

Planning & Zoning was held on Wednesday, September 10, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. The following members were in attendance Planning Chair Brent Boyce, Amy Handy, Angie Calio-Quillen, Randy Radish, Dan Ash, and George Sakellis. Also, in attendance were Director of Code Enforcement Ken West, Public Works Director James Foskey, Recording Secretary Alexis Oliphant, Town Manager Jamie Smith, Jeff Hill Laurel Fire Department, Ann Marie Townsend via ZOOM from ROSSI Group, Philip Barnes via ZOOM from the University of Delaware, David Kuklish, Boheler Engineering, and Robert Wittig, Developer. It was noted that Planning Member Randy Hill was absent.

Town Manager Smith stated Mrs. Ann Marie Townsend from the ROSSI Group is in attendance via ZOOM to present the draft Downtown Development District Renewal. Mrs. Townsend thanked P&Z for their time and reviewed a PowerPoint Presentation (attached) . She explained the purpose of the renewal process is to provide updates and impact data to the state to show there is still a need for the DDD designated area. The proposed DDD map (attached) includes two lines with the dotted line being the existing district boundaries and the black line being the proposed new district boundary. The proposed DDD would include 102 acres and extend the boundaries to the southwestern portion of town, along West Street to include Townsend Street to Elm Street and west to Center Street back down West and picking up 7<sup>th</sup> Street to the properties fronting Sixth Street between the railroad tracks and Poplar Street. The proposed renewal would remove the town parks and land from the boundaries, as the town is not eligible to receive DDD Funding. The towns current DDD incentives include a five-year tax abatement and reduction of water and wastewater impact fees. The towns proposed DDD incentives would be phasing in the property taxes over the five years and a partial reduction of building permit fees. She advised the tax climb will be a 25% increase throughout the five years. The town will need to decide on how they would like to the building permit fees reduced. Mrs. Townsend provided key projects in the town including the Promenade, Davelli's Bagel Café, 102 E. Front Street, Central Avenue Mixed-Use, 113 North Central Avenue, and the Laurel Senior Center. She stated the next steps are to present to the Mayor & Council at October's Meeting, submit the completed DDD application to the Office of State Planning, and to attend a Cabinet Meeting in 2026. Mrs. Townsend inquired if P&Z had any questions.

Planning Member Handy inquired who made up the focus group. Mrs. Townsend stated they invited anybody who had projects that resided in the DDD. She advised only three individuals attended who included Mr. Brian Shannon of the LRC, Mr. Kevin Gilmore of Sussex County Habitat for Humanity, and Mr. Badad Bahar from 113 North Central Avenue. She also received input from Mr. Joe Myers from Neighborhood Good Partners, Mr. Bill McGowan, Director of Code Enforcement West, and Chief Kracyla.

Town Manager Smith stated the towns first focused area when applying for the DDD was to focus on the center of the town due to it having a lot of historical properties. With the proposed extension it will include more historical properties on the western portion of town.

Planning Member Radish made a motion to recommend the Draft DDD Renewal Extension as presented to Mayor & Council for their review and approval. Planning Member Calio-Quillen

seconded the motion. Vote was 5-1, with Planning Member Hill absent and Member Handy opposing.

Town Manager Smith stated Mr. Phillip Barnes from the University of Delaware is in attendance via ZOOM. Mr. Barnes thanked P&Z for their time and stated his purpose is to receive insight regarding SB237 from P&Z Members. Mr. Barnes stated a year ago the Legislation passed SB237 pertaining to Climate Change Overview in the General Assembly by then Governor Carney. He stated the bill will go into effect late 2026 which will require municipalities to incorporate a Climate Change and Resiliency element into their Comprehensive Plan. He stated the towns Comprehensive Plan will be due for renewal in 2028. He explained the bill is very vague and his purpose tonight is to gather feedback from P&Z Committees across the state and present a report to the Office of State Planning addressing municipalities concerns. After a brief discussion, P&Z agreed to review the SB237 bill and to email any concerns individually to Mr. Barnes for his report.

Planning Chair Boyce stated a Minor Subdivision Request pertaining JEL Properties, 103 & 104 East Eighth Street, Tax Map #332-111-33.00 was submitted for review. Planning Chair Boyce stated the property is located across from the former high school and is zoned R-2. Planning Chair Boyce stated the minor subdivision complies with the R-2 square footage requirements.

Planning Member Calio-Quillen made a motion to accept the Minor Subdivision pertaining JEL Properties, 103 & 104 East Eighth Street, Tax Map #332-111-33.00. Planning Member Handy seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0, with Planning Member Hill absent.

Planning Chair Boyce stated a Concept Plan pertaining to 10912 County Seat Highway, Tax Map #232-12.00-105.00 was submitted for P&Z's review. Town Manager Smith stated Mr. Kuklish with Boheler Engineering is in attendance to present the concept plan. Mr. Kuklish stated the proposed property is located on southern portion of Rt.13 & Rt.9 with a commercial zoning. The proposed site is 8 ½ acres with 5 commercial pads proposed with two being retail, two being vacant, and the one being a quick service restaurant (QSR). Mr. Kuklish advised water and sewer are available which will be required to extend the services along the entire length of the front of the property. Mr. Kuklish advised it is proposed to have an interconnectivity lane road, connecting to the neighboring property to the North. Mr. Kuklish stated a Preliminary Site Plan will be submitted shortly which will feature more details of the proposed property.

Planning Member Calio-Quillen inquired if the Laurel Fire Department is ok with this proposal. Chief Hill stated yes.

Planning Chair Boyce inquired if this proposed project would need to go in front of PLUS. Mr. David Kuklish stated no, the project is under the required square footage area required for PLUS.

Town Manager Smith stated this property was annexed several years ago and inquired about a timeline when a Preliminary Site Plan will be submitted. Mr. Kuklish stated in another month a Preliminary Site Plan will be submitted.

Chief Hill inquired if the proposed property would tie into Bargain Bills. Mr. David Kuklish stated yes.

The Planning & Zoning Minutes of April 9, 2025, were presented for review and adoption. Planning Member Calio-Quillen made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Planning Member Ash seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0, with Planning Member Hill absent.

With there being no further matters to discuss, Planning Member Calio-Quillen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Planning Member Radish seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0, with Planning Member Hill absent.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:51 p.m.