



**City of St. Marys
Master Plan Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2017**

MPSC Attendees:

William DeLoughy
Tanya Glazebrook
Eric Landon (Proxy for Steve Howard)
Kenneth Lyons
Fred Mercier
Elaine Powierski
Jon Preble
Michael Rich
Lee Walker

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm, a quorum was present.
2. A motion to approve the minutes from the January 4, 2017¹ meeting was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.
3. Courtney Reich introduced Teresa Concannon of the Department of Community Affairs of the State of Georgia who discussed the DCA's program called the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing. It's a statewide program where five communities (city or county) are selected to participate each year for a three-year term. The purpose of the GICH is to have communities receive information about resources that can be used for community improvement as well as for the participants to attend retreats where they learn about current developments in community programs and exchange information about programs that the participants might be working on. Information about grants or programs is also provided by DCA. If a community wants to participate, the community has to obtain the application in June to complete and submit by September. The DCA review committee will conduct a visit as part of the application process and it's important that the community have a committee that is focused on why it wants the community to participate as part of that visitation process. Teresa answered a few questions and was thanked for her willingness to visit with the committee and explain the opportunity that the GICH presented. Although no vote was necessary, the committee, as a whole, felt that participation in the program was worthwhile and that the city should consider applying for the program.
4. Mike Rich noted that the vision statement had been circulated by email and that a majority of those responding had preferred proposed vision statement nine as the final choice. Upon motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the following statement was adopted as the city's vision statement for the master plan:

One St. Marys. One Vision. One Future.

We are a vibrant and friendly coastal community where our residents play an essential role in our success;

We cherish our ecological environment, historic heritage and role as the Gateway to Cumberland Island National Park;

We proudly support our nation's security by maintaining a strong relationship with the military forces who are our neighbors;

We strive to create a diverse economy and a community with safe neighborhoods, job opportunities, quality education, and access to vital services for all residents;

We envision a city of the future where individuals, families and businesses can thrive while preserving our environment and small town values.

We are One St Marys.

5. Courtney noted that she was looking for the mission statement to be finalized around the end of March. There was some discussion about whether the City Council would be the entity to decide on the mission statement or whether a mission statement should be suggested by the committee. After some pro and con discussion, the consensus of the committee was that the committee should draft the mission statement because of the unique knowledge the committee had as a result of its public outreach. Members were advised to submit their proposed mission statement to Jeff Adams by February 17th. Jeff would then circulate all the proposals he receives to the committee as a whole and the committee will discuss and vote on the mission statement as its next scheduled meeting.
6. Mike noted that he had sent out a proposal for a sunset ordinance for St. Marys. Mike explained that the purpose for the proposal arose out of the work done by Elaine shortly after she was elected to council two years ago. Mike noted that the proposal is appropriate for the master plan since it addresses the functioning of city committees that hold hearings, grant licenses or otherwise act on behalf of the city and that a review committee would address issues of city efficiency already noted in the public comments obtained in early 2016. He also noted that such a review process would provide some additional service to the city that could save money as a result of the need to not hire additional paid staff.

Elaine also commented on the need for this type of committee based on her review of the committees. Elaine will provide a copy of her report to the City Council to EPG. Jeff Adams was reluctant to include a proposed ordinance in the plan documents. He observed that a master plan can identify a need and a proposed workplan solution but does not normally go to the detail level of including items like draft ordinances.

There was general agreement that some form of committee oversight was desirable. There was a split of opinion on whether another citizen committee was the best way to provide that oversight. It was the committee's consensus that the portion of the needs and opportunities document dealing with city facilities would be amended to identify the need for a periodic formal review of how each city board or authority was meeting its obligations. It was further agreed that the preamble that accompanied the draft ordinance would be integrated into the plan narrative.

7. The committee discussed the timetable for the plan documents, their review and submission to the City Council. EPG plans to have a draft of the plan ready for the committee's review by March 17th. The committee would have two to three weeks to review it and offer comments. Before sending the plan to the City Council, it will be presented to the Planning Commission at its April meeting. It would thereafter be presented to the City in May. The zoning code would follow a similar route about a month after the master plan.
8. EPG had received written comments on the needs and opportunities matrix by the end of January. It was noted that Orange Hall had not been included in the matrix. Jeff and Courtney will insert appropriate language for Orange Hall in the matrix and the master plan. As a result of the Ms. Duncannon's presentation, the matrix and workplan will be revised to include a workplan item that the city will file an application to participate in the GICH.
9. The items to be covered at the next meeting will include the goals and policy statements, the mission statement and the final review of the needs and opportunities matrix. It was agreed to change the date of the next meeting from March 2nd to Monday, February 27th at 6:00 PM at the Senior Center.
10. When the floor was opened for public comment, Cheri Richter said that provisions for Orange Hall should be in the master plan.
11. Upon motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

General remarks and announcements

Mike Rich made the following comments and announcements:

Mike discussed the email sent to the MPSC members prior to the meeting that contained the various vision statements that had been submitted by committee members and members of the public. He asked that any new vision statement anyone wanted to present should be circulated among the committee members by email within seven days. He also asked that members of the committee let him know their preference for a vision statement from that list by January 15th. He noted that even though he had included slogans in the email, the committee should probably not consider a slogan since there is no requirement that a slogan be recommended in the master plan. Courtney noted that the Statement of Values which was included in one of the Visions would be included in the plan regardless of which of the final Vision statements the MPSC chose.

Mike requested that the date of the next MPSC be moved because he would not be available. The date of the next MPSC meeting was moved to February 9, 2016 at 6 PM at the Senior Center.

Courtney requested that the MPSC provide any photos they have of St Marys that they would like to be included in the plan. The photos should demonstrate the character of St. Marys, and illustrate elements that they like about the City and community.

Report on new zoning ordinance

Connie Cooper with Cooper Consulting gave a presentation on her Zoning Diagnostic Report and her recommended changes to the City's Zoning Ordinance. The powerpoint outline that she used in her presentation is attached to and made a part of the Minutes. Comments that were made during the presentation are summarized below:

Although there will not be a specific mobile home district or RV Park district, modular and manufactured homes will be allowed in some of the zoning districts as appropriate.

Existing PD's will not be changed by the new Zoning Ordinance; however, the standards for new PDs may change.

Fast food franchises can be located in the downtown area and the city can restrict or prohibit drive-throughs and walk ups as well as proscribe design standards that limit or prohibit "corporate/logo architecture."

Even though there is no farmland as such in the city, the AF district will remain in the ordinance for the purposes of annexation. However, the allowable uses may change.

Special Permit Uses currently expire with a transfer of land. The new ordinance will consider having special permit uses run with the land.

Accessory uses include garage apartments, detached or connected buildings.

Public input indicated that people wanted more dining and shopping options downtown. In order to support that, the City needs increased residential density downtown. The new ordinance will support this through reduced residential lot sizes.

The current project does not include a revision of the sign ordinance. The City is currently working on updates to the sign ordinance.

The new zoning ordinance will grandfather existing uses. New development and redevelopment will be required to meet the new standards.

The new ordinance will contain design standards for mid-town and commercial and a form based provision for downtown.

If the MPSC can provide comments to Connie in 2 weeks (by 1/18) Connie will provide a draft ordinance in six weeks. The current Zoning Map is on the City's website in case anyone needs to reference it as they are reviewing the ordinance.

Public Comment

The MPSC heard public comment, as follows:

Mel Schoychid: Cooperstown was able to prohibit fast food/corporate architecture and St. Marys should do the same. The MPSC should actively coordinate with the Development Authority, and should support growth downtown by the Waterfront to include boats, sales, more river traffic, residential lots. The MPSC must also take into consideration hazardous materials and sea level rise.

Cheri Richter: The Maritime Heritage District Overlay was important to the City because it allowed the city to regain a little control over an area that was also under the purview of the Navy and NPS. The City uniquely owns to the center of the river. The MPSC must make sure that important points in this overlay are not lost.

Charles Davis: The MPSC must consider brownfield issues at the Mill site and make sure we are protecting people downstream. Also, the MPSC must consider traffic impacts of proposed changes in downtown so that traffic is not directed away from Osborn where the businesses are. Traffic calming measures like stop signs on Dilworth and signage on Osborn could accomplish this. Light industrial has noise restrictions. Those noise limits should be read at a certain distance away from the building, not directly at the building.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm