

Caroline County Planning Commission



Hannah Cawley, Chairman
Travis Breeding, Commissioner Member
Jeff Jackson, Member
Keith Bilbrough, Member

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June 14, 2023

CAROLINE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

The Caroline County Planning Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, June 14, 2023. Planning Commission members and staff attended in person. Members of the public were invited to attend the meeting both in-person and/or virtually using a website link provided.

Attending the meeting were: Hannah Cawley, Chairman; and members, Travis Breeding, Keith Bilbrough, and Jeff Jackson, arrived at 6:14. Also present were Katheleen Freeman, Director of Planning and Codes; Leslie Grunden, Assistant Director of Planning; Stewart Barroll, Attorney and Beth Beales, Long Range and Agricultural Planner.

Agenda:

- Approval of May 10, 2023, Meeting Minutes
- Clearinghouse Project Review-Federalsburg Pump Stations-Renovations of Pump Stations
- Clearinghouse Project Review-Phase I Development of North County Regional Park
- MDP Annual Report

Chairman Cawley called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Cawley asked the members if they had reviewed the minutes from the May 10, 2023, Planning Commission meeting. No changes were noted.

Motion: Mr. Bilbrough made a motion to approve the minutes as written

Second: Mr. Breeding seconded the motion.

In Favor: All members voted in favor of the motion (3-0).

Clearinghouse Review-Federalburg Pump Stations-Renovations of Pump Stations

The Town of Federalburg is applying \$3,464,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development for the complete renovation of the Town's two pumping stations located near Marshyhope Creek.

The Federalburg wastewater collection system includes four lift stations and three pumping stations. One of the pumping stations is located at the wastewater treatment plant. The remaining two pumping stations handle over 90% of the Town's sewer flow. Pumping station (PS) 1 is located in Marina Park in close proximity to Marshyhope Creek. It was built in 1973 and was last renovated in 1991. The 50-year-old station is in serious need of renovations to improve pumping efficiency and system communications and reduce maintenance requirement. Failing pump shafts, seals, and bearings represent regular maintenance and repair responsibilities that are increasing in frequency. PS 2 also is located in close proximity to Marshyhope Creek, was renovated over 30 years ago and experiences the same maintenance and repair issues described for PS 1.

The cost of problematic repairs of failed pumps and associated internal systems is becoming a burden on the Town's budget and outpacing the value of both stations. Pumping station failures present a serious threat to the environment and public health. In December of 2022 an overflow at PS 1 resulted in a raw sewage overflow of approximately 500 gallons, some of which entered the Marshyhope Creek via the storm drain system.

The complete renovation of both pumping stations will ensure the stations are functional well into the future. Due to both stations' proximity to the Marshyhope Creek and their location in the floodplain, the Town is required to elevate the pump stations to meet floodplain MDE coastal zone inundation boundary design standards. Two additional wet wells and variable speed pumps will be added to the system to meet current MDE permitting requirements. The Town is requesting 80% of the total estimated project cost of \$4,330,000.

Ms. Cawley asked if the two-year timeframe is doable to complete the project. Ms. Grunden said it might be close but is doable.

Motion: Mr. Breeding made a motion to recommend Clearinghouse Approval Code C1 – consistent with County plans, programs, and objectives.

Second: Mr. Bilbrough seconded the motion.

In Favor: All members voted in favor of the motion (3-0).

Clearinghouse Project Review- Phase I Development of North County Regional Park

Caroline County Department of Recreation and Parks is applying for \$997,232.00 in funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), a federal funding program administered in Maryland by

the Department of Natural Resources, for the Phase 1 development of the North County Regional Park near Greensboro.

Phase I development of the North County Regional Park includes the site infrastructure improvements necessary for the transformation of former cropland into two multipurpose athletic fields, a playground, a network of paved and soft-surface trails, picnic shelters, permanent restrooms, a trail overlook and access to riverfront, interpretive signs, public parking, and the related supporting wet and dry utilities for existing and future park expansion.

The total estimated cost of Phase 1 development is \$2,490,232.00. Caroline County is contributing \$1,493,000.00 of the total project cost from State of Maryland Parks and Playground Infrastructure funds, Program Open Space funds and Caroline County's General Fund.

Ms. Cawley questioned the difference in the cost estimate of Phase I. Ms. Beechy, Director of Recreation and Parks stated that the initial cost estimate was done in 2019 as part of the master planning process. Ms. Grunden stated that the extra cost of the initial estimate was for site work, architectural and engineering cost. Ms. Cawley also asked if this was the initial plan for the property when purchased. Ms. Beechy stated yes that it was started with land conservation funds.

Ms. Cawley asked if the residents of Greensboro will be able to walk to this park. Ms. Beechy stated that they are considering some type of transportation for safe crossing to the park.

- Motion:** Mr. Breeding made a motion to recommend a Clearinghouse Approval Code C1-consistent with County plans, programs, and objectives.
- Second:** Mr. Billbrough seconded the motion.
- In Favor:** All members voted in favor of the motion (4-0).

MDP Annual Report

Required by the General Assembly since 1952, under Land Use Article §1-207 (basic requirements), §7-104 (adequate facilities reporting requirements), and §1-208 (measures and indicators), all planning commissions and planning boards with planning and zoning authority are required to prepare and submit an annual report for each calendar year.

The annual report includes statistics about growth and development and related activity in the County during the past year, including building permit data, locations of development, changes in zoning or County plans and acreages of preserved land.

The annual reporting process is a time to review and discuss land use and development trends in the County in the past year and whether they align with Comprehensive Plan goals. The forms include questions that are designed to help spark conversations about development in our community.

The Maryland Department of Planning uses the Annual Report to monitor growth statewide and to determine if State Smart Growth policies are having beneficial or unanticipated effects. The State Requires this report to be filed with the local legislative body. With Planning Commission approval, the report will be forwarded to the Maryland State Department of Planning.

- Motion:** Mr. Bilbrough made a motion to approve the annual report and forward to Maryland State Department of Planning.
- Second:** Mr. Breeding seconded the motion.
- In Favor:** All members voted in favor of the motion (4-0).

BZA Update

The Board of Zoning Appeals met on May 16, 2023 to hear the following application:

Application No. 23-0020: A request by **Donald J Jr & Dawn G Swann** for a **Variance** in accordance with Zoning Chapter 175, Article XVII, §175-153.A(3)(g) of the Code of Public Local Laws of Caroline County, Maryland and COMAR Title 27 to modify a decision, specifically Variance No. 22-0028, to permit the expansion of an existing dwelling within the 100-foot Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Buffer and to allow an increase in lot coverage limits. Said property is located on Tax Map 107, Grid 1, Parcel 246, south of Denton, Maryland.

The variance application was approved by the Board with the following condition:

- A Building Permit and/or Zoning Certificate will be required prior to any proposed development and must be accompanied by all the necessary documentation and site plan requirements including a buffer mitigation plan.

Comprehensive Plan Schedule

Ms. Freeman presented the proposed draft schedule for the comprehensive plan schedule. Staff estimates one to two months per element to complete a draft. Some sections may require more time. Ms. Grunden stated that flooding on certain roads will need to be discussed. Ms. Grunden stated that Land Use will most likely take more time. The plan will need to be completed by the end of 2025. The Housing element will be more in-depth than the past. Mr. Breeding stated that the transportation will be an important topic since there has been no change in the past 13 years. Mr. Breeding stated that the zoning map online has grids with more information, but he could not find the information. Ms. Freeman stated that that feature is coming with our GIS upgrade that is coming soon, but that information is available in the office.

Department Update

Ms. Freeman stated that within the near future we will be using a new software for all meetings. The recording will be more clear and easier than what we are using now. The staff will be having training on the new software soon. Ms. Freeman also stated that we are still looking for a Planning Commission member. The new member must reside in an unincorporated part of the County.

Ms. Freeman updated the Board on draft legislation that has come through the Planning Commission. The Trucking and Service Business text amendment change is almost complete. The Solar and BESS Legislation, an amendment was added that if the property owner has sold their TDR rights, then they will not be able to add commercial solar on their property.

Ms. Freeman also stated that during the Comprehensive Plan, the TDR program should be reviewed.

Mr. Breeding asked for an update on Mr. Hutchison's project. Ms. Freeman stated that Mr. Kaczynski has been in contact with Mr. Hutchison's attorneys, and they have not submitted an updated site plan for review. They are waiting for updated storm water management and to verify if the project is off of the MALPF property.

Planning Commissioners Open Discussion

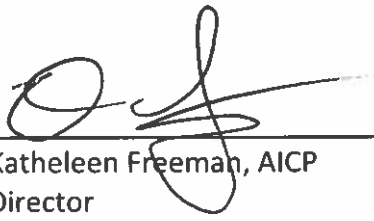
Mr. Breeding had a constituent reach out regarding a pole building on her property. She would like to build it within 10' of the property line, which she owns the adjacent property. With the current regulation she needs to be at least 25'. The Board would like to do a text amendment change to allow setbacks in the Rural Zoning District to be 10' from the side and rear property line. Ms. Freeman will draft a text amendment change and bring it to the Board at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT


Motion: Mr. Breeding made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Second: Mr. Bilbrough seconded the motion.

In Favor: All members voted in favor of the motion (4-0).



Katheleen Freeman, AICP
Director
Planning & Codes



Hannah Cawley, Chairman



Prepared by Elizabeth A. Beales