

Bellevue has historically been an African American community with significant history in the seafood industry. The Turner Seafood Factory was an African American owned complex that once employed up to 70 employees at a time, operated a restaurant, hosted a baseball team, and had 8 structures that supported the seafood industry. The last remaining historical structures include the adjacent Church and Pick's Place Restaurant.

The museum complex will include a bench for viewing a digital screen with historical pictures. The first floor will include artifacts for viewing and the second floor will be used for gatherings. It is envisioned as a community place where artists can showcase work and workshops can take place, among other things. There will be a community garden.

It is anticipated that much of the museum's traffic will include tourists that are already near the complex waiting for the private ferry. Dr. DeShields anticipates there will be no more than 10 visitors at any given time. The exception is that the museum hopes to coordinate visits from school groups that will primarily arrive by school bus. Therefore, heavy traffic and parking are not anticipated. The DeShields family owns parking that it will lease to the museum. The Church will allow any excess parking and Dr. DeShields is agreeable to obtaining a formal agreement with the Church.

The museum will be open between 12:00 pm and 5:00 pm on Friday – Sunday. Thus, use will not likely affect watermen who utilize the waterfront early in the morning.

The project will include a walking trail around the Bellevue Park, which will allow community members to avoid walking on nearby Bellevue Road.

The Critical Area Commission approves the plan with planting mitigation.

Attorney Zach Smith represented the Applicant and discussed compliance with the requirements of the Talbot County Code, § 190-56.2.

Mr. Smith explained that preservation of Bellevue's historical and cultural heritage are consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan. The Historic Preservation Commission and Planning Commission both provided favorable recommendations in this regard. The project will preserve African American and seafood heritage that are deeply engrained in the Bellevue community. The museum will provide a traditional means to preserve and showcase history.

The scale of proposed buildings will comply with the County code and be in character with the area. The museum will add economic value to the community and will enhance the existing park, using local businesses to maintain the complex.

There will be no lighting or excess noise that will impact the neighborhood. Trash and debris will be cleaned during business hours.

Public facilities will not be adversely impacted. There is County Road access and the area is already protected by police and fire services. It is already connected to public sewer. There is

a well for water. The County will extend a sewer line at the museum at a cost that is consistent with a single-family home.

Traffic and parking are not anticipated to be an issue or conflict with other adjacent uses, including church and commercial fishing activities. The museum expects that most visitors will be guests who are already at the complex to ride the ferry.

The project will not adversely affect wildlife. It is already developed property. There will be minimal tree removal and the Applicant will comply with Critical Area Commission planning requirements. There are no adjacent agricultural uses that will be affected.

Community member Regina Dacusa spoke in favor of the project. She grew up in the community and formerly worked at the crab house. It is important to her that the history be kept alive.

FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Board is in favor of the proposal and unanimously concur that preserving the Bellevue history and culture are important. The museum will be a welcome addition to the community to aid the public in learning about its historic and cultural significance.

The Board finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the request satisfies the requirements of the Talbot County Code, § 190-56.2.

1. The use will be consistent with the purposes and intent of the Talbot County Comprehensive Plan. It is consistent with Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive Plan and in the vision statement, which promote preservation of the character of the villages and the unique “sense of place.”

It is consistent with Chapter 8 of the Comprehensive Plan, which promote Historic and Cultural Preservation. The Plan states: “*Historic Preservation enables this legacy to be protected and remembered. It allows the past to be integrated with the present and reminds us that the old has a useful place alongside the new.*”

The Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 2, also provides that “*Village growth should derive from infill, redevelopment and limited new development and should be compatible with the existing character and density of the village.*” The plan maintains site coverage and density limits with the Village Hamlet. The additional Critical Area lot coverage added by the museum will be mitigated by providing 14,252 square feet of plantings. The Board finds that the museum will be a compliment to the Village of Bellevue

2. The use will comply with the standards of the zoning district in which it is located, except as those standards may have been modified by the granting of a variance.

The proposed project site will meet design standards and setback requirements with the exception of the critical area lot coverage, parking, and landscaping requirements. The existing county-owned park contains more than 50,000 square feet of lot coverage and contains 44% lot coverage with public amenities including a pier, ferry wharf, boat ramp, basketball court, playground area, pavilion, and paved parking area. As a result of this nonconformity in lot coverage, the applicant and the County have obtained approval from the Critical Area Commission subject to mitigation requirements.

Parking will be satisfactory by utilizing off-site parking at the Bellevue Community Park and Church. The Applicant is providing some parking on Lot 71 for employees and a handicapped parking space on Bellevue Road. The museum has made arrangements with the church for overflow parking. The bus pull-off space will be for the discharge and pick up of visitors.

3. The scale, bulk and general appearance of the use will be such that the use will be compatible with adjacent land uses, with existing and potential uses in its general area, and will not be detrimental to the economic value of the neighboring property.

The proposed buildings will be oriented to the east/west similar to the residences on Bellevue Road and Poplar Lane and are similar in size and height to a residence. The proposed buildings are adjacent to the existing residences and the landscaping is located along areas of existing vegetation to maintain views of the Tred Avon and open space for the park. Once constructed, a museum's use will be compatible with the residential land uses similar to the Rural Life Museum in Trappe and the Tilghman Waterman's Museum.

4. The use will not constitute a nuisance to other properties and will not have significant, adverse impacts on the surrounding area due to trash, odors, noise, glare, vibration, air and water pollution, and other health and safety factors or environmental features.

5. The use will not have a significant adverse impact on public facilities or services, including roads, schools, water and sewer facilities, police and fire protection or other public facilities or services. There will be a Public Works agreement and the museum will hook up to the existing public sewer in Bellevue.

6. The use will not have a significant adverse effect upon marine, pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Safer pedestrian conditions are proposed to minimize vehicular conflicts with pedestrians as the project is providing a walkway on the County property to the park.

7. The use will not produce traffic volumes, which would exceed the capacity of public or private roads in the area or elsewhere in the County, based on the road classifications established in Chapter 134, the Talbot County Roads and Bridges Ordinance, and other applicable standards for road capacity. Bellevue Road and Poplar Lane are County Roads. The museum intends to be open during the afternoon on Friday through Sunday. The traffic associated with the museum will not exceed capacity of these County roads.

8. Any vehicle access to proposed off-street parking areas and drive-in facilities will be designed to minimize conflicts between vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic and to minimize impacts on adjacent properties and on public or private roads.

9. The use will not significantly adversely affect wildlife with respect to the site's vegetation, water resources, or its resources for supplying food, water, cover, habitat, nesting areas, or other needs of wildlife. The applicant is planting 14,252 square feet of landscaping to offset the new lot coverage associated with the project which will provide more habitat opportunities on the site.

10. There are no adjacent existing agricultural uses that will be impacted.


Documents on Record

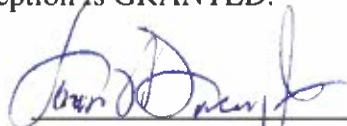
1. Application for Special Exception.
2. Tax Map with subject property highlighted.
3. Notice of public hearing for advertising.
4. Newspaper confirmation.
5. Notice of public hearing with list of adjacent property owners attached.
6. Special Exception standards.
7. Staff Report, prepared by Elisa Deflaux.
8. Planning Commission recommendation.
9. Sign maintenance agreement/sign affidavit.
10. Comments from Critical Area Commission, Annie Sekerak, dated 05/16/24.
11. Authorization letter from David Nagel, Chief Operating Officer.
12. Independent Procedures Disclosure and Acknowledgement Form.
13. Aerial photo.
14. Site plan.
15. Stormwater Management Plan pages.
16. Project Information and Master Plan Page A-00 and Project Site Plan A-01.
17. Pick's Place Elevations Page A-04 and Gallery annex Elevations page A-03.
18. Pick's Place Floor Plans Page A-02 and Gallery annex Floor Plans Page A-03.
19. Draft Memorandum of Understanding.
20. Email dated 8/9/24 from S.D. Swann with attachment.
21. Email dated 8/12/24 from C.L. Bailey-Harrison.
22. Hearing Exhibit #1 – Letter from Historic Commission.

Mr. Adelman moved to grant the Special Exception subject to the conditions set forth herein. The motion was seconded by Mr. Forrest. Based upon the foregoing, the Board, by a unanimous vote, grants the Special Exception subject to the following conditions:

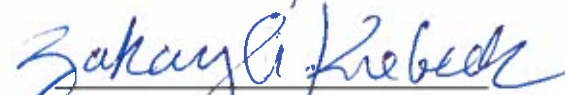
1. The Applicant shall take all of the required steps and acquire all necessary approvals, including any additional waivers necessary, required for a Site Plan and Landscaping Plan as spelled out in the Talbot County Code.
2. The Applicant shall make an application to the Office of Permits and Inspections, and follow all rules, procedures, and construction timelines as outlined regarding new construction.
3. The Applicant shall ensure that the planned bus lane will have adequate width.
4. The Applicant shall obtain an agreement with the St. Luke's United Methodist Church to utilize the church property's parking and such agreement shall be delivered to County staff.
5. This approval is only for the requested improvements and additions in this application and does not cover or permit any other changes or modifications. Items not specifically addressed in this application may require additional approvals.


IT IS THEREFORE, this 4th day of October, 2024, **ORDERED** that the Applicant's request for modification of the special exception is **GRANTED**.


Frank Cavanaugh, Chairman


Louis Dorsey, Jr., Vice-Chairman


Patrick Forrest


Zakary A. Krebeck


Jeff Adelman