

# Town of Rock Hall PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

*of the meeting held on:*  
**December 14, 2022**

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## **In Attendance at the Virtual Meeting:**

Planning Commissioners: Vic Costa, Chairman, Anthony Colache, Cathy Jayne, Anna Riggin, and Allen Riley. Also present were Eleanor Coyer, Town Council liaison, Robert Reselle, Town Manager, and Christopher Jakubiak, Zoning Administrator and Town Planner.

### **I. Call to Order**

At 7:00 pm, Chairman Costa called the meeting to order.

### **II. Approval of Minutes**

The Commission reviewed and approved the minutes of the October 12, 2022 and November 9, 2022 minutes.

### **III. New Business**

There was no new business.

### **IV. Old Business**

Continuation of Comprehensive Plan Work: Chairman Costa called on Mr. Jakubiak to begin the review of the draft Water Resources. The Town Planner explained that the Water Resources element of the comprehensive plan is required by State planning statutes and that it must address both the availability and supply of potable water and the quality of area waterways such as streams and the Bay.

Mr. Jakubiak reviewed the chapter page-by-page with the Commission. Mr. Colache asked if the information and data on current water usage included the Town's service to Haven Harbor Marina South. In response, Mr. Jakubiak said yes and directed attention to the water and sewer service area maps he had distributed documenting the extent of the area in and around the Town that was served by public water and sewer.

He indicated he had reviewed the preliminary engineering reports for the water system upgrades and for the upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant and that the draft Water Resources chapter may be updated in places as he coordinates with the Town's contracted engineer who is working on the infrastructure upgrades.

On the discussion of water and wastewater treatment facilities, Mr. Costa asked about the elevation of the system relative to sea level and Mr. Jakubiak explained that the treatment facilities for both the water and sewerage systems are not in the 100-year floodplain and elevated above sea level by at least 8 feet meaning they are at least 3 feet above the 5 foot base flood elevation associated with the 100-year flood plan. He read new text that he would add to the chapter to reflect this fact. Chairman Costa asked about the pump stations too and Mr. Jakubiak noted he would seek information on that from the Town's contract engineer.

During the discussion of the of non-point source pollution and recommendations to address it, Chairman Costa proposed that the recommendation referring to promoting narrower streets should be removed because of the difficulty fire trucks encounter when navigating narrow streets that have on-street parking. The combination can obstruct a fire truck getting to a fire. The Commission agreed and directed that the reference be removed from the draft.

Mr. Colache ask about the overall resiliency of the water and sewer systems considering sea level rise and if the chapter should address this issue more. Mr. Jakubiak suggested that he could create a new subsection in the Chapter on that topic. Mr. Colache agreed, and the Commission concurred on the need for the additional subsection.

Mayor Dawn Jacobs, who attended the meeting in person, spoke and provided information for the Commission to consider incorporating into the draft namely that the update of the WWTP is underway currently and it is set to be accomplished by 2024 and that the project is now moving into the construction phase. She also noted that pump station upgrades would be needed, and each pump station upgrade might cost about \$5 million each. Mr. Jakubiak indicate he would revise the chapter accordingly.

## **V. Citizen Comment**

1. Mr. Philip Cicconi and Ms. Mary Etta Reedy, members from the Kent County Commission on Aging, attended the meeting and were invited to give a presentation to the Planning Commission about the needs of local senior citizens and how they might be addressed in the new comprehensive plan. Prior to the meeting they distributed paper copies of the presentation they had made to the Mayor and Town Council previously. Ms. Reedy asked that

the Commission focus on the challenges with transportation and housing affordability, but also on the issue of isolation and loneliness.

2. On the same, topic, Mayor Jacobs was recognized by Chair Costa. She noted that the currently adopted Rock hall Comprehensive Plan does not really address the senior segment of the population, even in the demographic section of the document and she suggested that the new comprehensive plan could remedy that.
3. Mr. Gren Whitman submitted a letter via email to Mr. Jakubiak and the members of the Planning Commission on the topic of planning for sea level rise. The letter was distributed via email to the Commission members and added to the meeting packet. Though Mr. Whitman had recently left the meeting, Mr. Costa asked the Commission members to focus on the letter and a discussion followed about the need for detailed planning for coastal and flood resiliency, how it could be funded, and the optimal group to lead this type of study for Rock Hall. The consensus of the Commission was that the new comprehensive plan should address this issue and recommend creating a study group that could undertake detailed planning and then advise the Town on a long-term basis.

### **Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. Colache, seconded by Ms. Riggan, the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.