

Town Commissioner's Working Meeting
Charlestown, Maryland
August 22, 2023
6:00 PM
Town Hall, 241 Market Street and on Zoom

Attendees: Renee Capano, Rob Rinehart, Richard Mahan, Lou Wood, Bryan Lightner, Kathy SanDoe: Jackie Akers was not in attendance.

Public in Attendance: Ken Confalone, Ursula and Prosper Boudart, Jane Bellmyer

Zoom: Joe Lapreste, Tom Costanzi

President Capano called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Mr. Boudart was asked to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Stormwater Management Ordinance Update – President Capano invited the Planning Commission members to the meeting. Mr. Confalone noted as Chairman of that board over the years, often disturbances are less than 5,000 square feet, but the development creates stormwater that dumps onto adjoining properties or the street, increasing costs other places. A solution is needed for this and he suggests reducing that threshold to 500 square feet. For example, a two-bay garage might be 576 square feet. There could be conditional stormwater management plans for development under 1,000 square feet. As land gets developed, there is more and more impervious lot coverage in Town to deal with. He thinks updated regulations should be customized for the Town. President Capano said the 5,000 sq ft rule comes from the State and County. She stated that silt fence should be required for all construction, not just sites with 5,000 square feet of disturbance or more. She continued, stating that no water should be diverted onto neighbors and stormwater improvements should not be impeded. Mr. Lightner mentioned the Watershed Master Plan will be completed this fall and they are working with the project engineer to prioritize 40 locations with flooding problems and then will re-rank them, based on proposed project types, which could include drainage improvements and new rain gardens. Commissioner Rinehart suggested all shed structures require gutters to help protect neighboring properties. Ms. Boudart noted that streets are often part of the problem, as they are either not graded correctly or not connected with the drainage system. Mr. Lightner stated when stormwater management plans are required, whatever facilities that are constructed to control the stormwater runoff, end up within an easement and deed restriction, so they stay with the property in perpetuity. Commissioner Mahan suggested that, as an alternative, owners of sheds without gutters, would need to install three feet of gravel around the base of the shed, and plant native plants to help slow any runoff. He and President Capano discussed the need to differentiate between development and redevelopment, and the need to clarify some of the definitions in the ordinance. A suggestion was made to pro rate 500 square feet of disturbance by having different requirements for every increment upward. Mr. Lightner said the runoff characteristics also change when redevelopment exceeds 40%, for example. He noted the State is also looking to

update their stormwater requirements and that MDE staff could assist with the Town's update. President Capano suggested an engineer would be an asset in assisting with updating our stormwater management ordinance. Commissioner Mahan said the fee structure for building permits could also help pay for an engineer who could enforce new standards. Mr. Straiton explained that rain gardens work similar to french drains, releasing excess water slowly to reduce flooding downstream. Commissioner Rinehart stated that the Town could try working with the County for inspections. Commissioner Akers agreed the inspections should be up to County standards.

Park Mobile Signage Changes – President Capano: A suggestion was made to change the signage to say 'No Trailer Parking' along Water Street by Veteran's Park, the Wellwood, and Charlestown Marina. Signage at Veteran's Park could be changed to 'Resident Parking Only'. There was also discussion about finding a solution to prevent people from jumping off the narrow pier at the boat ramp as current signs are often disregarded. She noted that Park Ranger visibility is helping with parking and other issues as are the Sheriff patrol checks.

Trash Ordinance 2011-04 Amendment – Mr. Lightner for Commissioner Akers: An ordinance amendment is being proposed to clean up the old ordinance, and allow for updated procedures for Bulk Trash, Yard Waste, and Trash. For example, a fee of \$150.00 per truck load, with up to 3 truck loads, can be provided as a service, for residents who are moving out of Town. This would not pertain to evictions, as that is a landlord's responsibility. Commissioner Mahan noted that bulk trash needs to be differentiated from regular trash in relation to curbside placement.

Speed Humps – Mr. Lightner: The speed hump on Caroline Street needs to be moved as it is partially blocking a driveway, but there is a proposal to consider placing two speed humps on the following streets in the Historic District: Louisa, Caroline, Frederick, Market, and Conestoga, in between Bladen and Calvert Streets. Mr. Straiton noted that when the Commissioners approved two speed humps on Louisa Lane at the last meeting, that is the main thoroughfare for boat trailer traffic coming from North East, and he didn't want to see that traffic re-routed because of the speed humps. The Commissioners agreed that speed humps on all of those streets would be good.

MML Fall Conference – Mr. Lightner: The conference will be held in College Park, October 15 to 17, 2023. All Commissioners, except President Capano, and Town staff would like to attend.

Commissioner Comments:

Commissioner Rinehart noted that a gate is needed at the wharf to be closed from dusk to dawn to deter unsavory activity. A sign would need to be installed to note the closure. He volunteered to close the gate at dusk and reopen it at dawn.

Commissioner Mahan suggested a Volunteer Day to clean up weeds along Cecil and Bladen Streets. Maybe it could be called Town Pride Day and could coincide with Cecil Cares Day on October 7th.

Public Comment:

Debra said signs were needed on Louisa Lane to slow down. Mr. Lightner replied that two speed humps have been approved for Louisa Lane.

Commissioner Wood motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Mahan seconded. Approved 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy SanDoe

Town Clerk