



Annual Report to The Mayor And Council

Board: Advisory Planning Commission

By: Stephanie Stullich, Chair

Date: January 12, 2022 Period Covered: January – December 2021

I. What is the Purpose of the Board? (As stated in the City Codes or establishing Resolution)

According to Section 15-19 of the City Code, the Advisory Planning Commission (APC) is charged with:

- Making recommendations to the Mayor and Council regarding zoning applications including departures and variances.
- Hearing appeals related to City building codes.
- Providing analysis and input relative to County and University plans and studies.
- Proposing workable solutions for community problems related to zoning, building, and development codes.

II. Provide an update on the previously approved Workplan (if applicable) that lists and briefly describes progress and outcomes during the past year in support of this purpose.

The APC is exempt from filing a workplan, as determined by the Mayor and Council. The following is a summary of activities during the past reporting period.

- The APC met 8 times (once every month, except April, June, September, and December). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings were held virtually.
- Public hearings were held on 14 applications, including 12 variance requests and 2 requests for departures. The most common variance requests were for parking in the front yard (6) and lot coverage (6). These applications are summarized in the table below.

Application #	Hearing Date	Location	Variances				Departures	
			Lot Coverage	Setback	Parking in front yard	Fence	Free-standing sign	Parking spaces & driveway
Total		14	6	1	6	2	1	1
CPV-2021-01	2-4-21	Lackawanna St	1					
CPV-2021-02	2-4-21	Stewart Ct	1		1			
CPV-2021-03	3-4-21	Dartmouth Ave	1					
CPV-2021-04	5-6-21	49th Place		1				
CPV-2021-05	7-1-21	Mineola Rd	1		1			
CPV-2021-06	7-1-21	Rhode Island Ave	1					
CPV-2021-07	8-5-21	51st Ave			1			
CPV-2021-08	10-7-21	51st Place			1			
CPV-2021-09	10-7-21	51st Place	1		1			
CPV-2021-10	10-7-21	51st Ave			1			
CEO-2021-01	5-6-21	Howard Lane				1		
CEO-2021-02	11-4-21	Indian Lane				1		
CPD-2021-01	7-1-21	Baltimore Ave					1	
CPD-2021-02	10-7-21	Dartmouth Ave						1

- Two new members were appointed, Malaika Nji-Keber (District 4) and Kiersten Johnson (District 2), and their first meeting was in July. Orientation materials were provided including the requirement for taking the Planning Commissioner Training Course provided by the State of Maryland.
- The APC held two Informational Presentations which residents and civic associations were invited to join to learn more about certain development proposals and to express their comments and opinions. The minutes of the meetings reflect the questions, answers, and discussion between the Applicant, APC members, and the public.
 - February 4, 2021: The Children’s Guild Pre-School (SE-4836). This project proposed to expand the current daycare approval from 50 to 120 children, install a playground, and make other site improvements. Meeting participants raised questions about traffic and parking, but there was not strong opposition to the proposal. It was supported by the City Council and approved by the Planning Board.
 - March 4, 2021: Development Concept for vacant land on Rhode Island Avenue between Knox Road and Calvert Road. This project proposed to develop three small apartment buildings marketed towards professionals or others working in the area. There was significant opposition to the plans presented and the project has not moved forward. The property is still available for sale.

- In November, Attorney Susan Cook, provided some basic training to members as a refresher and to provide an opportunity to address questions or concerns. The following topics were discussed.
 - City Code Section 190-4 – Criteria for granting variances
 - City Code Section 15-24 – Conflict of Interest
 - College Park Ethics Code, Chapter 38
 - Appearances while in session and in the community

III. Provide a recommended work plan that lists and briefly describes goals, objectives, and tasks for the upcoming year in support of the purpose. Workplans must be approved by the City Council.

Not Applicable. The Advisory Planning Commission is not required to submit a work plan.

IV. Please identify any issues or problems that you want to bring to the attention of the City Council.

As noted in our previous Annual Report (for 2020), the APC has found that the general public has become accustomed to online formats for public hearings and community meetings, and in some cases these are better attended than in-person meetings. At the same time, the APC recognizes the value of face-to-face communication that occurs in in-person meetings. Looking ahead, the APC would like to encourage the City Council to identify and implement technological solutions that facilitate hybrid meetings, in which meeting participants can participate either in person or remotely. The APC also encourages the use of options that enable speakers participating remotely to be seen if they choose to turn on their cameras, which we believe will provide a more inclusive feeling for all who wish to participate.