

**Harford County Historic Preservation Commission**  
**Meeting Summary: Tuesday, July 9, 2019**

Members Present: Carol Deibel (chair)  
Iris Barnes  
Phil McCall  
Dan Coates (Co-Chair)  
Jacob Bensen  
Christina Presberry  
Jackie Seneschal

Staff: Caitlin Merritt  
Joel Gallihue

Public: None

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**Call to Order**

The regular monthly meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was called to order on Tuesday, July 9, 2019 at 7:15 PM.

**Welcome & Introduction**

Ms. Deibel welcomed everyone to the meeting. She continued by explaining the sequence of tonight's review - the case will have a brief presentation by staff; then HPC members will ask any clarification questions and finally, discuss buffer widths and make a recommendation.

**Review and Approval:** June 5, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Seneschal moved to approve the meeting summary. Ms. Presberry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**New Business**

Abingdon Business Park – Buffer Review

Ms. Deibel asked Ms. Merritt to present her staff report to the Commission.

Ms. Merritt briefly explained the Abingdon Business Park development and that only a small portion of the larger project impacts St. Francis de Sales, which is a County Historic Landmark. Lots 7 and 9 have share property lines with the County Landmark. Ms. Merritt noted all existing conditions on the St. Francis property and the surrounding area, which included close proximity to I-95, existing development on the St. Francis property, and existing forestation. Ms. Merritt included photos and copies of the Preliminary Landscape Plan for the project. She noted that the Preliminary Landscape Plan showed about 60 feet or more in some areas of either forest retention or reforestation along the adjacent

property lines. Ms. Merritt recommended that the proposed reforestation and forest retention areas would provide sufficient landscape buffers.

Ms. Deibel asked the Commission if they had any questions for Ms. Merritt.

Ms. Seneschal asked what the building height limit would be. Ms. Merritt said three stories, however they do not know any details about what kind of warehouse or commercial use will be on lots 7 and 9. The proposed building locations within the lots most likely will change.

Ms. Deibel asked if we could recommend that the minimum buffer width be 60 feet. Ms. Merritt said yes.

Ms. Seneschal said that her only concern was the view from the front of the historic church on the property. It sits up on a hill and looks down over proposed Lot 9. She thinks that the proposed buffer area closest to Abingdon Road isn't sufficient to buffer the views. Especially, since they do not know any details about the lot's future design. She proposed having the buffer increased from 60 to 75 feet.

Mr. Gallihue mentioned that they could think about recommending higher grade plantings and taller trees.

There was some general discussion about the church's view and the buffer width.

Mr. McCall asked if Abingdon Road would be widened to accommodate traffic to Lot 9. Mr. Coates noted that the access point to Lot 9 is from the proposed access road, Edgewood Road.

There was a general discussion about a deceleration lane on Abingdon Road.

Mr. Coates commented that the view from the historic church would primarily look down over the proposed parking lot on Lot 9, rather than the top of the building.

There was a general discussion that the proposed building location on the Landscape Plan could change.

Ms. Deibel asked if anyone had a motion for a buffer recommendation.

Ms. Seneschal entered the motion to preserve the views from the front of the historic landmark towards proposed Lot 9, that the buffer width be 75 feet starting from Abingdon Road continuing about 200 feet along the adjacent property line. The remaining forest retention buffer along the adjacent property line as depicted in the Preliminary Landscape Plan would be sufficient. In addition, where reforestation occurs higher planting standards should be used that include tree species that have higher growing heights. For lot 7, the proposed 60' reforestation area depicted on the Preliminary Landscape Plan, along the adjacent property line is sufficient and should be the minimum buffer width.

Ms. Deibel asked for a second. Mr. Coates seconded the motion.

Ms. Deibel repeated the motion for the record:

Based on their review, the HPC identified that the viewshed from the front of the historic church should be preserved as much as possible. To accomplish this, they recommend the following:

- For Lot 7:

The proposed 60' reforestation area depicted on the Preliminary Landscape Plan, along the adjacent property line is sufficient and should be the minimum buffer width

- For Lot 9:

The buffer width should be 75' starting from Abingdon Road and continuing along the adjacent property line.

Existing forest should be retained as much as possible.

Where reforestation occurs, higher planting standards should be used that include tree species that have higher growing heights.

The remaining forest retention buffer along the property line as depicted on the Preliminary Landscape Plan is sufficient.

Ms. Deibel called for a vote on the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Seneschal asked Ms. Merritt if the St. Francis de Sales community was notified of tonight's meeting. Ms. Merritt said that she did not specifically notify them, outside of the regular HPC meeting notices. Ms. Seneschal also asked Ms. Merritt to update the Commission when the final buffer is decided.

### **Adjourn**

Ms. Seneschal moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Presberry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting ended at 8:10 PM.

The next HPC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 7, 2019 at 7:00 PM.