

Town of Rock Hall PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

of the meeting held on:

October 14, 2020

In Attendance:

Present were Planning Commissioners: Victor Costa, Chairman, Cathy Jayne, David Mayne, and Allen Riley. Also present were Beth Andrews, Town Council Liaison to the Planning Commission and Christopher Jakubiak, Zoning Administrator and Town Planner.

I. Call to Order

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

II. Approval of Minutes

The Commission approved the minutes from the June 10, 2020.

III. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

IV. New Business

The Planning Commission can recommend, to the Mayor and Town Council, changes to the Zoning Ordinance and Mr. Jakubiak presented a staff report dated October 7, 2020, slides illustrating the current and possible new standards on accessory structures, and draft text amendments on the topic of accessory buildings on residential lots. He also presented a text amendment to expand the type of projects that would be approved by the Planning Commission as the Commission had previously requested. The five text amendments that were presented and discussed are summarized here as follows:

- Amendment 1 would set a maximum size for accessory buildings on residential lot based on the size of the lot, increase the required distance between an accessory structure and a property line based on the size of the building, create screening requirements, reduce the maximum height from 20 feet to 18 feet, and require that accessory buildings greater than 650 square feet in size be approved by the Planning Commission.
- Amendment 2 adds a definition for the term “building footprint”, which clarifies that a building’s footprint is the outer face of the foundation of the building (and thus does not include any porches, decks, or patios, that may be attached to it.
- Amendment 3 clarifies the existing regulations and makes it clear that only accessory buildings greater than 200 are subject to the “performance standards” of Article VI of the Zoning Ordinance.
- Amendment 4 changes the chart of standards in Article V to clarify that the height of accessory structures on commercial lots is not capped at 18 feet but remains at 20 feet and 1.5 stories.
- Amendment 5 changes Article XI, Section 5 by expanding the types of development projects that are subject to the Planning Commission’s site plan approval authority (to include single-family houses and duplexes) and otherwise amends language to clarify the general uses types which are listed in that section.

During discussion of the draft amendments, a question was raised about whether the zoning ordinance currently restricts the amount of lot coverage, and if so whether that restriction could be an effective tool to ensure that such buildings did not overcrowd a lot or cause adverse impacts to neighboring lots. Mr. Jakubiak agreed to research this and report back at the next meeting. It was also suggested that increasing the setbacks for large accessory structures may be preferable to limiting their maximum size. The Planning Commission decided to revisit the topic of accessory buildings at its next meeting. The Commission favored Amendment 5, which like all zoning amendments, would need to be the subject of a public hearing.

V. Citizen Comment

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:20 pm.