



CITY OF ABERDEEN
PLANNING COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT 2022

plan**ABERDEEN**
Our City. Our Plan. Our Future.

July 18, 2023

This report was prepared by the Aberdeen Planning Commission and the Director of Planning and Community Development for the City of Aberdeen for the period of January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022, and adopted by the Aberdeen Planning Commission.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Mark Schlottman, Chairman
Dominique Gillis, Vice Chairman
Susan Brown (resigned)
Michael Hiob, Vice Chairman nominated in November 2022
Samuel Posten
Terri Preston
DeAunte Printup

BOARD OF APPEALS

Amy Landbeck, Chairman
Robert Armstrong, III
Peggy Dymond
Amy Lindecamp

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Gary Getz, AIA, NCARB
Merrill Messick, AIA
David O'Steen

DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Phyllis Grover

SENIOR PLANNER

Stefani Spector

PLANNING ASSISTANT

Sydney Trionfo

MAIN STREET COORDINATOR AND ASSISTANT

Vickie Horne and Jennifer Tuer

**ABERDEEN PLANNING COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT
2022**

INTRODUCTION

The Code of the City of Aberdeen, Chapter 235 Development Code §10 establishes the rules of procedure and responsibilities for the Planning Commission. The Commission is tasked with preparing and recommending a Comprehensive Plan; reviewing and recommending approval of preliminary site plans and preliminary and final subdivision plats; recommending zoning boundary changes to the Zoning Map and text amendments to the Development Code and Subdivision Regulations; recommending rezonings and annexations; recommending changes in land use or development that arise from local, State, or Federal programs or policies; and recommending programs for public structures, improvements, and land acquisitions.

The Planning Commission's Annual Report highlights the major planning, zoning, and development activities that occurred during the 2022 calendar year. This year's Annual Report includes the year-long effort on the 2022 Comprehensive Plan update with the consulting team of Wallace Montgomery. The Department of Planning and Community Development activities included issuance of building permits, review and recommendations on site plans and subdivision plats, annexation reviews, drafting amendments to the Development Code, and planning for parks and recreation improvements.

For the 2022 Comprehensive Plan update, the Planning Commission participated in all public workshops, surveys, creating a vision, and provided comments on all draft chapters of the Plan. These initiatives worked towards implementing the State's vision for sustainable communities that protect the natural environment, direct growth, maintain and improve public infrastructure, and include community involvement. Overall, the City did not have any restrictions on development in the designated Priority Funding Area during the 2022 reporting period.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the City of Aberdeen has a population of 16,254, making it the largest municipality by population in Harford County. The City is served by a diverse transportation system including one interstate highway (I-95), one federal highway (US Route 40) and five state highways (MD 22, MD 132, MD 462, MD 715, and MD 7), MARC commuter rail service, AMTRAK passenger rail service, Harford Transit LINK, and MTA bus service. The City of Aberdeen is a full-service municipality providing many public services for its citizens. The City has its own planning and zoning authority, water and sewer services, police department, and public works department. Fire protection service is provided by the Aberdeen Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. Harford County Government is responsible for public schools, libraries, courts, additional police protection, health, recreation, transit links, and other community services.

PLANNING IN ABERDEEN

Legal Authority

The authority to plan for the City's development and to enact and enforce laws relating to land planning and zoning is derived from the Local Government and Land Use Articles of the Annotated Code of Maryland and the City Charter.

Land use planning and regulation in Aberdeen is the responsibility of five official bodies: the City Council, the Department of Planning and Community Development, the Planning Commission, the Board of Appeals, and the Architectural Review Committee. The City Council adopts the Comprehensive Plan, enacts legislation to ensure compliance with the Plan, adopts amendments to the Development Code and the Zoning Map, guides implementation of goals and strategies, and funds capital improvements related to the Plan.

The Department of Planning and Community Development is responsible for the administration of planning and zoning within the City and advises the Planning Commission and the Board of Appeals regarding all zoning cases, annexations, subdivisions, site plans, zoning reclassifications, and Development Code amendments.

The Board of Appeals is comprised of five members and one alternate appointed by the City Council. The Board considers applications for special exceptions, variances, interpretations of the Development Code, and appeals from administrative decisions related to planning and zoning.

The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is comprised of four members appointed by the City Council. The ARC reviews site, signage, and landscaping plans for development projects located in the three established overlay districts.

PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission is made up of seven members who are appointed by the City Council for staggered five-year terms. The Commission elects a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from its membership for terms of one year, with eligibility for re-election. Mr. Mark Schlottman is Chairman of the Planning Commission. Ms. Dominique Gillis was Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission until November 9, 2022. Mr. Michael Hiob is Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission.

The Commission meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., in the City Council Chambers, 60 North Parke Street, Aberdeen. When warranted, the Commission will also hold special meetings. The agenda is posted on the City's website and all meetings are open to the public.

The Commission is directly involved with all phases of the planning process. Certain powers and duties of the Commission are mandated by the Local Government and Land

Use Articles of the Annotated Code of Maryland and the Code of the City of Aberdeen. The Commission is required to file an Annual Report on its activities with the Mayor and Council and the Maryland Secretary of Planning.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

Development Code Amendments

The Planning Commission reviewed the following Ordinance amending the Development Code and provided recommendations to the City Council:

- Ordinance #22-O-03 Development Code revisions to address medical service-related uses in the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) area.

2022 Plan Aberdeen – Comprehensive Plan Update

The City's Department of Planning and Community Development held a kick-off meeting with Wallace Montgomery to prepare the 2022 Comprehensive Plan update in November 2021. Aberdeen's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2011. Wallace Montgomery used the 2011 Plan as a baseline and the planning team evaluated existing conditions and trends; reviewed studies, data, and reports that were completed since the last Plan update; identified and analyzed priority issues and had a rigorous public participation process with surveys, social media alerts, and workshops.

Wallace Montgomery created a website for Plan Aberdeen and a brand image to be used throughout the process. The planning team developed a community public opinion survey, a SWOT Analysis, homework assignments for elected officials, City staff, and various volunteer committees, and held stakeholder input meetings that included discussions with the Planning Commission, Economic Development Commission, City Council, and external agencies. Three community Visioning Workshops were held to receive input for the Comprehensive Plan update. The 2011 Vision Statement was reviewed, and it was unanimous that it no longer addressed the City's needs or desires for the community. The Planning Commission, City staff, and the planning team wrote a Vision Statement that captured the community's input from the Visioning Workshops:

"The City of Aberdeen is a destination to work, live, learn, and play with an actively engaged community, diverse neighborhoods, thriving businesses, economic opportunities, transportation options, and a sustainable future."

After eighteen months of work on the Plan update, a Resolution was adopted by the Planning Commission for the 2022 Comprehensive Plan and recommended the City Council also adopt the Plan. The City Council adopted Ordinance No. 23-O-04 for the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan in April 2023.

Planning Commission Development Reviews

The Commission conducted regular reviews of subdivision plats, site plans, and annexation requests. The Commission and staff reviewed these requests and ensured compliance with the Aberdeen Development Code, Comprehensive Plan, Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, and Subdivision Regulations. The following development activity was reviewed, and actions noted: (Refer to the Map on Page 9 for the 2022 Development Activity)

1. Review revised Preliminary Site Plan for Fieldside Commons. The revision reduces the number of multi-family apartment units from 533 to 522. The Fieldside Commons residential development is located off Long Drive on Tax Map 51, Parcels 108 and 4. The revised preliminary site plan was approved.
2. Review Revised Final Plat, Lot 1 Long Property Subdivision; review Revised Final Plat Two, Fieldside Village; and the Final Plat, Second Revised Plat, Lot 3 – Long Property Subdivision. The purpose of the revisions is to address forest conservation easements and stormwater management easements all of which are located off Long Drive. The revised subdivision plats were approved.
3. Review the Preliminary Site Plan for the new 14,300 sq. ft. activity center for the existing school and a 1,500 sq. ft. chapel expansion for the St. Joan of Arc Roman Catholic Parish. The expansion project is located off Law Street on Tax Map 205, Parcel 1598. The preliminary site plan for the expansions was approved.
4. Review the revised Preliminary Site Plan for Ripken Center. The revisions included new artificial turf baseball and modified whiffle ball fields, new Merchandise building, and new Office building for Ripken staff. The revised preliminary site plan for the fields, Merchandise and Office Building is located off Long Drive on Tax Map 51, Parcel 108. The revised preliminary site plan was approved.
5. Review Preliminary Site Plan for Middleton Holdings, LLC, Lot 2 for Popeye's. The site is located off Middleton Road on Tax Map 202, Parcel 600. The preliminary site plan was approved.
6. Review Preliminary Site Plan for 31 E. Bel Air Avenue to create a 12-unit apartment building. The multi-family residential development is located off East Bel Air Avenue on Tax Map 204, Parcels 2074 and 2079. The preliminary site plan was approved.
7. Review Consolidated Plat for the Land of Ferial, LLC located at 31 E. Bel Air Avenue to consolidate two parcels of land into one parcel. The Land of Ferial is located off East Bel Air Avenue on Tax Map 204, Parcels 2074 and 2079. The consolidation plat was approved.
8. Discussion on the restoration of Aberdeen's Historic B&O Train Station by the Friends of the Aberdeen B&O Train Station.
9. Review revised Final Subdivision Plat for Rutter's Store #103. The Rutter's Store will be located off U.S. Route 40 and Old Philadelphia Road on Tax Map 58, Parcels 561, 562, and 130. The revised final subdivision plat was approved.

10. Review the Final Subdivision Plats for Aberdeen Overlook; Final Plat One – Final Plat Four, Phase One; Final Plat One – Final Plat Four, Phase Two; Final Plat One – Final Plat Four, Phase Three; and Final Plat One and Final Plat Two – Phase Four. The Aberdeen Overlook residential development is located off Long Drive and Aldino Stepney Road on Tax Map 51, Parcels 096, 951, and 946. The final subdivision plats were approved.

ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES ORDINANCE (APFO)

New residential and non-residential development projects are subject to Chapter 302, Growth Management, in the Code of the City of Aberdeen. The Growth Management requirements are applicable to school capacity, sewerage, water, and roads. Ordinance No. 21-O-08 adopted by the City Council made changes to the APFO establishing an Adequate Public Facilities Agreement for proposed improvements between the owner/developer and the City of Aberdeen.

OTHER PLANNING STAFF WORK EFFORTS

- The City was awarded a MDOT/SHA Transportation Alternatives Program grant in the amount of \$700,000 for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity enhancements at the Aberdeen MARC Train Station. The architectural and engineering design work was completed by EXP US Services, and the construction work was completed by DSM Contracting for the pedestrian and bicycle connectivity improvements. The project was substantially completed in November 2022.
- The City Council acquired 13.8 acres of land located at 684 West Bel Air Avenue for the purpose of a future activity center with multi-purpose fields, parking lot, and accessory uses. The Harford County Council approved \$9.0M in their FY2021 budget for the architectural and engineering design for the proposed activity center. The City staff is working with Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation and their architects and engineers from JMT Architecture and Site Resources on the design and site layout. Construction of the activity center is anticipated for 2024. The City Council is also considering acquisition of an adjoining parcel(s) on Battle Avenue for extending a walking trail and other environmental attributes.
- The City was awarded \$4.0 million in the Fiscal Year 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act as a Congressional Community Funding Project (“Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Funds”) for the Aberdeen Transit Oriented Development – Station Square Project for Phase I. Phase I of the TOD Station Square Project includes a NEPA Analysis with a Phase II Environmental Study, Geotechnical Report to assess subsurface conditions, water table, and undertake soil borings, and 30% Preliminary Architectural and Engineering Design Services to include cost estimating for the project. The remaining FTA funds will be used for acquisition and demolition of the existing Exxon Station located at 1-7 N. Philadelphia Blvd. The FTA Funds will complete the first phase of funding for an

estimated \$55 million project that removes existing physical barriers, which have created accessibility challenges and increases connectivity at the Aberdeen Train Station (“the Station”). The proposed Station Square improvements will meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility and increase public safety and mobility to the Aberdeen MARC/Amtrak Train Station, a transportation hub for Harford County.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERN CHANGES IN 2022

The Planning Commission reviewed three Petitions for Annexation and made favorable recommendations to the City Council:

- 1) FRP Old Philadelphia Road LLC located off Old Philadelphia Road and Cranberry Run Drive on Tax Map 58, Parcels 252 and 265 containing 22.046 acres. The area proposed for annexation is in the City’s future growth area known as Planning Area 15 – Old Philadelphia. The proposed uses of the property are for warehouse distribution and logistics and the proposed zoning designation is M-1 Light Industrial District.
- 2) Richard Baker, owner of 2106 Titan Terrace located off Titan Terrace and Telestar Way on Tax Map 52, Parcel 336. The area proposed for annexation is in the City’s future growth area known as Planning Area 6 – Titan Terrace. The proposed use of the property is for residential purposes and the proposed zoning designation is R-1 Low Density Residential District.
- 3) Land of Presbyterian Home of Maryland, Inc. located off Long Drive on Tax Map 51, Parcels 951 and 946 containing 9.062 acres of land. The area proposed for annexation is in the City’s future growth area known as Planning Area 11 – Long/HEAT. The proposed use of the property is for open space/residential purposes and the proposed zoning designation is Integrated Business District.

NEW BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITIES IN 2022

All building permits were issued within the corporate limits of Aberdeen, which is a designated Priority Funding Area. New Building Permits Issued in 2022:

Type of Construction	Number Issued	Total Estimated Construction Costs
Residential – Single Family Dwellings	1	\$200,000.00
Multi-Family Residential	10	\$39,052,000.00
Commercial	5	\$5,805,815.00
Commercial – Alterations	53	\$6,941,001.00
Totals	69	\$51,998,816.00

Table 1: New Building Permit Activities

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES MAP

The Development Activities Map is located on Page 9 and highlights all approved preliminary site plans, final subdivision plats, and annexation areas that occurred in 2022.

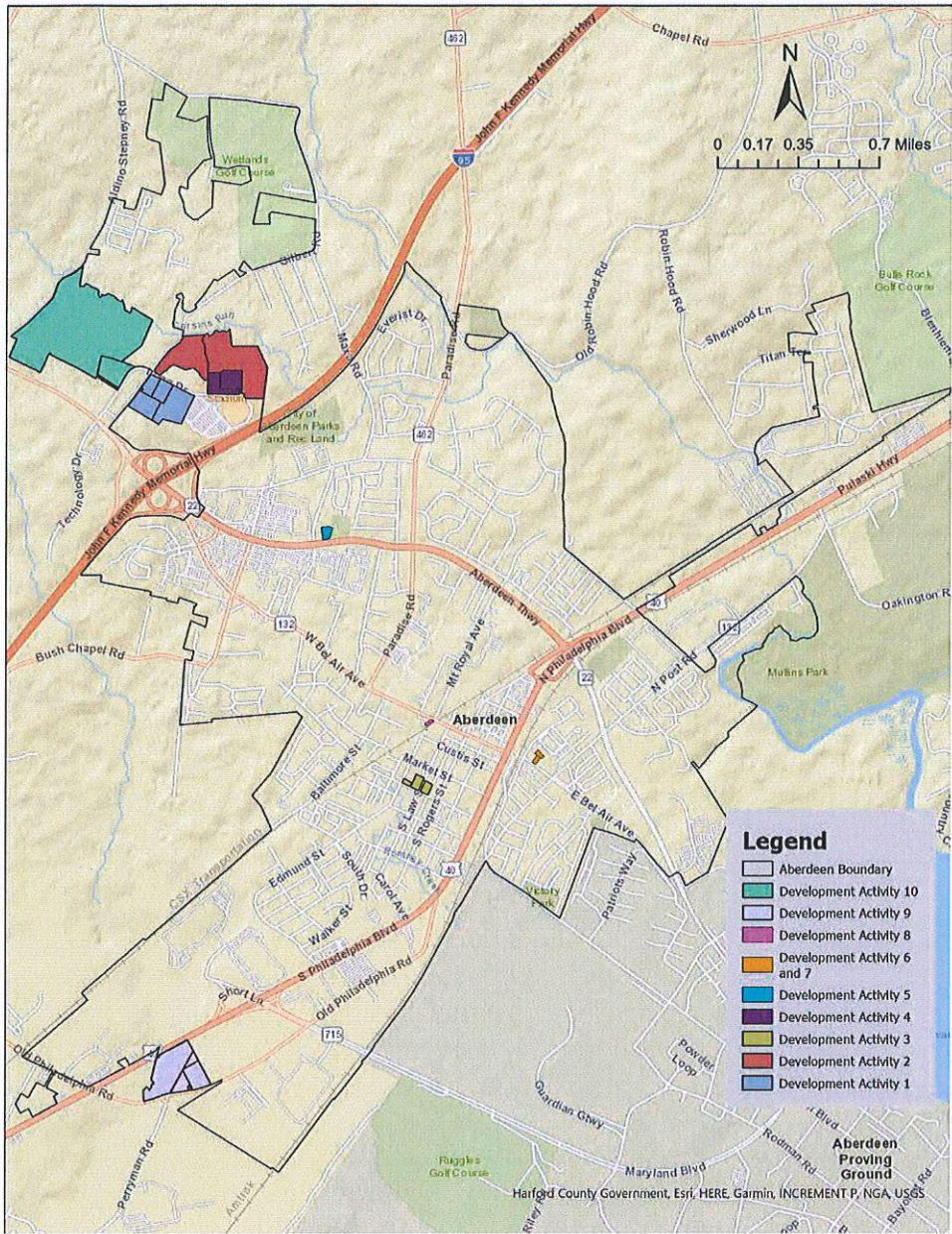
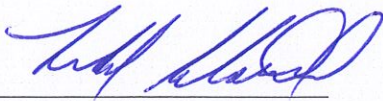


Figure 1: Development Activities Map

Approved: 
MARK SCHLOTTMAN
Chairman, Aberdeen Planning Commission

7/19/2023
Date