

**Worcester County Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: January 3, 2019

Time: 1:00 P.M.

Location: Worcester County Government Office Building, Room 1102

Attendance:

Planning Commission

Mike Diffendal, Chair

Jay Knerr, Vice Chair

Marlene Ott

Brooks Clayville

Betty Smith

Jerry Barbierri

Staff

Jennifer Keener, Zoning Administrator

Bob Mitchell, Director, Dept. of Env. Programs

Katherine Munson, Planner V, Dept of EP

I. Call to Order

II. Administrative Matters

A. Review and approval of minutes, November 1, 2018 — As the first item of business, the Planning Commission reviewed the minutes of the November 1, 2018 meeting. Following the discussion it was moved by Mr. Knerr, seconded by Mr. Barbierri and carried unanimously to approve the minutes as submitted.

B. Board of Zoning Appeals agenda, January 10, 2019 — As the next item of business, the Planning Commission reviewed the agenda for the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting scheduled for January 10, 2019. Mrs. Keener was present for the review to answer questions and address concerns of the Planning Commission. No comments were forwarded to the Board.

III. Public Hearing - Revised Draft Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan

As the next item of business, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the revised draft Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan. Mr. Diffendal opened the public hearing at 1:03 P.M. Katherine Munson, Planner V, Environmental Programs, Bill Rodriguez, Parks Superintendent, Department of Recreation and Parks, and Tom Perlozzo, Director, Department of Recreation and Parks were present.

Ms. Munson referred to a packet sent to the members in December, which included ten (10) pages from the 2017 plan (adopted February 20, 2018) edited to clarify recreational land deficiencies. She stated the new proposed draft has also been available on the county website. She explained that these changes are proposed in response to the state (Program Open Space) review of the adopted plan. She stated that although Program Open Space approved the 2017 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan submitted in February 2018, Program Open Space determined that the county had a recreational land deficit, based on information presented in the plan. Counties with recreational land deficiency are penalized with a significantly reduced

Program Open Space match for development of recreational amenities. She stated that the following proposed revisions to the plan have been made to address this:

1. Public and private school playing fields were added to the playing field access map and to the recreational land inventory. A discussion of playing field access was amended to include these facilities.
2. Half-mile service area analyses were amended to include these school facilities and discussion regarding these analyses were expanded to address concerns about deficiencies.
3. Three formal joint use agreements with schools were added as an appendix.

Mr. Diffendal asked for questions or comments on the drafted revision from the Planning Commission. Ms. Ott asked if Ocean Pines facilities were included in the analysis. Ms. Munson stated that they were. Mr. Barbierri asked why there was not a map for Pocomoke City in the attachment. After reviewing the attachment, Ms. Munson explained that no changes are proposed for that map. The deficiencies in playing fields were noted in the northern end of the county. Mr. Barbierri asked if the recreation department has a formal joint use agreement with the schools or YMCA in Pocomoke. Mr. Rodriguez stated that there is not one with the YMCA. Mr. Perlozzo clarified that there is a joint use agreement with the entire school system that covers all of the schools.

Mr. Diffendal asked for public comments on the draft plan.

Kate Patton, Executive Director, Lower Shore Land Trust, presented a letter describing the Lower Shore Land Trust's accomplishments, activities and services. She stated that the Lower Shore Land Trust is accredited with the national Land Trust Commission. She stated that the Land Trust holds 120 easements of over 21,000 acres that are monitored annually, including easements co-held with Worcester County. She stated that she envisions a strong partnership with Worcester County and would like to help the county implement the Land Preservation and Recreation Plan. She stated that the acreage the Lower Shore Land Trust has protected is 1,913.228 acres and she asked that this be updated in the document.

Kathy Phillips, Executive Director, Assateague Coastal Trust, presented a letter and stated that the organization appreciates that the county included the state goals in the plan, and commends the county for providing and planning for water access and trails. She stated concern that the state (Program Open Space) seems to mandate that the county focus on building ball fields and parking, over water trails or other passive recreational development. She stated that this is unfortunate because Worcester County is rural with an abundance of land and water-based recreational opportunities such as biking, hiking, fishing and boating. She said that more ball fields will require more impervious surfaces, pesticides and fertilizers, which impact the bays. She said that the plan is a good opportunity to include TMDL benchmarks. She stated that Worcester County does a good job with land protection.

No other public comments were offered.

Following the discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Ott, seconded by Ms. Smith, and carried unanimously to forward a favorable recommendation to the County Commissioners for approval and adoption of the draft plan with the proposed edits presented by staff.

IV. Water and Sewerage Plan Amendment

As the next item of business, the Planning Commission reviewed an application associated with the addition of certain informational items in the Master Water and Sewerage Plan (The Plan) for the Ocean Pines Sanitary Service Area and the River Run Sanitary Service Area (SW 2018-4). Robert Mitchell, Director of Environmental Programs, presented the staff report to the Planning Commission. Mark Cropper, attorney, was present on behalf of the applicant, River Run Development Associates, LLC (River Run) and Nichols-Neff Properties, LLC (Nichols), who are joint applicants for this amendment.

Mr. Mitchell explained that the applicant is requesting this amendment to reclassify the sewer and water planning areas for two adjacent parcels comprising the dormant golf course from S-6/W-6 (no planned service) to S-1/W-1 (within two years) and include this change within the appropriate sewer and water planning area information in The Plan. The reclassification of the sewer planning area will be for the River Run Sanitary Area and service to the properties will be from the River Run WWTP. The reclassification of the water planning area will be for the Ocean Pines Sanitary Area and service to the properties will be from the Ocean Pines water treatment and distribution system. This revision is to provide public sewer and water to serve a proposed residential subdivision on the dormant golf course.

Mr. Mitchell reviewed the staff report noting the consistencies found for such a development within the Comprehensive Plan and land use designations, and that the proposed improvements would be permitted in accordance with existing zoning classification for the properties. He explained the land use inconsistency for one of the two parcels and noted the preexisting use developed on the entirety of both properties that spanned land use designations given to the properties in successive Comprehensive Plans. Also discussed was the nature of the surrounding properties being existing developed and the point that the development of these properties would be done in exactly in the same manner as the golf course that was previously constructed across the property line.

Mr. Mitchell noted that the connections to the River Run Sanitary Area's sewer collection system and the Ocean Pines water distribution system would be in accordance with the Department of Public Works' (DPW) design approval and any installed infrastructure would be turned over to the County upon inspection and acceptance by DPW staff. He also noted that the properties have an existing onsite sewage system capacity that would be abandoned, fall within St. Martins River/Ocean Pines Water Management Strategy Area and Ocean Pines wellhead protection areas, and that the connection to public sewer and water was much more preferable than developing the property on well and septic. He also noted the connection to the spray plant

at River Run would not add flow to the area's point source discharge from the Ocean Pines WWTP.

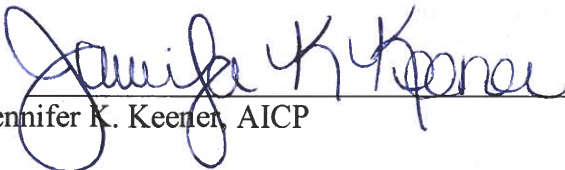
Mr. Cropper concurred with staff's findings on this report and offered that the land use designation area for these properties and all environmental and planning aspects for future development were discussed and examined thoroughly during the recent rezoning of the properties.

He also introduced Dane Bauer, a consultant, from Hall and Bauer, who testified on the project. Mr. Bauer testified that in his opinion the public sanitary capacity and public water capacity was present to serve the development and that it was economically and technically feasible to do so. He also noted the specifics of the build out phasing for the permitting spray irrigation facility at River Run were more appropriate to be detailed in a Public Works agreement and the Sanitary Service Area expansion done under the local procedures according to the Public Works Article.

Following the discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Knerr, seconded by Ms. Ott and carried unanimously to find this application consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommended that they forward a favorable recommendation to the County Commissioners.

VI. Adjourn – The Planning Commission adjourned at 1:28 P.M.


Betty Smith, Secretary


Jennifer K. Keener, AICP