will be adequate on-street and public lot parking available nearby. The building is in substantial disrepair and needs roof replacement. Motion to accept the concept plans as submitted by Brent Davis.

Moved by: Chairman Durea
Seconded by: Chairman Choquette
Motion passed unanimously.

Rezone #111-2025, Zoning Map Amendment: B2 General business to R3

Tax account 01-003690 and tax account 01-242661 was motioned to remove from the agenda by Chairman Choquette and seconded by Chairman Durea. Motion passes unanimously. Application was withdrawn by applicant.

Rezone #113-2025 – Rezone R2 1013 Clark Ave

Edwin Flores, owner of ICOR LLC, requested rezoning from R2 residential to R3 multifamily to allow use as a two-family dwelling. The property was previously configured as a two-family dwelling but has

been vacant. Property purchased in April 2024 with intent to use as two-family dwelling. Attorney Erica Witz swears in anybody who is participating in this public hearing. Mr. Brandewie presents the staff report for 1013 Clarke Ave. Upon inspection by staff In October of 2024, one side has been restored, other side unfinished. It is currently under R2 zoning only which allows single-family use. The owner was informed that the property is owned single family residential and the house cannot be converted to a two-family dwelling without a zoning map amendment. Mr. Brandewie submits his staff report as exhibit 1. It states that This situation has come up on several occasions where a long term abandoned two or three family apartment building has been subject to a zoning map amendment seeking to restore the property to its previous multifamily use with the change from R2 to R3. Although the current R2 limits the property to only single family residential, in all the cases that he recall since 2017 the Planning Commission has acted to deny the request from R2 to R3. Some of the rationale for this we believe has been to discourage the expansion of multifamily dwellings due to a history of disinvestment by irresponsible property owners, where the end result has been that the city has paid to take down, demolish those dwellings over a period of time. Other reasons include the creation of spot zoning where the placement of an isolated R3 zoning district in a broad area of R2 zoning patterns would be contrary to zoning law. In this particular case, one might argue that, well, it is adjacent to an R3 zoning pattern across the street with a six-year zone department. So whether it could be considered spot zoning could be argued possibly both ways. There are also statutory guidelines that require a zoning map amendment be justified on the basis that there either was a mistake in the zoning or and. Or that there are changing conditions in the neighborhood. From staff's perspective, there's been no evidence submitted on both criteria. We do support the review of the zoning code itself. Rezoning to R3 could be considered spot zoning.

Public comments:

- Edward Popchock spoke in support of allowing the two-family use

Mr. Flores reads a letter that he wrote to the board. "The property was initially built as a duplex and its layout and design reflect this intention. The existing structure is not conducive to a single family residence, and attempting to convert it will require extensive and costly renovations. By reverting it to its original use, I can maintain the property's integrity and avoid unnecessary alterations.

Furthermore, the property's existing infrastructure supports its original two family dwelling designation. The property features two existing driveways that can accommodate two to three cars on each side of the property. This existing parking arrangement demonstrates that the property was designed to accommodate multiple families. My plan is to occupy one unit and rent the other side, providing a valuable opportunity to affordable housing in our community. By offering a rental unit at a moderate rate, I aim to contribute to the local housing needs, supporting individuals or families who seek affordable options. This action arrangement will not only preserve the property's historical character, but also enable me to maintain the property more effectively, ensuring it remains a valuable asset to the community. In conclusion, I believe that rezoning the property to a two family dwelling will have a positive impact on the community."

Motion: To deny the rezoning request from R2 to R3, with a recommendation that City Council evaluate allowing accessory dwelling units made by Chairman Choquette, seconded by Chairman Durea. Passes unanimously

Zoning Text amendment – Urban design Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance

No Discussion.

Old Business

1. Drawbridge Villas Development Project

No significant updates. Owner still pursuing environmental assessment documentation.

2. Comprehensive Plan Update

Draft municipal growth element chapter distributed for review. Projects population growth to 4,523-

4,874 residents by 2045.

Approval of Minutes:

March 19th minutes not yet circulated.


Public Comments

Ed Popchok inquired about potential development between Cedar Street and White Oaks. Staff indicated no formal plans submitted yet.

Motion to adjourn at 6:24pm by Chairman Choquette, seconded by Chairman Durea.

Motion Passes

Approved: _____



City Clerk

Agenda items may or may not be considered in sequence. This agenda is subject to change to include the addition or deletion of items, including executive/closed session.