

**PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF MARTINSBURG
232 N. QUEEN STREET
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 4, 2017
J. Oakley Seibert Council Chambers**

With a quorum present, President Jim Rodgers called the regular meeting of the Martinsburg Planning Commission to order at 6:02 p.m. The following Commissioners were present: Jim Rodgers, Mark Palmer, Chris Ross, Scott Hamilton, Jeffrey Molenda, Reenie Raines and ex-officio member Councilman Greg Wachtel. The following Commissioners were not present: Matt Coffey, Yvonne Jenkins and George Reichard. Also in attendance were Legal Counsel Chris Peterson, City Engineer/Planning Director Michael Covell and Planning Secretary Holly Hartman.

ROLL CALL (and microphone check)

APPROVAL OF December 7, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Molenda made the motion to approve the December minutes as presented. Commissioner Ross seconded the motion followed by a unanimous vote of “aye”. Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. CASE # MA 17-003. 800 Foxcroft Avenue. Public Hearing.** Map Amendment application requesting consideration for revisions to a portion of the original concept plan for partial building renovation, redevelopment, demolition and additional loading docks to the existing Martinsburg Mall structure and land as shown in submitted concept plan. Martinsburg Development Partners, LLC., applicant.

Eric Cornett introduced himself, Barry Rogers and Robert Gardner on behalf of the applicant and explained that they are requesting an amendment to the previously approved concept plan for additional demolition and renovation for ongoing efforts to redevelop the Foxcroft Town Center. Mr. Cornett explained that is phase three, which is to develop the area in the rear of the mall.

President Rodgers opened the Public Hearing at 6:05 pm. As no one came forward to speak for or against this project, President Rodgers closed the Public Hearing at 6:05 pm.

Commissioner Molenda asked how shoppers would access one end of the mall from the other. Mr. Cornett replied that there is a sidewalk out front, non-continuous because of the JC Penney’s loading dock that cannot be moved, but wraps around the entirety of the mall with the exception of that spot. Commissioner Molenda suggested the entrances could be located in the courtyard and the loading docks on the outside, then customers would not need a vehicle

to access the other end of the mall. Mr. Cornett replied that the majority of the mall will be pedestrian friendly; he understands the concern but the loading dock cannot be moved. The current layout has been based on the feedback and demands of the major retailers showing interest in the location.

Commissioner Molenda asked if there have been talks with the County and EPTA proposing a transfer station at the mall. Mr. Cornett advised that there is a bus stop in front of Wal-Mart but they are discussing a possible location for a transfer station.

President Rodgers asked for staff concerns.

City Engineer/Planning Director, Michael Covell, stated that this is a concept plan; there could be an increase or decrease in tenants that will utilize the proposed footprint, which will be discussed once a site plan is submitted. Being in the conceptual phase, this would be a guide for them to come back with a more detailed site plan. Mr. Covell explained that there is a service corridor, but it is not able to be turned into a public corridor to tie the West side into the East side. This is not a change in zoning, but warranted a public hearing because of the change in the concept plan.

Ex-officio member Councilman Wachtel asked if any thought had been given to covered walkways. Mr. Cornett answered that the possibility is being discussed with signage for the stores and such.

Ex-officio member Councilman Wachtel expressed concern with the large number of tractor-trailers that park in the Wal-Mart parking lot. Mr. Cornett replied that they are working on that issue, as they do not like it either.

Commissioner Ross expressed safety concerns with the amount of lights that are out on the backside of the mall. Mr. Cornett replied that they are exploring quotes to upgrade the lights to new LED lights. They plan to change the lights all at once when the new lights are installed and will have this done as soon as possible.

Mr. Covell asked if the storefronts would be unique, giving the strip with five new tenants as an example, or will they be uniform to match the rest of the mall. Mr. Cornett responded that the storefronts would be unique as some tenants have specific prototypes required by the retailers.

Commissioner Molenda asked if any thought had been given to making the road that circles the mall a public roadway so police can enforce speed limits. Mr. Cornett responded they are open to discussion on the matter. Ex-officio member Councilman Wachtel suggested speaking to Chief Richards of the police department about the roadway.

Commissioner Raines asked if there were any plans for benches. Mr. Cornett replied that they are not to that level of detail yet but will make note of the suggestion. He stated that many of their other locations have benches successfully incorporated into the plans.

Commissioner Hamilton asked what type of tenants would be moving in. Mr. Cornett answered that the area between JC Penney's and Bon Ton will be national retailers, two undeveloped pads will most likely be restaurants and the remainder are planned for retail.

Commissioner Raines made the motion to recommend the map amendment as presented. Commissioner Hamilton seconded the motion followed by a unanimous vote of "aye". Motion carried.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

1. Comprehensive Plan Update. Status update by Planning Staff.

Mr. Covell stated that results of the meetings earlier in the month of December were provided in the packet. Earlier in the day he received preliminary results for the responses to the online survey, but it is not finished being advertised, and will be discussed further tomorrow with The Berkley Group. Mr. Covell advised that the consultant would like to meet with the Planning Commission. The next meeting date of February 1st does not work for them, but staff will get a proposed date and see if the Commissioners are available for it. This meeting will be for the Commission only, not a public hearing, to discuss the next steps such as how to proceed with more public input and methods of outreach. It will be a workshop format so there would be an agenda a week beforehand announcing the workshop. It was discussed that the survey is posted on the city website and paper copies will be available in areas with diverse public demographics. As far as announcements, staff is looking into online advertisements, press coverage, radio interviews and more to spread the word in our community. As of last week, there were almost three hundred online survey responses. Mr. Covell mentioned that the home show will be at Berkeley Plaza in March and we will have the survey available there also. Commissioner Molenda expressed concern with traffic and rail traffic increases due the incoming Proctor & Gamble plant. Mr. Covell acknowledged the concern but advised that the state and county would coordinate those concerns as the project is located in Berkeley County and informed him of the local emergency planning committee.

2. Election of Officers.

Mr. Peterson opened the floor for nominations for President.

Commissioner Molenda nominated Commissioner Rodgers as president. Commissioner Raines seconded the nomination. With no other nominations, Mr. Peterson closed the floor for nominations. Mr. Peterson asked Commissioners to vote on the nomination of Jim Rodgers as President of the Planning Commission. Nomination passed by a unanimous vote of "aye," Commissioner Rodgers was re-elected as President.

Mr. Peterson opened the floor for nominations for Vice-President.

Commissioner Hamilton nominated Commissioner Molenda as Vice-President. Commissioner Raines seconded the nomination. With no other nominations, Mr. Peterson closed the floor for nominations. Mr. Peterson asked Commissioners to vote on the nomination of Jeff Molenda as Vice-President of the Planning Commission. Nomination passed by a unanimous vote of "aye." Commissioner Molenda was re-elected as Vice- President.

OTHER BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Molenda made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Raines seconded the motion followed by a unanimous vote of "aye". Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Jim Rodgers, President

Holly Hartman, Planning Secretary