

# **Garrett County Planning Commission Minutes**

## **January 8, 2020**

### **I. Call to order**

Tony Doerr called to order the regular meeting of the Garrett County Planning Commission at 1:30 pm on January 8, 2020 in the Commissioners Public Meeting Room in the Garrett County Courthouse.

### **II. Attendance**

The following Commission members and planning staff were present: Tony Doerr, Jeff Messenger, Tim Schwinabart, Bruce Swift, Liz George, Jim Hinebaugh, Billy Weissgerber, Shelly Argabrite, Bruce Metz, Gary Aronhalt and Chad Fike

The following persons from the public were present: Tom, Jodi & Michaela Matthews

### **III. Approval of minutes from last meeting**

The minutes were approved as presented.

### **IV. New Business**

#### **a) Zoning Appeals Cases**

**SE-483-** an application submitted by Jesse & Jennifer McConnell for a Special Exception permit for a single-family home, six-bedroom Transient Vacation Rental Unit (TVRU). The property is located at 178 Round Beach Circle Drive, Tax Map 59, Parcel 143, Grid 20 and is zoned Lake Residential 1. The Planning Commission offered no formal comments.

#### **b) Waiver Request and Preliminary & Final Plat**

Thomas & Jodi Matthews requested waivers from the private road and right of way standards of the Garrett County Subdivision Ordinance. The waivers are necessary to create one new lot on their property (Tax Map 84, Parcel 284) located off Crellin Underwood Road in a Rural Land Classification. After discussion, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the waivers and the Preliminary & Final Plat of the subdivision.

#### **c) AECOM Contract Extension**

Assistant Director Fike reported that the Purchasing Department is agreeable to a six-month contract extension for AECOM and plans to reach out to the contractor to confirm.

d) **Deep Creek Watershed Sign Regulations**

Mr. Fike informed the Planning Commission of possible issues with the new sign chapter of the Deep Creek Watershed Zoning Ordinance adopted by the County Commissioners on November 19, 2019. The new regulations would allow Transient Vacation Rental Unit (TVRU) signs to be larger than what was intended. After discussion, the Planning Commission approved a motion requesting that the County Attorney consider whether existing TVRU zoning and/or licensing requirements could be amended to limit the size of TVRU signs. If such limits are not appropriate, the motion recommended amending the sign regulations in the Ordinance to limit on-premise signs in the residential districts to a maximum of 4 square feet.

e) **Comprehensive Plan Update- Mineral Resources**

The group reviewed the Mineral Resources Chapter with the following comments discussion and/or edits:

- Under Goals, the group modified a goal of ensuring mechanisms were in place for the protection of mineral resources to state that the goal should be changed to exploring protection of mineral resources. The goals were otherwise accepted.
- Under Natural Gas Production, the group modified a statement about Marcellus Shale recovery being “economically unfeasible at this time” to read that recovery was “not permitted at this time”.
- Under Mineral Resources Policies and Actions, the Commission approved the first three Actions and reworded the 4th policy dealing with amending the Comprehensive plan if technological advances in natural gas extraction occur.

f) **Comprehensive Plan Update – Sensitive Areas**

The group reviewed the Sensitive Areas Chapter with the following comments and/or edits:

- Under Goals and Objectives, the group decided a goal of preserving 15,000 acres of farmland by 2040 was reasonable based on the average amount farmland being preserved in recent years. The other goals and objectives were accepted.

- Under Steep Slopes, the group wanted to gather more information about a recommendation to limit development on slopes 20% or greater.
- Under Ridgelines, the group clarified that ridgeline protection remains a priority.
- The group agreed with revisions to the Future Growth and Development section including removal of paragraphs from the 2008 Plan dealing with Broad and Localized Impacts of Development.
- The group agreed to the revised sections dealing with Agriculture and Forest.
- The group made a modification to the Ridge Tops section to clarify that both positive and negative impacts of wind power were recognized.

**V. Next Meeting** – February 5, 2020

**VI. Adjournment**

Tony Doerr adjourned the meeting at 2:30 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Chad Fike, Assistant Director