

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: David J. Deutsch
City Manager

SUBJECT: ***Status Report***

DATE: March 27, 2014

1. Hilltop Plaza Shopping Center Rezoning Schedule

The attorney for the Hilltop Shopping Center rezoning application contacted staff this week to request a postponement of the Bowie Advisory Planning Board public hearing, which was tentatively scheduled for April 8th. The request for a postponement is due to the developer's decision to hold a meeting with stakeholders to obtain their further input on the design of the residential project and its potential impacts on the community. Staff was advised that the community meeting will take place in the next several weeks, after which a revised schedule for City hearings will be discussed. The May 5th City Council public hearing date is still a possibility; therefore, it remains on the Tentative Agenda. A copy of the detailed March 19th Stakeholders Meeting notes is attached for your information.

2. Paper Shredding & Styrofoam Recycling Event

The Public Works Department has scheduled a paper shredding and Styrofoam recycling event at the Bowie High School parking lot on Saturday, June 21, 2014 from 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. Residents can bring up to five tall kitchen bags or five archive boxes for shredding. Documents may be observed while they are being shredded. Styrofoam must be free of any debris (glue or tape).

This event is always received well by residents. The last event was held on November 16, 2013 and just over nine tons of paper were collected for shredding.

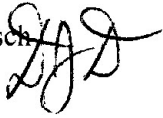
Attachment



City of Bowie

15901 Excalibur Road
Bowie, Maryland 20716

TO: City Council

FROM: David J. Deutsch
City Manager 

SUBJECT: Stakeholders Meeting Summary
Zoning Map Amendment #A-10016
Hilltop Plaza

DATE: March 27, 2014

A Stakeholders Meeting was held on Wednesday, March 19th to review the above referenced application, which proposes the development of 75 residential dwelling units in three multi-story buildings to be located in the northern portion of the Hilltop Plaza Shopping Center property that is currently used for parking. The applicant in this case, Hannah Storch, is requesting a Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) which would result in changing the present zoning of the entire 16.70-acre property from C-S-C (Commercial Shopping Center) and R-R (Rural Residential) to M-X-T (Mixed Use – Transportation Oriented). Representatives in attendance from the applicant's team included: Mr. Bruce Levine, with the property owner/developer, Hannah Storch; Mr. Tom Haller, local land use/zoning attorney; Mr. Mike Lenhart, with Lenhart Traffic Consulting; and, Mr. Mike Rosen, with Martin Architectural. Additionally, City Councilmembers Brady, Marcos and Turner and more than 20 area residents and interested parties were also present.

City staff opened the meeting by describing: the location of the subject property; the purpose of the Stakeholders Meeting; the current proposal; various steps in the land development review process; and, the tentative dates of the City's public hearings (Bowie Advisory Planning Board on Tuesday, April 8th and City Council on Monday, May 5th).

Mr. Tom Haller provided a brief background of the project, noting that the ZMA has been on file, requesting a change from C-S-C and R-R to M-X-T. He stated that the request is the first step in a multi-stage review process, which could take two to three years. The City Council had previously requested a residential proposal that is compatible with the existing dwellings to the north, is senior friendly and provides sufficient parking. The client was waiting for the economy to improve so the project would be attractive to builders. Mr. Haller noted that there is an existing crime problem in the general area where the development is proposed, and that more activity there would provide more security.

Mr. Mike Rosen stated that his firm was tasked with finding a good planning solution to address the problem of the existing parking area being an undesirable place. He described the specific location of the proposed development and identified the location, scale and use of the buffer strip in the rear (north) of the property. Mr. Rosen described how the area is envisioned to be developed; creating a well landscaped parking area and constructing three new separate residential buildings with flat, green roofs; and increasing the existing vegetation in the rear buffer area. He referred to a board showing the viewsheds between the existing townhouses on Marquette Lane and the proposed new residential buildings. Mr. Rosen noted that parking is proposed on the ground floor of each unit that would be

provided in a two-car garage available with each new dwelling. He stated that 69 extra parking spaces are being provided.

Mr. Mike Lenhart stated that a traffic impact study had been conducted, which includes AM and PM traffic counts, a review of several intersections, trip forecasts and reviews of Levels of Service (LOS). A review of accident data along Race Track Road revealed that there are no accident patterns that lead to specific issues. Mr. Lenhart noted that the study demonstrates all intersections pass Prince George's County adequacy requirements.

Questions and comments raised by those in attendance included the following:

Will the existing vehicular access in the rear of the site remain? When redesigning the rear access, would consideration be given to changing it to a right-in/right-out movement? (RESPONSE: This access will be in the same location, but may be redesigned/reconstructed to provide an improved surface. The right-in/right-out movement in the rear will be considered.)

How many dwelling units are proposed and what are the peak hour trips from the project? (RESPONSE: 75 dwelling units are proposed, which will generate 39 AM peak hour trips and 45 PM peak hour trips.)

Is the existing site access to/from Race Track Road the only point of ingress/egress to/from the site? It is very unsafe to turn left into the rear access from Race Track Road because there is no by-pass lane for vehicles heading north. (RESPONSE: The existing driveways through the retail portion of the property will remain. Site patrons and future residents will continue to be able to make left turns out of the rear portion of the property onto Race Track Road.)

Will the future dwellings be age restricted, and will they be apartments or condos? (RESPONSE: The units are not proposed to be age restricted; they are more senior-friendly because they are proposed to have elevators. There is no zoning requirement for age-restricted units. While the City wanted senior-only units, there is not enough property for amenities that are typically found in senior-only communities. With the elevators, the proposed project provides access for everybody. The residential proposal addresses issues, such as placing less of a demand on public school facilities, and it is compatible with existing adjacent residential and retail uses. The units could be rentals or condos. They are planned as condos. The property owner prefers to build condos, but it is difficult to know at this time; it really depends on market conditions.)

To address the security issue in the rear of the property, has consideration been given to working with the local police or have any other means of providing security been explored? (RESPONSE: Security in the rear of the property has historically been an issue. Housing and more activity in that area should provide more security and more of a presence to deter crime. A residential component in shopping centers is becoming more common. In this case, the residential use is compatible with that to the north of the property.)

A charrette or other opportunity for community has not occurred, and the City's public hearing dates have been set. What is the urgency? When will the

public be given the opportunity to work with the developer? (RESPONSE: No charrette was held because there was no market for the product years ago. The applicant did not want to move forward with a project that could not be built. The City's public hearing dates could be moved to accommodate a community meeting. There is willingness on the part of the applicant to postpone the hearing dates to provide an opportunity to meet with the community.)

Has emergency access into the site been studied? (RESPONSE: There was no emergency access study done. All dwelling units will be sprinklered, as required by the County Code. Access into the future residential component of the site will be provided from Race Track Road and via the two existing driveways running through the commercial component of the site. Turning radii are required to be designed to accommodate fire trucks, which are not as large as delivery trucks that currently access the development.)

Has consideration been given to building another retail/commercial component in the rear of the property, or has the City been approached about purchasing the property for open space/parkland? (RESPONSE: Consideration was given in the past to developing that area with more retail uses, but the applicant believes the demand for more retail has been "maxed-out". The City has not been approached about purchasing the land.)

Is it possible for more vehicles to park in the rear area while providing ample parking for the existing tenants there? (RESPONSE: The parking in the front retail area is not being altered. Approximately 200 parking spaces will remain in the rear area for retail tenants and the future residential use. Future head-in parking stalls will be provided for the stores in the rear area.)

After the formal meeting ended, several attendees reviewed the plans on display, while others spoke with members of the developer's team.