

**TOWN OF ELKTON
PLANNING COMMISSION
JUNE 7, 2021
VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**

Present: Dave Wiseman; Rick Keane; Keith Thompson; Art Blount; Will Muller; Lisa Blackson, Esquire; Jeanne Minner, Director of Planning; Nick Cannistraci

Absent: G. Edward Ginder

Mr. Wiseman called the meeting to order. He stated the first item on the agenda is approval of the minutes from the May 10, 2021 meeting.

MOTION: Motion was made by Mr. Keane to approve the minutes of the May 10, 2021 Planning Commission meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Thompson and unanimously approved by the remaining Commission members.

CASE # 1583 – REQUEST OF ALBERT D. GUCKES, JR. REPRESENTING HERTRICH PROPERTIES XXIV, LLC, FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO OPERATE HERTRICH COLLISION CENTER OF ELKTON AT 601 E. PULASKI HIGHWAY, TAX MAP 033B, PARCEL 2058 AND ZONED C-2 (HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL)

Al Guckes, Dale VanSchaik, Harry Phillips and Jeff Williams were in attendance to address this request for a special exception. Mr. Guckes stated they are proposing to convert the existing 7,500 square foot auto center into a collision repair center. He noted there will be no changes to the basic footprint of the building. They will be removing an existing above ground waste oil tank and shed, and the only changes to the building will be to add three (3) additional overhead garage doors on the north side.

Mr. Guckes stated that this property is located at 601 E. Pulaski Highway and is in the C-2 Zone. It has been operating as a quick lane center. He mentioned that the quick lane center had required seven of these nine conditions as well. He reviewed the nine (9) conditions required for the special exception specific to this proposed use (see copy of addressed conditions attached). The proposed use meets each of the nine (9) conditions.

After reviewing each condition he addressed the site plan pointing out the shed which was to be removed and where the three (3) air conditioning units will be moved. He also noted the buffer yards landscaping and forest retention areas. He pointed out the location of the vinyl fencing which blocks the surrounding properties and noted that the proposed building is a minimum of 141 feet from their adjacent car dealership. He confirmed they have no plans for any extension of the parking areas.

Mr. Guckes noted that they have replaced the pipe that had failed on the neighboring parcel with a 60" x 33" reinforced concrete pipe which allows storm water to be directed to the appropriate facilities so as not to affect neighboring properties.

Mr. Thompson asked if they will be retaining the used car showroom. Mr. Guckes stated it will all be part of the collision center. He noted that all car sales will be from the dealership location.

Mr. Keane asked if body shops and paint shops are regulated by the State. Mr. Dale VanSchaik stated that Maryland requires every paint facility to be registered and they regulate the filtration rates. The State regulations are 96-97% and their facility has a filtration rate over 99%. The State MOSH do safety inspections on a regular basis.

Mr. VanSchaik stated they have to take the plans to the State for review prior to any permitting or construction. Mr. Guckes stated it is a very labor intensive process.

Mr. Blount asked what the hours of operation would be for the body shop. Mr. VanSchaik stated they will be standard hours from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Mr. Thompson inquired whether the vehicles have been removed from the gravel area on the parcel located behind the dealership. Mr. Guckes stated that the vehicles have in fact been removed and that area will not be a part of this project. Mr. Thompson asked how long totaled vehicles would be at the facility. Mr. Van Schaik stated the normal turn-around time is approximately seven (7) days due to insurance requirements. Mr. Thompson asked if the trucks that are parking in the entranceway to the new body shop will be moved. Mr. Guckes pointed out that the trucks are there only to block access to the lot and that they would be moved. Mr. Thompson said he is sorry to see the oil change business go, that it was very convenient.

Mr. Wiseman asked if Ms. Minner had any other comments. She stated that she did not. Mr. Wiseman stated the plans seem to address all the required Town standards.

There being no further questions from the Commission members, Mr. Wiseman opened the floor to audience comments. There was no one in attendance who wished to speak for or against this project.

MOTION: Motion was made by Mr. Keane to recommend approval of the special exception for Hertrich Collision Center to the Board of Zoning Appeals. The motion was seconded by Mr. Blount and unanimously approved by the remaining Commission members.

Mr. Wiseman noted that the second item on the agenda had been removed.

OLD BUSINESS: Ms. Minner stated she and Mr. Cannistraci met with the landscaper who will be replacing the trees at the Royal Farms. She is working up a design to replace the trees that were removed. Mr. Wiseman asked if she approves the plan before the landscaping is placed. Ms. Minner confirmed that she reviews the plans in order to confirm that they meet Town requirements.

Mr. Keane inquired about large equipment and work being done on the entrance to the Logistics warehouse on Route 40. Ms. Minner stated they have received final approval for Phase 1 and therefore they are able to begin work on the entrance.

Mr. Wiseman inquired about the status of the 7-Eleven on Maloney and Pulaski Highway. Ms. Minner stated they are working on the Traffic Impact Study and trying to address County comments on the Maloney Road portion. Mr. Wiseman asked how this traffic impact study will be affected when the Logistics center begins construction. Ms. Minner noted that the traffic impact studies will take into consideration development over time and State Highway is pretty adept at reviewing projects already in the pipeline when they are reviewing new projects. They have to account for a growth factor over time on the roads also. Ms. Broomell asked if Ms. Minner is kept in the loop with respect to Cecil County comments on projects that involve both the Town and County. Ms. Minner said both the Town and County try to make sure the other is kept in the loop.

Ms. Broomell asked if there would be any improvements to Maloney Road. Ms. Minner said usually it is standard improvements that would have to be made.

Mr. Wiseman asked if there has been any discussion about opening meetings to the public again. Ms. Minner said she thought the Mayor had mentioned it at a recent M & C meeting. Commissioner Broomell said the Board is considering it but wanted to wait until the Governor gives approval for public meetings. Ms. Minner said people need to have a level of comfort in public meetings. Commissioner Broomell said the Board was discussing how they might be able to get back together and still have Zoom meetings. Mr. Wiseman said for the larger projects the video screen is helpful to be able to see details on the plans being presented. Ms. Minner stated she felt by the end of the year they would be back to public meetings.

Mr. Thompson inquired about past projects which have been approved but are not moving forward. Ms. Minner said that the Warner Road project is working on their Public Works Agreement and should be starting soon. Mr. Wiseman said the State has been very slow in moving projects through.

Ms. Minner said that the McConnell Warehouse was so happy with how their project progressed that they have recently purchased another parcel across Konica Drive in Upper Chesapeake Corporate Center in order to place another warehouse. She said she is already in discussions with them concerning their traffic impact study. She added that there is someone interested in the old Gore plant at the Upper Chesapeake Corporate Center and to possibly expand on to the 20 some acres where that plant is located.

There was conversation about UCCC and the fact that large trucks have a difficult time maneuvering into some of the roads.

Mr. Muller mentioned that drilling is being done near Belle Hill and Muddy Lane. Ms. Minner stated that Free State Business Park were required to make sure that any of the wells that were open were properly closed and that the septic tank was properly abandoned.

Mr. Wiseman inquired about the water tower property and the reason it was taken off the agenda. Ms. Minner said there were a couple of notes on the plan which needed to be changed. She stated that notifications to the adjacent property owners were not sent and although the Town is exempt from their own zoning requirements, we would have to abide by the notification requirements. The plan will be on the July meeting agenda.

Mr. Keane asked what the status is for the Rudy Park project. Ms. Minner said they have been transitioning to a voucher based system from a Section 8 system. There were also some issues that needed to be addressed by the Elkton Housing Authority Board. Ms. Minner said they are ready to go they just have to work out a few details.

NEW BUSINESS: Ms. Minner stated she has received numerous contacts regarding projects which may be coming before the Planning Commission. She anticipates there will be a full agenda for the July meeting.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be on Monday, July 12, 2021.

There being no other items for discussion Mr. Wiseman adjourned the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brie Humphreys