



**Town of Easton
Board of Zoning Appeals**

14 South Harrison Street
Easton, Maryland 21601
410-822-1943

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 20th, 2018

Members Present: Peter Cotter – Chairman, Gary Molchan – Vice Chairman, Tom Moore and Michael O’Keefe – Alternate

Staff Present: Lynn Thomas – Town Planner, Sierra Crist – Current Planner / GIS Analyst, Nancy Pinkney – Administrator Specialist

Opening Statement

Peter Cotter, Chairman, called the regularly scheduled meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday November 20th, 2018 in the Town Council Chambers.

Upon motion of Mr. Molchan seconded by Mr. O’Keefe the 2018-10-23 meeting minutes were approved as submitted. Approved 2-0

BOZA Case No. V 18-12 / V-761 Map 104 Parcel 1307 Hammond St Zach Smith

Zach Smith, Bill Stagg and Wayne Suggs were present on behalf of the request.

Mr. Smith explained the nature of the request for a lot size and density variance to permit the existing vacant lot to be subdivided into two lots. The intended use of these lots will be for Habitat for Humanity to build two new homes in Town.

Mr. Smith explained that the current property has no current address. Mr. Smith stated he feels it is a great candidate for Habitat home site with a close proximity to the downtown. Mr. Smith explained the application which shows the proposed subdivision with two different options based on two one-story homes or one two-story home and stated that option B, sheet two, for the one-story homes will be the formal request. Mr. Smith explained this will be a request to permit one

lot at 4,499 sq. ft. and the other lot at 4,069 sq. ft where the lot size minimum is 5000 sq. ft. in this area.

Mr. Molchan asked if the applicants had considered building a duplex like the ones on Port Street. Mr. Stagg responded that Habitat has done a couple of developments like this with duplexes on Clay Street and one on Port Street. Mr. Stagg added that Habitat for Humanity families are typically first-time homeowners and that the home buyers go through a lengthy process of how to be a homeowner. Mr. Stagg added that when a duplex is built it adds a level of complexity to the home purchasing and maintenance process. Mr. Stagg stated that there tends to be better success with single family detached houses for homeowners and that duplexes are better for rental units.

Mr. Molchan asked the applicants if there are similar lots less than 5000 sq. ft. in the area. Mr. Stagg said there are smaller houses on Glenwood Avenue and referred to a document in the application which he highlighted similar small lots in the area. Mr. Stagg stated that the lot is currently vacant and that there are no trees present on the lot that will be cut down.

Mr. Cotter said there are two variance requests, one for variance of lot size and the other density. Mr. Cotter asked Mr. Smith to speak about the density request.

Mr. Smith addressed the request for a variance of density stating that the Town ordinance permits up to 30 units per acre in the CR in certain circumstance with multi-family and that greater density exists in this area based on the existing lot sizes. Mr. Smith stated that in his opinion, the provision is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan and the minimum density permitted to be a PFA in the State of Maryland. Mr. Smith feels the comprehensive plan describes overwhelming supports of higher density. Mr. Smith added that he is requesting a variance of the permitted density to accommodate one single family dwelling per reduced lot size.

Mr. Cotter asked for input from staff on the density concerns. Mr. Thomas responded that he agrees with Mr. Stagg and Mr. Smith for increased density for R7A. Ms. Crist added that this is the CR zone, which is downtown and the older part of town. Ms. Crist continued that it is not often that you see new lots being created in the CR as most lots are existing small lots. Ms. Crist added that she does not feel that this request is out of character with the neighborhood.

Mr. Cotter opened floor for responses from public which there was none. Mr. Cotter stated that there was a letter received this morning from Mr. Nick Turner in opposition.

Upon motion of Mr. Cotter seconded by Mr. Moore the Board voted 3-0 to approve the lot size and density variance requests as submitted.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Cotter requested a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Mr. Moore for a 3-0 vote. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:29 a.m.