

Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke Planning Commission was held in Council Chambers on Thursday, June 26, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm.

Present:

Commissioners Nola Tullar,
Chip Choquette, Jessmin Duryea, Steven Mills
Planning Director: Dan Brandewie
City Clerk: Melinda Stafford
Attorney: Erica Wiltz

Preliminary-Final Plan: Subdivision Plat for the Lands of Craig Collins, Parcel A, "Oxford Court Subdivision".

Dan Brandewie, City Planner, presented the preliminary plan for 1606 Old Virginia Road. The applicant is seeking to create four building lots ranging from 7,000-9,000 square feet with a preliminary plan submitted for approval. In order to achieve compliance with the R2 zoning standards, the applicant did receive a variant by the Board of Zoning Appeals for reduced lot width and lot size affecting two of the parcels. This plan reflects the inclusion of the stormwater management pond that was originally constructed for the Oxford Court subdivision. The stormwater pond serving Oxford Court, along with the developable acreage, was sold to Mr. Collins in May of 2022 as part of the land swap where the city acquired fortified parcels owned by Mr. Collins from New Willis Street. The stormwater pond is approximately 14,000 square feet. The applicant received variances for reduced lot width and size on two parcels. There is a recommendation by Mr. Brandewie on behalf of the city for long term maintenance of the stormwater pond and sidewalks. As part of the final record plat approval, soil erosion and control plan must be submitted in appropriate prior to receiving a building and grading permit. Then they have to come back with the final record plat for the planning commission which then will be signed off by both planning commission and city council. One other item would be if there's any deed restrictions regarding anything regarding building appearance or any use restrictions, there also should be a statement for maintaining the deedments such as removing grass exposure located on private property. Those would be the responsibility of the property owner. Commissioner Choquette noted "My observation is also give the kids somewhere to play safely." Commissioner Tullar asked for clarification on the drainage. The storm drainage system drains truly is. Because by his calculations, they tied into some catch basins. He thinks they use catch basins instead of junction boxes. It may already in the right of way. So, if they're talking about sidewalk, we've got exposed things. We might look at something to improve the whole street or kick everything back. He doesn't know how to address that yet. Might have to turn into junction boxes and seal up the top so that nothing can go into them. The plats show the ditch connecting into two catch basins parallel with the curb line on 6th street, conveying it back down to the Oxford kind of street projection. That's where he believes it's tied into the city system but the area between the right of way line and the curb line is where that pipe is. So right now, there is no easement. That is necessary because it's already within the city's ownership.

Commission members expressed desire to require sidewalks along 6th Street. Doug Jones, Surveyor notes that some of the points that he might run into development wise sidewalks. They have no objections of sidewalks and driveways and so forth. He would like to investigate where these. Questions raised about ownership and maintenance of stormwater pond. Mr. Collins stated he is transferring the pond to the city's ownership. He stated, 'I've been in contact with Mayor Nock periodically and matter of fact I was contacted for prior coming together another day through some of

ribbon cutting was something he told me. But he said to let you know that I'm transferring it over to the city so it will be out of my hands. So, the city is taking. Taking that so far as anything towards that. There was some a bit of conversation regarding that. I talked to him previously PR a couple times last week and prior to me coming down. So, we have an agreement. So, he said that the town will be. The city will be taking that over."

Motion: To approve the preliminary plan as presented in item number one with references to the staff report for corrections and the requirement for sidewalks.

Made by: Commissioner Choquette, Seconded by: Commissioner Mills

Vote: Motion passed unanimously

Concept Plan: Request for courtesy review and zoning map amendment for redevelopment of parcel 1606, Old Virginia Road,

Dan Brandewie is presenting this as a courtesy review of an introduction to possible new development under one of the unique zoning districts that we have in the zoning code called the PRD overlay or planned redevelopment district Overlay zone. Considered a floating zone, but it's unique in that it offers a great deal of flexibility as far as meeting setback standards, vault regulations, so forth. It is on 0.584-acre property and the owner is proposing 15 apartment units in 5 connected building complexes. It doesn't join the Cedar Run or the stormwater pond for Cedar Run. It is just down from the high school. Mr. White and Mr. Xavier owned a four-unit apartment next door immediately to the west. It's a three-story, three-story apartments. Based on the international building coming code and also fire prevention codes. This will be fully sprinkler and these from a code standpoint the two stair towers were basically creating two different buildings which is permissible, which prevents the single means of egress for each of the two buildings. This will include 27 parking spaces as proposed, an active recreation area and stormwater management included. The architect and developers were present to provide additional details and answer questions. Commissioner Duryea questions about unit sizes (950-1060 sq ft for 2-3 bedrooms) Commissioner Mills asks what type of residents are the developers pushing for. The response is a mix of residents. Commissioner Choquette raised concerns about recent police activity at developers' adjacent property. The developer's response is, "we do detail background checks and in this instance the residence is there. They just turned 18. So, screen and error our tenants is one of the big things that has made us successful in retention. So moving forward we're going to continue to screen and evaluate. This was a one-off situation and so we're hoping that moving forward when we expeditiously had that tenant removed so that we could keep the area and the community somewhat safe." The developer referenced a situation that involved police presence. Developers stated they do thorough background checks on tenants. Commission members emphasized need for sidewalks along 6th Street. No formal action was taken as this was an introductory concept review

Draft Ordinance to Amend Chapter 230, Article V R-1 Residence District, Section 230-35 Accessory Uses

Dan Brandewie presented a draft ordinance to amend zoning code language regarding keeping boarders in R1, R2, and R3 districts on the issue of keeping borders. In other words, those individuals that may rent a room from another house or household. So the hoarder is used as context of the zoning change. It shows they all read almost identical, but it's the keeping of not more than one roomer or boarder by a resident family. That's the same language in R1 and R2, but R3 on page 10 reads the keeping of not more than two roomer or borders by a resident family. So apparently there's been some issues with this aspect of the zoning code. So, mayor and city council have asked staff to draft up something that would address this. The most simplest and easiest form of potentially a

zoning text change would just be to strike this element of zoning code. So that is what's presented to you. So, we're asking the planning commission to consider initiating a zoning text amendment to this effect. I know Ms. Wiltz has possibly some comments on it, such as maybe we need the definition of a boarder or a roomer it's not defined in the zoning code. There are concerns about defining a "boarder" and potential unintended consequences. There is reference to Salisbury, Maryland's definition. "Might be able to make an argument that keeping the border become incidental just the way housing is changing and the way people's families are changing and things like that. The way Airbnb's and things like that become more popular. Some might want to make the argument that having somebody like that live with you and pay rent or whatever is customary. So, I think if you were to explicitly prohibit that they would take one of them. So is there. I had heard that there's like some, maybe some state law regarding property rights in this issue. Is there any? Do you know anything about that? There was in Salisbury. There's a limitation right now in the. City of Salisbury where I believe it's more than two unrelated people cannot rented the same building or living in the same building." There are suggestions to prohibit advertising rooms for rent or receiving compensation. However there may be a need to allow for family members, exchange students, foster children, etc. Motion: To initiate the zoning text amendment process and schedule a public hearing for July 17th. Made by: Commissioner Tullar, seconded by: Commissioner Duryea
Vote: Motion passed unanimously

Lot 1, consisting of 74.17 acres, further identified as Map 92, Grid 2, Parcel 210, Tax Account: 01-040332, owned by the City of Pocomoke to amend the zoning on the property from M-1 Industrial and B-2 General Business to Planned Redevelopment District, referred to as "PRD Floating Zone" as made reference to by Chapter 230 of the Zoning Code, Article VII, Sections 230-55 through 230-60.
There is no need for the Public Hearing, send to City Council for approval.

Request for Planning Commission to initiate the adoption of Critical Area Regulations and a Critical Area Map.

There is no need for the Public Hearing, send to City Council for approval.

Request Planning Commission to initiate zoning text amendment to set time limits on the application and issuance of zoning and building permits; to clarify when applications and permits expire and to authorize extensions

There is no need for the Public Hearing, send to City Council for approval.

Request for Planning Commission to initiate zoning text amendment to create new Article XII "Urban Design Standards, Section 230-82 "Architectural Design Minimum Requirements"

There is no need for the Public Hearing, send to City Council for approval.

Mural Design & Guidelines Ordinance

There is no need for the Public Hearing, send to City Council for approval.

Drawbridge Villas: Townhouse Development Project

Commission requested reaching out to see if he was coming in or calling in to be present for the next meeting. There is a one-year limit on the preliminary plan. That would be set to expire in January. That they would have to come back to the planning commission.

Fairgrounds Wetland Violation Update

No new update from MDE

Comprehensive Plan Update

Want to set up a work session date. Suggestions are made.

Approval of Minutes: March 19, April 16, May 29th, June 12

Motion to table by Commissioner Choquette, seconded by Commissioner Duryea

Public Comments.

None

Adjournment.

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Choquette, seconded by Commissioner Mills.

Unanimous

Time: 7:28pm

Handwritten signatures of Commissioner Choquette and Commissioner Mills.