

**TOWN OF BLADENSBURG
WORKSESSION MINUTES
November 13, 2017 5:30 p.m.**

I. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor James called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with Council Members Bridgeman, Ficklin, Hall and Mendoza present.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 2017 Worksession: Council Member Mendoza moved to approve the minutes as presented; Council Member Ficklin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

III. ERNEST MAIER SCHEMATICS PRESENTATION: Business Owner Brendan Quinn presented a proposed design to improve the façade of the retail store fronting 450/Annapolis Road. The façade was a condition of the covenants agreed to between Ernest Maier and the Town as part of their Special Exception request to build a Concrete Batching Plant. The improvements presented include the installation of pervious pavers, landscaping buffers of holly trees or similar plantings, signage with a punched metal design to dress up the core of the building, columns fabricated with local stone, and a fence to hide and protect the property.

Mr. Quinn also proposed depicting six significant Town “themes” to be portrayed in paneled murals fronting the retail store. Additionally, he is considering a flag atop the plant.

Mr. Quinn stated he is working with a student in the University of Maryland Landscape Architecture program on the design.

Council Member Ficklin moved to support the owner of Ernest Maier moving forward with the façade improvements as presented; Council Member Hall seconded the motion. Vote: Council Member Hall-Aye, Council Member Bridgeman-Aye, Council Member Mendoza-Aye, Council Member Ficklin-Aye, Mayor James-Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Holiday Decoration Contest: Mr. Rinehart updated the Mayor and Council on the status of the Holiday Decoration Contest. The purpose of the contest is to recognize and show appreciation to the residents of Bladensburg for an outstanding job at decorating their homes for the holidays. The contest will be comprised of two categories 1) residential homes and 2) apartment homes (with a balcony only). One award per category will be announced by the Judges on December 18, 2017. Each award recipient will receive a \$100 Walmart gift card and bragging rights. The Holiday Decorating Contest is a Town TNI initiative.

Pocket Parks: The first pocket park will be located at the corner of Taussig Road

and 54th Street and will include two benches and enhanced landscaping. The benches and landscaping will be installed when the weather is appropriate. The pocket park will be a passive feature designed as a place for residents to pause and relax as they are out for walks around Town.

PG County Zoning Rewrite Update: Mr. Tinelli attended a public meeting on the Prince George's County zoning re-write. He reported the County is doing its first zoning and regulation rewrite since 1961. The County Council is requesting completion of the re-write on this voluminous document by March 2018. Mr. Tinelli stated Economic development has been the driving force behind the rewrite as current zoning is very cumbersome and needs streamlining to encourage redevelopment. The proposed regulations support mixed use transit centers that are pedestrian friendly. The document shows 3D images, with an updated landscaping manual, lighting standards and green building standards.

One primary issue of concern for the Town is the proposed zoning change of R55 to R65 for single family homes. The majority of single family homes in the Town are currently zoned R55 and would become noncompliant if the proposed change is approved. This change would potentially require residents to request a Special Exception or waiver for additions and other improvements being made to their properties. Additionally, the propose change could impact property values and may make it difficult to resell a home. At the time of the meeting Zoning Maps were not available. Mr. Tinelli stated the maps will be out soon and the deadline for public comments is December 15th.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Peace Cross Discussion: Mayor James reported the Special Worksession concerning the Peace Cross showed large support for keeping the memorial in place. The 4th Circuit Court of Appeals voted the Peace Cross' location on public land was unconstitutional and must be removed. However, it has temporarily suspended its ruling pending a decision by all fourteen Judges services the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals to rehear the case. At this time it is not recommended the Town take a position. The Town Attorney has advised Mayor James the Court will not hear any new testimony nor will not accepting any additional positions. The only information the courts will hear at this time is the briefings already on file with the Courts.

Recycling Agreement with Prince George's Council: The Mayor and Council agreed they were not comfortable approving the document without reviewing changes made by the Town Attorney, There will be a special meeting, if necessary, to approve the changes before forwarding the amended draft to the County.

PGCMA Representative: Mayor James requested she be appointed as the Town's PGCMA representative. She will attend the monthly meetings and other events and ensure that the Council is comfortable with any votes she casts on its behalf. Mr.

Bridgeman countered that he had been attending all the meetings for the past two years as representative for the Town. Although the Mayor would be the official representative, she encouraged elected officials to attend these meetings. Council Member Ficklin moved to appoint Mayor James as the Chief Representative to the Prince George's Municipal Association; Council Member Mendoza seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Council Member Hall-Aye, Council Member Bridgeman-Nay, Council Member Mendoza-Aye, Council Member Ficklin-Aye, Mayor James-Aye. The motion was approved four to one.

Holiday for Friday after Thanksgiving: Following last year's (2016) approval by the Mayor & Council giving the staff a holiday day on the Friday after Thanksgiving for staff, Town Administrator recommended making this a permanent holiday. After some discussion the consensus was not to make this a permanent holiday but a decision to be revisited each year. Council Member Mendoza moved to approve allowing the staff to have the 2017 Friday after Thanksgiving as a holiday; Council Member Hall seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Council Member Hall-Aye, Council Member Bridgeman-Nay, Council Member Mendoza-Aye, Council Member Ficklin-Aye, Mayor James-Aye. The motion was approved four to one.

VII. ADJOURNMENT: At 6:30 p.m., there being no further business, Council Member Bridgeman moved to adjourn; Council Member Hall seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. McAuley, Town Clerk