

# Town of Rock Hall PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

*of the meeting held on:*  
**May 10, 2023**

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

Planning Commissioners: Vic Costa, Anthony Colache, Cathy Jayne, Anna Riggin, and Alan Riley. Also present were Eleanor Coyer, Town Council liaison to the Commission, and Christopher Jakubiak, Zoning Administrator and Town Planner.

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

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

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

The Commission approved the minutes of the January 11, 2023 meeting and the March 8, 2023 meeting.

### **III. New Business**

There was no New Business.

### **IV. Old Business**

Continuation of Comprehensive Plan Work: Chairman Costa asked Mr. Jakubiak to return to the topic of the comprehensive plan update. Mr. Jakubiak summarized the deliberations from the April meeting. He summarized the several changes to the land use plan in particular and then presented the documents he had emailed previously to the Commissioners, namely, the revised Future Land Use Plan Map, the new Municipal Growth Area Map, and the Municipal Growth chapter. He noted that the new Municipal Growth Area Map showed the recommend land use for each property within the planned growth area. He then turned to the hard copy of the preliminary draft report which was distributed at the meeting and took time to review the draft Municipal Growth chapter. The Commission indicated the Municipal Growth chapter and Map as now drafted were sufficient to be part of the draft plan.

Mr. Jakubiak also noted that the U.S. Census was set to release data on population and housing at the municipal level on May 25, 2023 and once that took place, he would complete Chapter 2, Population of Rock Hall and provide it to the Commission for review.

Overall, the Commission's discussion addressed housing, sea level rise, the growth area, and the draft historic and cultural heritage chapter, but the Commission's most extensive discussion focused on the topic of land use designations and the Plan's guidance on the topic of the Rock Hall Harbor and maintaining a working waterfront. Chairman Costa recognized Cindy Genther who again advocated for allowing non-water dependent businesses in the Maritime Water Dependent (MWD) zoning district. Chairman Costa recognized Mr. Jakubiak who noted that other waterfront communities have confronted similar challenges and worked through the competing interests of promoting economic development and maintaining a working waterfront and he mentioned the City of Annapolis. Mr. Colache asked if the town planner would provide information on what Annapolis has done in this regard and Mr. Jakubiak agreed to send information through email following the meeting.

After extensive discussion in which all members expressed an opinion on general land use at the Harbor, it was the consensus that the Commission was generally opposed at this time, to recommending simply opening the MWD to non-water dependent uses or housing. The Commission did agree, however, that the existing restaurants in the MWD district should be permitted by-right, so they are no longer classified according to the zoning rules as "non-conforming". The Commission did also agree that new restaurants and other such businesses should be limited to the proposed Maritime Heritage Overlay district, which was shown on the revised Future Land Use Map. The Commissioners decided that the way the revised draft land use chapter addressed the topic of maritime land use was generally satisfactory for now.

Mr. Jakubiak explained that he would send the Transportation and Community Facilities chapters, and the updated chapter on population, to the Commission for discussion at the next meeting and would continue to edit and refine the draft plan.

## **V. Citizen Comment**

There was no additional public comment.

## **VI. Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. Colache, seconded by Mr. Riley, the meeting was adjourned at about 8:30 pm.