

POOLESVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING OF AUGUST 17, 2011

**PRESENT:** HAROLD EHRENTRAUT, CHUCK STUMP AND GEORGE COAKLEY. ALSO PRESENT WAS TOWN MANAGER, WADE YOST.

**Call to Order**

Mr. Coakley: Poolesville Planning Commission of August 17, 2011 is called to order.

**Announcements**

Mr. Coakley: Are there any announcements?

Mr. Yost: Just that we will have a new member, Mr. Dennis Conley to the Planning Commission, he will have his official appointment on Monday, 7:30 at the Commissioners Meeting.

Mr. Coakley: Ok anything else?

Mr. Yost: That is it.

Mr. Coakley: Ok.

**Citizen's Comments on Agenda Items**

Mr. Coakley: And are there any citizen's comments on the agenda items, and other than the approval of the minutes of July 27 the only other item we have under new business is recommendation for Variance 003-11, placement of shed for the Mackie residence at 19824 Westerly Avenue. Any comments on that or you can wait until we get to it.

Speaker: I'll wait.

Mr. Coakley: Ok.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Coakley: Do I hear a motion then for approval of the minutes of July 27, 2011?

Mr. Ehrentraut: Motion to approve minutes of July 27, 2011.

Mr. Stump: Second.

Mr. Coakley: All in favor?

All: Aye.

**New Business**

Mr. Coakley: Ok and under new business, recommendation for Variance 003-11, placement of the shed at the Mackie residence, 19824 Westerly Avenue.

Mr. Yost: I've had a chance to go out and visit the property. I went out there and typically with variances you want to have some type of reason for the variance to be approved, and certainly in this case here, it is a corner lot and there is a large swale in the back of the property as well as trees, there is really not a level place for the applicant to put the shed other than the location that they want (inaudible) it does seem like the best place to be and it is behind a 6 foot fence also.

Mr. Stump: The fence is already there?

Mr. Ehrentraut: I was out there and I think it is the right property, the shed is already up?

Mr. Coakley: Yes.

Speaker: (Inaudible).

Mr. Yost: You should come up to the microphone.

Mr. Coakley: Yeah would you please come and identify yourself.

Ms. Mackie: My name is --- Mackie and I live at 19824 Westerly Avenue and I am here to ask for a Variance for the position of the shed in the yard. The shed was delivered this morning, due to logistical reasons but with the understanding that if the variance does not go through, then we would have to try another means to accommodate the code that (inaudible). So that is why we are here for the variance.

Mr. Coakley: Chuck did you have a chance to go by?

Mr. Stump: No I did not.

Mr. Coakley: Because even though it is fenced, I noticed that there is like a foot and a half or two and a half feet or something that comes up above it, so it is probably 11 or 12 feet tall or something like that.

Ms. Mackie: No it is not really, the sides of the shed are 6 feet 6 inches for the sides, and then it is just the structure of the roof and it is a Dutch roof, it is not a pointed one, it is flat and then down with the sides, which I believe it just added another 3 feet if that, something of that nature. I don't have the dimensions on me at the moment, I think I turned that in with the permit.

Mr. Coakley: That is about right, there is like 2 and a half feet or something that come up above the fence and everything. So aesthetically in all honesty it does not look real good from the road, because you have the house and then the break and then the sides...

Ms. Mackie: Well we had to take one panel out to put it in and we are working on putting that back in the next day, tomorrow working on getting that back up. The way that the landing and the lot is with the house being a corner unit, is set back from the road considerably, so that makes the backyard less than what the front yard is. We have a small pool that was already there when I purchased the house, so that takes up quite a bit of that backyard and as Mr. Yost was saying, there is a swale all the way through the whole back side of the yard, the elevation does not give it a chance to adhere something easy to put a shed back there. If this variance does not go through than we would have to go through and put it up on stilts and then it is going to be standing much higher than what the fence is now. And I talked with my neighbors and they much rather prefer where it is, they have no problem with that, compared to having it up on stilts on anything of that nature. That is just not going to look aesthetically nice, because then you are going to see half the shed or more up there, but it would be in the backyard according to the definition of what the backyard is.

Mr. Coakley: Well we shouldn't be able to see anymore above the fence if you put it on the level...

Ms. Mackie: The way that it is back there...

Mr. Yost: The yard goes down and the neighbor's side yard, which is her rear yard, the fence does drop down about 4 feet, so that shed would have to be raised up and it would be about 4 more feet.

Mr. Coakley: How about the opposite side of the yard from where Butler Road is?

Ms. Mackie: There isn't room there because that is where the pool is and then that is where the pool filter and pump is and I can't dig around that.

Mr. Ehrentraut: Do you have a side exit, like right where the shed is, is there a door out?

Ms. Mackie: No there is not one right there, there is one in the back of the house, I can show you on the plat.

Mr. Ehrentraut: Is it possible to turn the shed?

Ms. Mackie: Well then you would have more of it coming that you would see from the roadside. The longest side of it is along the side of the house, so that it is the most pleasing from the street.

Mr. Coakley: Is your property flat over there?

Ms. Mackie: This is where the pump is, right through this whole area here and there are some trees and some larger bushes along through here, there is not enough room to put the shed here and there is a gate on the fence right here.

Mr. Coakley: Because if you draw a line coming from the rear of your home across would be where your back yard would be, so it would leave this triangle back in here and then of course...

Ms. Mackie: Well the fence only goes right here, so there is a huge tree here and another huge tree right here, there is a large bush that (inaudible), without having to cut down a whole lot of shrubbery and greenery then there really is not space. This is not flat because all of this angles upward and this part is higher than this part.

Mr. Coakley: Well the pluses are, the siding does match the siding of your house, so that is one thing.

Ms. Mackie: And that is why I invited, I offered for anybody to come out and walk it with me or come out and see it and I invited Mr. Yost and he came out.

Mr. Coakley: I drove by a few times, I didn't bother stopping.

Ms. Mackie: To try to determine if there was any other place, but there really isn't. There are trees all through here, this is a very large tree in here, and this is a huge pine tree, and the only other place would be for putting it on stilts would be going back along here and that (inaudible).

Mr. Coakley: Ok probably worst of all evils or the best of all evils, I guess. Ok anybody else have any comments or questions?

Mr. Stump: No Sir.

Mr. Coakley: Ok well I guess my comment would be, it is probably slimly aesthetically unsound but probably the best you can do with what you have I guess.

Mr. Ehrentraut: Six houses down there is another shed that is completely visible.

Ms. Mackie: Right and then there is another one that is...

Mr. Coakley: The whole neighborhood has gone to pot.

Ms. Mackie: It is. There is one at 17304 Hoskinson Road that have a shed directly on their side yard as defined by the Code Book and on both sides of their house. So they have got a shed and then they have another lean to sort of structure on the other side. And they are directly on the sides that you can see from the road. It is actually taller than what my shed is on the one side.

Mr. Coakley: That doesn't make it right.

Ms. Mackie: I know but that means they must of had a variance as well.

Mr. Coakley: I wouldn't assume that. I would just assume nobody ratted on them yet until now.

Ms. Mackie: Well I am not here to throw anybody under the bus but there are you know keeping the same here. The way that the elevation is in the yard and it just keeps --- away from it, so the fence does keep going back to --- which is the only flat area that could handle something of that nature. So I ask that you could grant the variance.

Mr. Coakley: Well we don't do the granting, we only make the recommendations to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Ms. Mackie: Recommend to the Board of Zoning, and I guess that is the August 30 meeting?

Mr. Yost: August 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Coakley: Ok which one of you would like to take a shot at a recommendation?

Mr. Stump: I'll take a crack at it. I move we approve the variance for the shed placement at 19824 Westerly Avenue.

Mr. Ehrentraut: Second.

Mr. Coakley: All in favor?

All: Aye.

Mr. Coakley: Ok.

Ms. Mackie: Thank you.

Mr. Coakley: And Wade won't use your name when he visits that house on Hoskinson. Ok and there is no old business, any talks for the good of the Commission.

Mr. Yost: The Commissioners will have another meeting on the Master Plan on Monday evening after they finish their regular business and they are going to take a look at what the CEDC and the Parks Board have submitted that kind of got cut out. They want to review all that.

Mr. Stump: Should be fun. I wasn't there for the, I was pretty much gone the entire month of July so I missed the last one, sounds like it was interesting, I read the minutes.

Mr. Coakley: Keep in mind and also let them know that a lot of that was cut out because the Master Plan isn't a manifesto, it's not a how to manual like document...

Mr. Stump: Right it should be at a higher level, I agree.

Mr. Coakley: And that is why we cut out a lot of the stuff from both the Parks and the CEDC.

Mr. Yost: I think Jim Brown just wants to see his stuff go back in about the expanding Whites Ferry Road for the bike lane.

Mr. Ehrentraut: There is an article in the Gazette too, the one that is coming out, bike lanes in Poolesville, especially Whites Ferry Road.

Mr. Stump: Adding them?

Mr. Yost: Didn't see the article yet.

Mr. Ehrentraut: I didn't read it, but I read the headline. Trying to look up the radon report.

Mr. Yost: Yeah we are finally moving forward with our radon treatment for wells 7, 9, and 10. Get those wells back online and hopefully by spring or early summer 2012 we will have them back online.

Mr. Ehrentraut: What is the treatment, aeration?

Mr. Yost: For the radon it is aeration unit, and for the uranium it is a media that is actually going to precipitate out.

Mr. Ehrentraut: Is that --- or do you have to replace it.

Mr. Yost: No it is not a ---.

Mr. Coakley: Make sure I get that water that way I can feel safer using my Jacuzzi again, because I am always a little concerned about all that radon gas coming up out of the water when the jets are going.

Mr. Stump: Have we heard anything from the Habitat friends lately?

Mr. Yost: They are still going through the process trying to get their impact fees waived with the County.

Mr. Stump: Still huh?

Mr. Yost: Yep. They are still slated coming up this summer.

Mr. Coakley: I thought they had given up on it.

Mr. Stump: I was starting to think that.

Mr. Yost: I don't know if they've extended the contract.

Mr. Stump: Hope it doesn't fall through.

Mr. Coakley: My guess is that they would say they were backing out and then hope that another sale doesn't go through or something and then try to come back in and say you haven't been able to sell it or something like that so you reduce the price from what we would have to be paying in impact fees or something and then try to get back in that way maybe.

Mr. Ehrentraut: Tot lots still coming?

Mr. Yost: There are two of them coming. One at the skatepark, Dr. Dillingham Park, will have a pavilion and a tot lot, and the contractor that we awarded the contract to does schools also so they are in the last mode of trying to finish off the school projects before they start, so I suspect early next week. And then Stevens Park also is going to be replaced, we sent out an RFP on that, we've got \$120,000.00 and a \$60,000.00 grant just came in on top of it.

Mr. Coakley: Very good. Before we adjourn I would like to officially welcome Dennis to our, unofficially officially, Planning Commission.

Mr. Stump: Just in time to get the comments on the Master Plan.

Mr. Yost: I have to go back and (inaudible) on the 14 is the public hearing for the Master Plan. I hope people will show up. I did get a couple phone calls today from actually Conrad Potemra came in and he had some comments, he said he is going to be here to testify. And Caroline Taylor, who lives outside of town and works with a couple other activist groups, said that she just wanted to make sure that we have adequate water for the build out and maybe we should think about how the climate changes are occurring.

Mr. Stump: Hopefully Rande's front page article will attract a little more attention.

Mr. Coakley: It will be interesting because last time there was a lot less citizen input, it was the same old faces with the same ones that showed up, Rudy and Conrad and two or three others and stuff but very little. If anything I think the school issues will bring some people out possibly. Ok anyone have anything else?

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Coakley: Do I hear a motion to adjourn?

Mr. Ehrentraut: Motion to adjourn August 17, 2011 meeting.

Mr. Stump: Second.

Mr. Coakley: All in favor?

All: Aye.

Mr. Coakley: Ok.