

# TOWN OF GEORGETOWN - PLANNING COMMISSION

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## Meeting Minutes March 16, 2022

### ATTENDANCE

#### Commissioners

Larry Rohlfing  
Linda Dennis  
Lance Mears  
Suraj Gyani  
Eric Evans

#### Staff

Jocelyn Huff, Planning  
Jamie Craddock, Planning  
Tim Willard, Solicitor

### 1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Commission Chair Rohlfing called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### 2. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 19, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Dennis moved, seconded by Commissioner Evans, to approve the January 19, 2022 regular meeting minutes as presented. **APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

### 3. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. CASE #2021-28 *Office Storage Facility*  
(A) *Comprehensive Plan Amendment: Future Land Use Map*  
(B) *Rezone Application*

*An application by Sussex County Habitat for Humanity, Inc., for (A) an amendment to the Town of Georgetown's Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map from Multifamily Residential to Business & (B) an official zoning map amendment from Multifamily Residential District (MR1) to Urban Business District (UB1). The property is located at Kimmey Street Extended, 100' Northwest of Tracey Street, identified as Sussex County Tax Map ID 135-14.16-58.00.*

Mark Davidson, principal land planner with Pennoni Associates, presented the application for Habitat for Humanity with Kevin Gilmore and Jack Moore. Also, in attendance from Pennoni was Eric Wahl and Alan Decktor. A handout was provided of the slides to be presented, addressing location, surrounding zoning and land uses, and the proposed use of the property, for the application to revise the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map to Business. Habitat would like to relocate their existing offices and provide inside storage and a yard to be able to park trucks and trailers.

Chair Rohlfing asked for public comment, either for or against the application. No comments were received.

Ms. Huff confirmed that no correspondence was received either for or against the application.

**Commissioner Evans moved, seconded by Commissioner Mears, to recommend Town Council APPROVE the application to amend the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map to Business as presented. APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

**Roll call vote:**

**Commissioner Evans– Yes  
Commissioner Dennis – Yes  
Commissioner Mears – Yes  
Commissioner Gyani - Yes  
Chair Rohlfing – Yes**

The applicants reintroduced themselves for the record. The second request is for a rezone from MR1 Multifamily Residential to the UB1 Urban Business District.

Chair Rohlfing asked for public comment, either for or against the application. No comment was received.

Ms. Huff confirmed that no correspondence was received either for or against the application.

**Commissioner Mears moved, seconded by Commissioner Gyani, to recommend Town Council APPROVE the application to rezone the property from MR1 (Multifamily Residential) to UB1 (Urban Business) as presented. APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

**Roll call vote:**

**Commissioner Evans– Yes  
Commissioner Dennis – Yes  
Commissioner Mears – Yes  
Commissioner Gyani - Yes  
Chair Rohlfing –Yes**

**B. CASE #2022-04 Georgetown Village  
Rezone Application**

*An application by Ilsem LLC., for an official zoning map amendment from Neighborhood Business District/Professional Business District (UB2/UB3) to Highway Commercial District (HC). The property is located at County Seat Hwy and Little Street, identified as Sussex County Tax Map ID 135-19.00-30.15.*

Mark Davidson, principal land planner with Pennoni Associates, presented the application for Georgetown Village with owner John Tekmen. Also, in attendance from Pennoni was Eric Wahl and Alan Decktor. A handout was provided of the slides to be presented, addressing location, surrounding zoning, the Future Land Use Map, and proposed uses of the property for the application to rezone the property to HC (Highway Commercial).

US Route 9, a DelDOT maintained highway, will be the principal arterial road access as dictated by DelDOT. Phase 1 will include a proposed 85 room hotel and a couple small retail buildings. In the back will be a proposed 89 room assisted living facility, to be addressed with a conditional use application in the future.

Commissioner Mears expressed concerns for residents along Little Street and the impacts of the proposed uses to that area and questioned the need for a hotel.

Commissioner Dennis expressed concerns with residential living above food establishments due to noise and odors.

Chair Rohlfing asked for public comment, either for or against the application.

Lillian Vassalo, owner of the corner, adjacent property (22549 Little Street), property is currently zoned UB2 and has been operating as Sunrise Medical Center for 19 years. Owners are preparing to retire and sell the property. Not in opposition to the project, just concerned about impact on if connection will occur when it is developed. Told by the Town 19 years ago that a connection would be wanted if the property developed.

Jim Bowden, 22605 East Trap Pond Road, expressed concerns with the amount of traffic in the area. Little Street and East Trap Pond Road have become the new Route 9 and the number of cars will increase with this development.

Ms. Huff confirmed that no correspondence was received either for or against the application.

**Commissioner Evans moved, seconded by Commissioner Gyani, to recommend Town Council APPROVE the application to rezone the property from UB2/UB3 (Business) to HC (Highway Commercial) as presented following the Comprehensive Plan. APPROVED (4 Yes – 1 No)**

**Roll call vote:**

**Commissioner Evans– Yes**

**Commissioner Dennis – Yes**

**Commissioner Mears – No**

**Commissioner Gyani - Yes**

**Chair Rohlfing –Yes**

**C. CASE #2022-05 The Ponds  
Rezone Application**

***An application by Georgetown Plaza Associates II, LLC., for an official zoning map amendment from Neighborhood Business District/Professional Business District (UB2/UB3) to Multifamily Residential District (MR1). The property is located at the corner of East Trap Pond Road and Little Street, identified as Sussex County Tax Map ID 135-19.00-30.16.***

Mark Davidson, principal land planner with Pennoni Associates, presented the application for Georgetown Plaza Associates II, LLC, along with Nate Sorenson. Also, in attendance from Pennoni was Eric Wahl and Alan Decktor.

The recently adopted Comprehensive Plan was updated to reflect the future land use of the property as multifamily residential. The applicant is proposing a residential garden apartment project.

A handout was provided of the slides to be presented, addressing location, surrounding zoning, the Future Land Use Map, and proposed uses of the property for the application to rezone the property to MR1, Multifamily Residential.

As required by DelDOT, improvements to the roadways, shoulders and a shared use path will be provided. There are 72 proposed garden apartments meeting the 12 units per acre density allowed. There will also be smaller one-story garages in the middle of the parking lot with garage doors facing inward, available for lease.

Commissioner Mears confirmed with the applicant that the apartments will be rentals, not sold.

Chair Rohlfing asked for public comment, either for or against the application.

Jim Bowden, 22605 East Trap Pond Road, expressed concern regarding traffic and the new zoning with multifamily will bring even more cars all day long, in and out. In the current 50 mph speed zone on East Trap Pond Road, traffic is going 65 mph. A request will be made to reduce that speed for safety reasons. Another concern of the residents is whether the apartments are to be rentals or subsidized housing. Traffic is increasing, due to cars trying to bypass Route 9 by using Little Street and East Trap Pond Road. Safety is the biggest concern.

Ms. Huff confirmed that no correspondence was received either for or against the application.

**Commissioner Evans moved, seconded by Commissioner Gyani, to recommend Town Council APPROVE the application to rezone the property from UB2/UB3 (Business) to MR1 (Multifamily Residential) as presented and recommended in the Comprehensive Plan. APPROVED (3 Yes – 2 No)**

**Roll call vote:**

**Commissioner Evans– Yes**

**Commissioner Dennis – No**

**Commissioner Mears – No**

**Commissioner Gyani - Yes**

**Chair Rohlfig – Yes**

#### **4. RESIDENTIAL ELEVATIONS AMENDMENT**

##### **A. CASE #2006-33--02 VILLAGE OF COLLEGE PARK**

*An application by DRB Group, for review and approval of the single-family dwelling amended elevations. The property is located in the College Park subdivision, north of University Drive, identified as Sussex County Tax Map ID 135-14.00-35.00, 31.00 & 31.01 zoned MR1/RPC (Multi-Family Residential with Residential Planned Community overlay).*

Jon Ciavarra, Division President for the DRB Group of Delaware and Eastern Shore Maryland, presented the application. The project is for value-based housing, housing that people are looking for that the housing market has not been able to give them lately.

The applicant presented the elevations reviewed. There will be one and two car garage units. The calculation of the window percentages with each elevation can appear higher by what the eye sees. Trim (5/4 x 8) is proposed on many elevations to help break up the façades. Average area of the homes would be from 1250 square feet up to 2100 two-story square feet. Price points aimed for the low 300's. Seventy (70) lots will have basement opportunities.

Commissioner Dennis expressed concern with a flat façade on model #HRT1B. Applicant offered to waive that elevation option.

Commissioner Mears asked that on houses with the crawl space option, that steps be required to be installed at the back sliding door. No rails (juliette balcony) are wanted as the temporary installation can sometimes become permanent.

For the second waiver, a few of the plans do not provide the garage closer to the front lot line. When the garage is closer to the front on those plans, it allows flexibility for the first floor bedroom.

Commissioner Mears asked if on the facades that don't meet the 20% of windows such as Baldwin II, would it be feasible to provide windows in the top portion of the garage door. The applicant agreed it would be something they could do.

Waiver 1 request. Requirement that windows be provided on front & side facades facing streets, comprising of 20% of the building wall area.

**Commissioner Mears moved, seconded by Commissioner Evans, to APPROVE the waiver on the front street-facing façade with the stipulation that the garage door will have windows rather than the solid door; and for the side, street-facing facades, there will be 5/4 x 8" divider trim and shutters or the 5/4 x 4" or 6" window trim around the windows other than just the 'J' channel. APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

**Roll call vote:**

**Commissioner Evans– Yes  
Commissioner Dennis – Yes  
Commissioner Mears – Yes  
Commissioner Gyani - Yes  
Chair Rohlfing –Yes**

Waiver 2 request. Requirement that building floor areas shall extend at least 5 feet closer to the front lot line than the face of the garage doors.

**Commissioner Mears moved, seconded by Commissioner Evans, to APPROVE the waiver as presented. APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

**Roll call vote:**

**Commissioner Evans– Yes  
Commissioner Dennis – Yes  
Commissioner Mears – Yes  
Commissioner Gyani - Yes  
Chair Rohlfing –Yes**

**Commissioner Dennis moved, seconded by Commissioner Gyani, to APPROVE the residential elevations as presented, with the exception of the two-story flat façade to be eliminated as an option; and that any crawl space elevation would have rear steps installed as a requirement. APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

**Roll call vote:**

**Commissioner Evans– Yes  
Commissioner Dennis – Yes  
Commissioner Mears – Yes  
Commissioner Gyani - Yes  
Chair Rohlfing –Yes**

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment was offered to the Commission.

**6. PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Ms. Huff provided updates to the Commission regarding current projects.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Dennis moved, seconded by Commissioner Evans, to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 p.m. **APPROVED (UNANIMOUS)**

APPROVED:

  
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Larry Rohlfing, Chairperson

ATTEST:

  
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Jocelyn Huff, Planning