

PELU TASK FORCE MEETING #5
Tuesday, January 29, 2008

Start Time: 4:10 p.m.

End Time: 6:17 p.m.

Members present: Ada Louise Bohorfoush, Brian England, Bill Erskine, Judy Fisher-George, James Howard, II, Cathy Hudson, William Lewis, Julia Mattis, Frank Mirabile, Bridget Mugane, Tim Sosinski, Andrew Stack.

Also present: Kimberley Flowers, Stephanie Scott, Theodore Wimberly

Bill Erskine opened the meeting.

The minutes for the meeting held on January 24, 2008 were approved.

Two members from the Planning Board (PB) (Ramsey Alexander and Dave Grabowski) were introduced to the task force and available for a question and answer session.

Grabowski introduced himself as a contractor and community activist from the Elkridge community.

Alexander introduced himself as a resident from Town Center with a background in Architecture and land use planning.

Information Imparted by PB Guests:

- PB terms are five year terms, ten year maximum.
- The role of the PB members is to render decisions in land use cases in the NT, R-ED, and PGCC zoning districts. For cases involving ZRAs or zoning map amendments the PB's role is advisory. The PB's role is advisory for most of the cases they hear.
- PB would like to see the public involved in the process much earlier.
- The Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) is working on updating the notification system.
- PB must adhere to their Rules and Regulations (guidelines and procedures).
- Legal Counsel is available to PB by cell phone, if needed.

- PB may be concerned with televising (web streaming) work sessions. Work sessions are free-flowing, candid conversations between PB members. Concerned televising would take away from the frankness in the discussion.

Task Force Issue/Concerns of PB:

- The degree of detail required by the developer during the planning phase is not enough to allow the public to give adequate input. By the time the time final plan is required, it's generally too late for public response.
- Inadequate training of new planning board members.
- Maps in newspaper notifications would be helpful.
- All community associations should be notified of PB meetings.
- Would like to see PB do a better job of informing the public of the next steps after the PB decision is made.
- Public does not understand why traffic, noise, lights can not be considered during certain PB meetings/hearings. The PB agenda should specifically note what the PB will be considering during the meeting.
- The public believes that the PB is a citizen board that does not represent the concerns of the citizens.
- Upcoming dockets (beyond the mandatory two week docket) should be prominently posted on the web.

Jim Irvin, Director of the Department of Public Works (DPW), was introduced by Erskine.

Information Imparted by Jim Irvin:

- DPW is responsible for the County's infrastructure (traffic, water & sewer, storm water management).
- The Capital Budget is the main tool that DPW uses to shape infrastructure development in the County.
- DPW gets involved in private development by its membership on the Sub-division Review Committee.
- Interpretation of traffic studies is the key to good development. It is DPW staff's responsibility to evaluate traffic studies.

- DPW engineers should “walk” the site of every project it evaluates.
- It is important to remember that plans are not legal documents, projects are sometimes constructed differently, depending on field circumstances.
- Reverse 911 is a good tool, however, it poses shortcomings if used for notification purposes
 - Some people use cell phone only
 - Some people are not at home during the day
 - People don't want phone calls late night.
- DPW has two customer services reps to answer questions from the community, use main number for DPW - 410-313-4301.

Task Force Issue/Concerns of DPW:

- Topography and sight distances are not often accounted for in traffic studies.
- Does the public participate in the Sub-division Review Committee?
- Is adequate public input allowed for in the writing and reviewing of DPW's guidelines?
- Does DPW get involved in waiver petitions?
- Concern about Highway Capacity Manual 2000 standards vs. Critical Lane Volume standards.

The task force made the following decisions:

The attendance of meetings has declined. The task force considered a new timeframe of 6-8 p.m.

Suggestion was made to have just one speaker at future meetings. Thus, allowing the group to begin working on other issues.

Discussion of breaking the task force into smaller groups.

At the next meeting(s)—
 Eileen Powers to attend (Zoning Counsel)
 Cindy Hamilton (Subdivision Review, DPZ)

The next meetings will be held:

February 7, 2008
3-5 p.m.

February 13, 2007
6-8 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Scott
Theodore Wimberly