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TOWN OF EASTON, MARYLAND
Easton Town Hall
14 S. Harrison Street

May 2, 2016

PRESENT AT CONVENING.

Mayor Robert C. Willey	13	Councilmember Pete Leshar
Council President John Ford	14	Councilmember Ron E. Engle
Councilmember Alan I. Silverstein	15	Councilmember Megan M. Cook

Also present was the Town Manager Mr. Robert F. Karge, Town Attorney Mrs. Sharon VanEmburch, Town Planner Mr. Lynn Thomas and Town Clerk Mrs. Kathy M. Ruf.

OPENING REMARKS BY MR. ENGLE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Mr. Engle gave opening remarks and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 18, 2016 MEETINGS.

Upon motion by Mr. Leshar seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, minutes of the April 18 meetings were approved with corrections.

POLICE BOARD.

Chief Spencer and Capt. Waltrup were present to update the Council on Police Department activities. Chief Spencer thanked all those that assisted with the recent accident involving Officer Michelle Scherholtz.

Chief Spencer discussed personnel and stated that Recruit Ben Schorr is scheduled to graduate in June which will leave Easton Police Department two available positions for police officers. Chief Spencer stated that they will be shorthanded this summer.

Chief Spencer discussed the Talbot County 911 dispatchers' consolidation and bike patrol activities. He discussed recent events and upcoming events to occur in Easton. Chief Spencer stated that the dispatchers will become full time county employees July 1. They plan to move in to the expanded facilities on Port Street at the end of fall.

Chief Spencer discussed the annual in-service training which will occur at Easton Police Department.

Chief Spencer stated that the 2015 Officer of the Year is PFC Ryan McCormick and the 2015 Civilian Employee of the Year was awarded to PCO Amber Thamert.

Easton Police Department January thru March statistics were reviewed.

ITEMS BY MAYOR WILLEY.

Mayor Willey stated that the budget presentation for the upcoming fiscal year will be held June 6 at 7:15 p.m.

Mayor Willey stated that there will be a demonstration of the proposed self-contained breathing apparatus at the Easton Volunteer Fire Department June 20, at 6:00 p.m. The estimated cost of the equipment will be approximately \$400,000.

ITEMS BY THE TOWN MANAGER.

62
63 Mr. Karge asked for council consideration for the approval of the Property Maintenance Bid. He
64 stated that the staff recommendation is not the low bid but the next bid which is responsive to our
65 needs.

66
67 Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Mr. Engle and carried unanimously, the Marshall's
68 Property bid as recommended by staff was approved.

69
70 Mr. Karge asked that a public hearing be scheduled for May 16 for the CDBG request for \$300,000 to
71 partially fund the Housing on the Hill renovations. He stated that the request would be bundled with
72 the Channel Marker grant funding request.

73
74 Mr. Karge stated that our thoughts are with Officer Scherholtz and with the family as she recovers.

75
76 **LGIT BOARD OF TRUSTEES – ELECTION & BALLOT.**

77
78 Upon motion by Mr. Engle seconded by Mr. Leshner and carried unanimously, the candidates for
79 nomination to serve as members of the Board of Trustees for a three year term beginning July 1,
80 2016 were approved.

81
82 **LETTER FROM EASTON PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION CHAIRMAN RICHARD M.**
83 **TETTELBAUM RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF ESTABLISHING THE PUD DISTRICT FOR**
84 **GALLOWAY MEADOWS.**

85
86 President Ford discussed the letter received from Chairman Richard M. Tettelbaum for Galloway
87 Meadows PUD and set the Public Hearing for June 6 at 7:30 p.m.

88
89 **CONSENSUS ON THE REQUEST TO ANNEX APPROXIMATELY 13.025 ACRES, MORE OR LESS LYING**
90 **CONTIGUOUS TO THE EXISTING BOUNDARIES OF THE TOWN OF EASTON OWNED BY ROUTE 33,**
91 **LLC AND STANDARD FUSEE CORPORATION (FORMERLY MCLAUGHLIN ACQUISITION**
92 **CORPORATION).**

93
94 President Ford thanked the community for their comments and civility during the public hearing.
95 He thanked the staff and Planning Commission.

96
97 President Ford stated that he is insistent there be a service road. He stated that without the
98 service road, he will not support the application for annexation. President Ford stated that there
99 needs to be an alternative road for ingress and egress.

100
101 President Ford addressed some of the concerns outlined by some of the audience comments. He
102 stated that retail should not be considered at all for parcels for annexation. President Ford stated
103 that this has been the most difficult decision but he is not supporting the application without
104 considerations.

105
106 Mr. Silverstein stated that this is a unique piece of property. He stated that the property cannot
107 have the same use as it previously had. He suggested no significant development within five years.
108 Mr. Silverstein stated that he is concerned about the impact of traffic impact. Mr. Silverstein
109 stated that he wants to see agreements from other property owners adjacent to this property.

110
111 Mr. Leshner stated he is largely in agreement with Mr. Ford and Mr. Silverstein but with certain
112 concessions. Mr. Leshner suggested the area be accessed with a road off Marlboro Road, hold off
113 on development for five years, and assign BC zoning; the Planning Commission's zoning
114 recommendation to this parcel.

115
116 Mr. Engle stated he fully concurs with President Ford and Mr. Leshner. If the annexation request is
117 passed, he stated that he wants no access road to Route 33. He stated he agrees with Planning &
118 Zoning Commission's recommendation for zoning.

119

120 Mrs. Cook stated that this has been a difficult decision. She stated that she has relied back to the
121 Comprehensive Plan which she believes is a strong guiding force. Mrs. Cook stated that the
122 Comprehensive Plan shows this area as Priority 1 Annexation. She stated that the Planning &
123 Zoning Commission voted to support the annexation application. Mrs. Cook stated that she sees
124 this as an issue with timing and she likewise would prefer an exit on Marlboro Road.
125 She stated that she would like to see the impact of the proposed signal which she hopes will make
126 an impact on the flow of traffic. Mrs. Cook stated that she supports BC zoning for the property.
127

128 President Ford stated that the council could defer voting at the present time as it appears the
129 council is not in favor of annexation as presented. President Ford stated that it is up to the
130 applicant how to move forward. The applicant may consider changes in the application or voting
131 on the application as it stands.
132

133 **7:30PM PUBLIC HEARING TO OBTAIN THE VIEWS OF CITIZENS ON COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC**
134 **DEVELOPMENT, AND HOUSING NEEDS CONSIDERED FOR SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION TO**
135 **THE MARYLAND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG) FOR CHANNEL**
136 **MARKER FOUNDATION'S REHABILITATION OF THEIR PLANNED WELLNESS CENTER AT 8865**
137 **GLEBE PARK DRIVE.**
138

139 At 7:38 p.m., President Ford opened the Public Hearing.
140

141 Ms. Debbye Jackson, Executive Director and Mr. Rick George, Finance Director for Channel
142 Marker, Inc. were present to discuss the rehabilitation of their Wellness Center.
143

144 Mr. Karge stated the notice that was advertised was specifically for Channel Marker's grant
145 request but due to discussions last week with the state regarding CDBG, the Town has been
146 encouraged to file for an additional \$300,000 for the Housing on the Hill project with Channel
147 Marker's \$500,000 renovation grant request. Mr. Karge stated that an ad would be advertised to
148 include the town's portion of \$300,000 in addition to Channel Marker's request. Mr. Karge
149 stated that he has been assured that the funding for Buffalo Soldier Home will be coming from
150 special funds from the Secretary of Housing. He stated that a resolution for the total grant
151 request will be introduced at the next meeting.
152

153 Ms. Debbye Jackson discussed the services provided by Channel Marker. She stated that they
154 intend to have a program site on Port Street and consolidate the Port Street and Glebe Drive
155 facilities.
156

157 At 7:47 p.m., President Ford closed the public hearing.
158

159 **CONT'D. PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCE NO. 680, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF**
160 **EASTON MODIFYING THE RENTAL HOUSING LICENSE PROVISIONS TO EXTEND THE PROVISIONS**
161 **TO SHORT TERM RENTALS, TO PROVIDE CLEAR EXCEPTIONS TO THE REQUIREMENT FOR A**
162 **LICENSE, TO PROVIDE SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR OCCUPANCIES BY IMMEDIATE FAMILY**
163 **MEMBERS AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE REGISTRATION OF ALL NON-OWNER OCCUPIED**
164 **PROPERTY IN THE TOWN OF EASTON."**
165

166 Ms. VanEmburch discussed comments submitted by the Board of Realtors. She stated that nothing
167 has changed with the ordinance since the last time the matter was discussed.
168

169 President Ford stated that he did not fully understand everything when we started this process. He
170 questioned why the town is actually allowing short term rentals or AIRBNBs in residential
171 neighborhoods. He stated that they are actually a commercial use in residential neighborhoods.
172

173 Mr. Richardson stated that this is a tough topic and even harder to regulate. Mr. Richardson stated
174 that the town has six known AIRBNBs. He questioned how frequent this is occurring. Mr. Richardson
175 stated that we must acknowledge that short term rentals actually exist in Easton and are not
176 regulated. He stated that he is looking for direction on how to proceed and handle the rentals.
177

178 President Ford stated that infractions are going to have to be complaint driven.
179

180 Mr. Silverstein discussed St. Michael's legislation and Utah's legislation for Bed & Breakfasts. He
181 stated that he is of the opinion that if there are rentals less than four months, they should not occur
182 in residential neighborhoods.
183

184 Mr. Engle stated that we are recognizing that AIRBNBs are out there and rental owners have to
185 comply with rental building codes.
186

187 Mr. Leshner discussed a model he has in mind. He discussed St. Michaels short term rentals. Mr.
188 Leshner stated that the short term rentals fill a need in the community but the residents think this is
189 going to be too permissive. He stated he is having second thoughts on the direction the draft
190 legislation is going. Mr. Leshner suggested starting with prohibiting the activity and if there is a need,
191 permit short term rentals in a specific area.
192

193 Mr. Tom Alspach, 295 Bay Street, stated that he agrees with President Ford. Mr. Alspach stated he
194 has rentals and is attuned to regulations that landlords have to go thru. Mr. Alspach stated that this
195 would be a very specified form of commercial spot zoning. He stated that allowing AIRBNBs would
196 be allowing commercial uses in residential neighborhoods. He stated he would not want an
197 unregulated house next to him in residential area. He suggested prohibiting it or enacting a lot of
198 regulations on how to control and regulate short term rentals. Mr. Alspach stated that commercial
199 activities are not permitted in residential neighborhood. He requested how they would be regulated.
200

201 President Ford asked for any other comments. There being none, President Ford left the public
202 hearing open. He stated that written comments could be submitted to the Town office for
203 dissemination.
204

205 **ITEMS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.**
206

207 Mrs. Cook encouraged everyone to see the Ruth Starr exhibit at the Waterfowl Building.
208

209 President Ford reminded everyone that the Multicultural Festival will be held this weekend at
210 Idlewild Park.
211

212 **ADJOURN.**
213

214 At 8:17 p.m., upon motion by Mr. Leshner seconded by Mr. Silverstein and carried unanimously,
215 the regularly scheduled meeting was adjourned.
216
217
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219

220 _____
Kathy M. Ruf, Town Clerk