

**TOWN OF ELKTON
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
NOVEMBER 21, 2019
MINUTES**

Present: Robert Olewine; Heather Mahaffey; Dawn Schwartz; Shirley Hicks; Chip Bromwell, Zoning Administrator; Lisa Blackson, Esq., Legal Counsel

Absent: None

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Olewine. He called for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2019 meeting.

ACTION: Motion was made by Ms. Mahaffey to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2019 meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hicks and unanimously approved.

CASE # 1553 – REQUEST OF POLLITT SIGNS FOR A VARIANCE TO ALLOW PLACEMENT OF ONE (1) ADDITIONAL WALL SIGN. THIS ACTION CONCERNS PROPERTY LOCATED AT 300 BIG ELK MALL, ELKTON, MARYLAND, TAX MAP 315, PARCEL 1225, ZONED C-2 (HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL)

Ms. Barbara Pollitt of Pollitt Signs was in attendance to address this request. She was sworn in and stated that the Social Security Building at Big Elk Mall is currently under renovation. They are proposing to place an additional wall sign which will be positioned facing Route 40. She stated that due to the nature of the business their clients need to be able to locate them. She mentioned that the building sits below road level and therefore is more difficult to find and the proposed sign will make it much easier.

Mr. Olewine asked if the requested wall sign will be the same size as the one which will face into the mall. Ms. Pollitt confirmed that it is the same size.

Mr. Olewine entertained questions from the Board. There being no questions from the Board he called for any comments or questions from the audience. There were no questions from the audience.

There being no additional discussion Mr. Olewine called for a motion either for or against this request.

MOTION: Motion was made by Ms. Schwartz to approve the variance to allow placement of one (1) additional wall sign for the Social Security Building at 300 Big Elk Mall. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hicks and unanimously approved.

CASE # 1554 – REQUEST OF FREESTATE BUSINESS PARK LIMITED PARTNERSHIP FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION FOR PLACEMENT OF A HOTEL IN THE C-3 ZONE. THIS ACTION CONCERNS PROPERTY LOCATED AT THE INTERSECTION OF MUDDY LANE AND BELLE HILL ROAD, ELKTON, MARYLAND, TAX MAP 304, PARCEL 2102, ZONED C-3 (HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE COMMERCIAL)

Mr. Glenn Ercole, Partner, Shaw Real Estate/Contract Purchaser and Mr. Bob Capalongo of EN Engineering were in attendance and sworn in to address this request. Mr. Ercole explained they are proposing to place a light industrial warehouse at this location. Along with the warehouse they are proposing a hotel use which requires a special exception and they are therefore making that request this evening.

Mr. Capalongo noted that the site is approximately 14 acres. They are hoping to place a 4-5 story hotel which will face Interstate 95 and are currently working to find an interested party. The office/warehouse they are proposing will be a flex tech building.

He explained he had come before this Board back in 2006 for this property when they were proposing to place two hotels.

He believes this C-3 property and their current proposed uses are consistent with the surrounding properties. He stated that the loading side of the office/warehouse building will face the Amtrak property and will meet all setbacks and other requirements for this use. They are also proposing a restaurant for this project as well.

Mr. Olewine inquired whether there is site preparation currently being done. Mr. Ercole stated they are doing surveying at this time.

Ms. Hicks asked if access to the property will be from Belle Hill Road. Mr. Capalongo confirmed she was correct. She asked if these will be jobs for local residents. Mr. Ercole stated they would be for local residents. Mr. Ercole stated that there aren't many flex building uses in the area and believes it will be an asset to the community. Mr. Capalongo stated the uses will be more professional in nature. He mentioned that truck traffic would not come by way of Muddy Lane and they would be placing a cul-de-sac at the entrance to the project in order to make easier access to the proposed uses on site.

Mr. Olewine asked for questions or comments from the audience. There were no questions.

Mr. Olewine read the recommendation from the Planning Commission which was made at their meeting on November 11, 2019 to approve this request.

He called for a motion either for or against this request.

MOTION: Motion was made by Ms. Schwartz to approve the special exception for placement of a hotel in the C-3 zone for Freestate Business Park Limited Partnership. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hicks and unanimously approved.

CASE # 1555 – REQUEST OF FREESTATE BUSINESS PARK LIMITED PARTNERSHIP FOR A HEIGHT VARIANCE FOR PLACEMENT OF A PYLON SIGN WHICH WILL BE NO HIGHER THAN FIFTY TWO (52) FEET. THIS ACTION CONCERNS PROPERTY LOCATED AT THE INTERSECTION OF MUDDY LAND AND BELLE HILL ROAD, ELKTON, MARYLAND, TAX MAP 304, PARCEL 2102, ZONED C-3 (HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE COMMERCIAL)

Both Mr. Ercole and Mr. Capalongo remained to address this request. Mr. Capalongo stated they are requesting a height variance for placement of a pylon sign for this project. He noted there is a stand of trees which would block the vision of travelers along I-95 and therefore they feel the sign needs to be taller and would be similar to the height of other business signs in this area. He mentioned the Days Inn and the truck stop on the other side of Route 279 as well as others. Mr. Olewine asked if they are anticipating placing other signs for proposed businesses within the project. Mr. Capalongo stated they haven't really considered that at this point in the planning. He asked if sharing signs would be an issue. Mr. Bromwell stated that he doesn't see any issues but that he hasn't been presented with that scenario to this point.

Mr. Olewine entertained comments and questions from the audience. There were none.

There being no further discussion Mr. Olewine called for a motion either for or against this request.

MOTION: Motion was made by Ms. Schwartz to approve the height variance for placement of a pylon sign which will be no higher than fifty two (52) feet for Freestate Business Park Limited Partnership. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hicks and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS: There were no items of old business for discussion.

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Bromwell informed the Board there is one case for the December meeting, a special exception for a medical use in the TC zone. It is for a doctor's office which is moving from one location to another within the TC zone.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 19, 2019.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brie Humphreys