**CITY OF ABERDEEN**

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2015**

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**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, 2015 through December 31, 2015.**

**This report was prepared on July 28, 2016. The Aberdeen Planning Commission adopted this report on August 10, 2016.**

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Mark Schlottman, Chairman**

**Karen Heavey, Vice Chairman (resigned September 2016)**

**Kevin Miller, Vice Chairman**

**Dominique Edwards**

**Charles Glassman**

**Terri Preston**

**Amy Snyder**

**BOARD OF APPEALS**

**John Landbeck, Chairman**

**Peggy Dymond**

**Patrick Faircloth**

**Erick Stone**

**Melvin Taylor**

**Amy Lindecamp, Alternate**

**ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**Merrill Messick**

**Dave O’Steen**

**Allen Philippe**

**DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**Phyllis Grover**

**SENIOR PLANNER**

**Gilbert Jones**

**CITY OF ABERDEEN PLANNING COMMISSION**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2015**

**INTRODUCTION**

**The Annual Report for the Planning Commission presents the zoning and development activities that occurred during the 2015 calendar year. It also highlights the major planning activities considered by the Commission. This year’s Annual Report includes a comprehensive review of the Development Code, a rezoning request, calendar year 2015 building permit activity, and approved subdivision plats. Each of these initiatives worked towards implementing the State’s vision for sustainable communities that protect the natural environment, direct growth, maintain and improve infrastructure, and include citizen participation in the process. The City did not have any restrictions on development in the designated Priority Funding Area during the 2015 reporting period.**

**According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the City of Aberdeen has a population of 15,580 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), MARC commuter rail service and AMTRAK passenger service, CSX freight service, Harford Transit and MTA bus service, one federal highway (US 40) and five state highways (MD 22, MD 132, MD 462, MD 715, and MD 7). The City of Aberdeen functions as an independent municipality, providing many public services for its citizens. The City has its own zoning and planning authority, water and sewer services, police department, and public works department. Fire protection service is provided by the Aberdeen Volunteer Fire Department. Harford County Government provides schools, 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 (hereafter referred to as the Plan), enacts legislation to ensure compliance with the Plan, adopts amendments to the Development Code and the Zoning Map, and funds capital improvements necessary to implement 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 with regard to all zoning cases, annexations, subdivisions, site plans, 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, and interpretations from the Development Code and appeals from administrative decisions related to planning and zoning.**

**The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is comprised of three members appointed by the City Council. The ARC reviews site, signage, and landscaping plans for development projects located in the two 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 and Mrs. Karen Heavey was Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission until September 2016. Mr. Kevin Miller was elected Vice Chairman to fill the vacancy.**

**The Commission typically meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., in the City Council Chambers, 60 North Parke Street, Aberdeen. 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 prepare and approve a Comprehensive Plan and recommend the Plan to the Council. The Commission reviews and approves recommendations to the Council for all preliminary site plans, preliminary and final subdivision plats, amendments to the Aberdeen Development Code, annexations and rezonings, changes or amendments to the Subdivision Regulations, and changes in land use or development arising from local, State, or Federal programs or policies. The Commission is required to file an Annual Report on its activities with the Mayor and Council and the Maryland Secretary of Planning. The Commission members have completed the required Maryland Department of Planning – Planning Commission/Planning Board Education Course. Mr. Mark Schlottman completed the Maryland Open Meetings Training and received the Certificate of Training.**

**Planning Commission Activities**

**Sectional Map Amendment**

**The Commission did not review any sectional map amendments during this timeframe.**

**Development Code Amendments**

**The Commission reviewed the following amendments and recommended approval to the City Council:**

1. **The Code of the City of Aberdeen, Chapter 235-18 M. (1) – (11) and 235-21 for revisions to the Integrated Business District. These amendments were adopted by the City Council on April 27, 2015 by Ordinance No. 15-O-01.**
2. **The Code of the City of Aberdeen, Chapter 235-27 for revisions to accessory uses and other restrictions. These amendments were adopted by the City Council on April 27, 2015 by Ordinance No. 15-O-02.**
3. **The Code of the City of Aberdeen, Chapter 235 a comprehensive review of the Development Code was begun in January 2015 and was targeted for completion in December 2015.**

**Amendment to the 2011 Comprehensive Plan**

**The Commission did not review any amendments to the 2011 Comprehensive Plan.**

**Planning Commission Development Activity**

**The Commission conducted its regular review of subdivision plats, site plans, rezonings, and annexation requests. The Commission and staff reviewed these requests and insured that compliance with the Aberdeen Development Code, Comprehensive Plan, and Subdivision Regulations was achieved. Refer to the Map on Page 9 for the 2015 Development Activity.**

**These reviews resulted in the following recommendations for approval by the Commission:**

1. **Rezoning Request for 727 and 811 Old Philadelphia Road. Planning Commission recommended approval of the rezoning of the properties from**

**B-3 Highway Commercial to M-1 Light Industrial. The applicant subsequently withdrew the request before the City Council approval.**

1. **Final Subdivision Plat for Aberdeen Station, Lot 2, 744-788 South Philadelphia Boulevard. This project is located off U.S. 40 on Tax Map 206 and Parcel 2798. Planning Commission recommended approval of the final subdivision plat on 03/11/15. City Council approved the final subdivision plat on 03/23/15.**
2. **Final Subdivision Plat for Lands of Stancill, Lot 1 and Parcel A. This project is located off Beards Hill Road on Tax Map 202 and Parcel 0055. Planning Commission recommended approval of the final subdivision plat on 03/11/15. City Council approved the final subdivision plat on 03/23/15.**
3. **Preliminary Site Plan for MGP Retail Consulting. This project is located off U.S. 40 on Tax Map 206 and Parcel 2480. Planning Commission recommended approval of the preliminary site plan on 06/10/15. City Council approved the preliminary site plan on 07/20/2015.**
4. **Preliminary Subdivision Plan for MGP Retail Consulting. This project is located off U.S. 40 on Tax Map 206 and Parcel 2480. Planning Commission recommended approval of the preliminary subdivision plan on 06/10/2015. City Council approved the preliminary subdivision plan on 07/20/2015.**
5. **Concept Plan for Stadium Towne Center. This project is located off MD 22 on Tax Map 51 and Parcels 111, 751, 112, 879, 400, 592, 113, and 114. Planning Commission recommended approval of the concept plan on 06/10/2015. City Council did not review the concept plan.**
6. **Final Subdivision Plats Two and Three for Winston’s Choice, Lots 26-37, 38-57, and 63-68. This project is located off Taft Street on Tax Map 204 and Parcel 2855. Planning Commission recommended approval of the final subdivision plats on 08/12/2015. City Council approved the final subdivision plats on 08/24/2015.**
7. **Preliminary Site Plan for Stadium Towne Center. This project is located off MD 22 on Tax Map 51 and Parcels 111, 751, 112, 879, 400, 592, 113, and 114. Planning Commission recommended approval of the preliminary site plan on 09/16/2015. City Council approved the preliminary site plan on 10/19/2015.**
8. **Preliminary Site Plan for Frito Lay, Inc. Expansion to include Automatic Storage and Retrieval System and Expansion of the Raw Material Warehouse. This project is located off 800 Hickory Drive on Tax Map 58 and Parcel 264. Planning Commission recommended approval of the preliminary site plan on 11/04/15. City Council approved the preliminary site plan on 11/23/2015.**

**Other Planning Staff Work Efforts**

**The Department of Planning and Community Development and Department of Public Works staff began working on an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance. The Department of Planning and Community Development staff completed their review and update to the Code of the City of Aberdeen, Chapter 235 – Development Code.**

**DEVELOPMENT PATTERN CHANGES IN 2015**

**In calendar year 2015, the City issued 53 building permits for new residential construction, 4 building permits for new commercial construction, and 1 building permit for new industrial construction. All building permits were issued within the corporate limits of Aberdeen, which is a designated Priority Funding Area.**

**NEW BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED - 2015**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Construction** | **Number Issued** | **Total Estimated Construction Costs** |
| **Residential – Single Family Dwellings** | **53** | **$21,078,800** |
| **Residential – Duplex** | **0** | **0** |
| **Residential – Townhouses** | **0** | **0** |
| **Residential – Multi-family/apartment buildings** | **0** | **0** |
| **Commercial** | **4** | **$13,936,300** |
| **Industrial** | **1** | **$3,000,000** |

**ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES ORDINANCE (APFO)**

**New residential development projects in the City are subject to Chapter 302, Growth Management, in the Code of the City of Aberdeen. At this time, Chapter 302 only provides for adequate school capacity. Approvals for residential subdivision plans and site plans for development shall be subject to determination of adequate school capacity based on the current and projected use level described in the current Harford County Annual Growth Report.**

**Preliminary subdivision plans exceeding 5 lots and site plans for residential developments exceeding 5 dwelling units shall not be approved if: (1) the enrollment at the elementary school which serves the proposed development is greater than 115% of the rated capacity or is projected to be greater than 115% within 5 years or (2) the enrollment of either the middle school or high school which serves the site is greater than 115% of the rated capacity or is projected to be greater than 115% within 5 years. The approval of a plan shall be deferred and placed on a waiting list arranged by date of completion of the review by staff until such time as the enrollment of the affected school complies with the above requirements. In 2015 all of the schools in Aberdeen had adequate school capacity to accommodate new residential development within the corporate limits. No new schools or school additions were constructed within the corporate limits in 2015.**

**The Departments of Planning and Community Development and Public Works are working on an amendment to Chapter 302, Growth Management and the outcome of the work effort will be an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance.**

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