

**WORCESTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES – November 3, 2022**

**Meeting Date:** November 3, 2022

**Time:** 1:00 P.M.

**Location:** Worcester County Government Office Building, Room 1102

**Attendance:**

**Planning Commission**

Jerry Barbierri, Chair  
Mary Knight, Secretary  
Ken Church  
Marlene Ott  
Betty Smith

**Staff**

Jennifer Keener, Director, DRP  
Gary Pusey, Deputy Director, DRP  
Kristen M. Tremblay, Zoning Administrator  
Stu White, DRP Specialist  
Robert Mitchell, Director, Environmental Programs  
Roscoe Leslie, County Attorney

**I. Call to Order**

**II. Administrative Matters**

**A. Review and approval of minutes, October 6, 2022**

As the first item of business, the Planning Commission reviewed the minutes of the September 1, 2022 meeting.

**A motion was made by Ms. Ott, seconded by Ms. Smith, and carried unanimously.**

**B. Board of Zoning Appeals Agenda, November 10, 2022**

As the next item of business, the Planning Commission reviewed the agenda for the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting scheduled for October 13, 2022. Ms. Tremblay was present for the review to answer questions and address concerns of the Planning Commission. No comments were forwarded to the Board.

**C. Technical Review Committee Agenda, November 9, 2022**

As the next item of business, the Planning Commission reviewed the agenda for the Technical Review Committee meeting scheduled for October 12, 2022. Ms. Tremblay was present for the review to answer questions and address concerns of the Planning Commission. No comments were forwarded to the Committee.

**III. Amendment of the Worcester County Comprehensive Plan for Water and Sewerage Systems**

As the next item of business, the Planning Commission reviewed an application for a text amendment to allow for a discharge permit and wastewater and water plant improvements to serve the existing and future expansion of the Riverview Mobile Home Park in

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Bishopville, Maryland. The proposed amendment would only serve the mobile home park in this proposed modification for the park in the *Master Water and Sewerage Plan (The Plan)*. Rauch Engineering submitted the amendment on behalf of the Owner, James Latchum. Robert Mitchell, Director of Environmental Programs presented the staff report to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the applicant applied for this amendment to allow for the construction of a wastewater treatment plant for stream discharge and modifications to the existing water treatment plant to serve an expansion of the park up to sixty (60) units. The existing conventional subsurface multi-use septic system would be connected to the proposed wastewater plant, water plant improvements made, and septic would be properly abandoned after the required year-long timeframe for operational testing of the wastewater treatment plant. To allow for the review of such a discharge permit, it is also necessary to modify Section 1.2.2 D (Protection of the Environment) of *The Plan*, and provide amended language that would make it possible for this facility to apply for a discharge permit.

Mr. Mitchell then disclosed that a previously Planning Commission-approved amendment failed at the state level due to necessary text language changes. He explained that the prior amendments for this park were not approved due to language revisions that MDE wanted included in the text amendment. Those changes have been discussed and reviewed in the interim and the revised language is presented in this amendment. Mr. Mitchell then reviewed the history of the Riverview Park, located in Bishopville, which is in *The Plan* as a multi-use septic system serving the residents of the park. Maximum number of trailers was capped at 66, and they have run between 58-63 units in our historical records and have the ability to add the last system connections. Their septic is a single system, with a low pressure-dosed drain field that has the old system as a backup. They have conventional (zero) treatment at the present, and the current system and drain field is an innovative system repair located entirely in the critical area. Mr. Mitchell offered that state funding for pre-treatment (a package plant) that would be required with a system replacement should the existing system fail, is not a guarantee as there are scoring systems involved that are very competitive for these grants. He further explained that the system servicing this mobile home park is the only large multi-use septic system (over 5,000 gpd) that does not have groundwater discharge permit, is located within the critical area, is not adjacent to any sewer planning area, and does not have a more secure state funding source for the addition of treatment (systems located in our state parks).

Mr. Mitchell then provided a summary of the nutrient reductions with this conversation to treatment and the strict permit requirements that would be imposed by the state with this amendment language. The proposed point discharge to the Bishopville Prong requires a net zero total phosphorus load to the Prong due to the impaired status of the waterway. The

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Owner's consultant has indicated that the load must be mitigated to achieve a net-zero TP discharge to the Bishopville Prong and even that small amount needs to be offset through treatment practices within the watershed. The consultant indicates the Owner proposes to achieve a minimum of the required phosphorus removal from naturally generated sources on owner-controlled and owned parcel adjacent to the proposed MHP expansion shown and will demonstrate this to MDE on a subsequent permit application after amendment approval.

The extent the owners and their consultants have explored as alternatives were briefly described by Mr. Mitchell to the Planning Commission members. He indicated that they tried additional onsite testing to expand the septic capability, they explored adjacent properties for spray irrigation, and they looked for sewer plant connections, but have been unable to find or secure these outlets. He finished this point with the observation that there has been a concerted effort over the last couple years by the owners, while also being reviewed by the county, to examine options and confer with state agency staffs any alternatives to a point source discharge for this park.

The actual language was the last part of the amendment reviewed by Mr. Mitchell and he offered that the text additions were significantly more burdensome on the owner than before. These additions were included to protect the environment and ensure the owner and their consultant took into account items that were needed to achieve that net-zero option with mitigation of nutrient inputs as well. The documentation requirements that need to accompany any future discharge permit application, should this amendment be successful, were also reviewed.

The Planning Commission members did have a few comments. Mr. Church asked if this language was reviewed with the state and Mr. Mitchell indicated it had. Follow-up comments from the mobile home owners present in the audience indicated that they did meet with the state on this amendment and they also met with local environmental groups in Worcester County who they said were in favor of this amendment.

Following the discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Knight, seconded by Ms. Ott, to find this application consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan* and recommended that they forward a favorable recommendation to the County Commissioners. The vote was unanimous with only Mr. Wells and Mr. Clayville missing from the meeting.

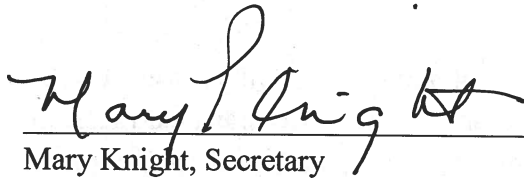
**IV. Miscellaneous**

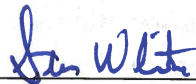
As the next item of business, Director Jennifer K. Keener, AICP presented a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Comprehensive Plan public engagement component, which was approved on Tuesday, November 1 to go out to bid, to the Planning Commission. She asked

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that since the Comprehensive Plan is the Planning Commission's planning document, that it would be greatly appreciated if one member from the Planning Commission would volunteer to be an evaluator to review the bid documents and provide a rating after the bid window has closed at the end of November.

- V. **Adjourn** – A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Knight and seconded by Ms. Ott.

  
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Mary Knight, Secretary

  
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Stuart White, DRP Specialist