

PALMER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING OCTOBER 9, 2012 7:00 P.M.
PALMER LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM

The regular monthly meeting of the Palmer Township Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, October 9, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. with the following in attendance: Commission members Chairman Rich Wilkins, Vice Chairman Bob Blanchfield, Virginia Rickert, Ron Grandinetti, Tom Grube, Jo-Ann Stoneback, and Chris Briglia; Engineer Ralph Russek, Planning Director Cyndie Carman, and Attorneys Charles Bruno and Victoria Opthof. Chairman Wilkins opened the meeting by lead those present in the Pledge to the Flag.

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 2012 MEETING – On motion by Rickert, seconded by Blanchfield, and agreed by six, Stoneback abstaining, the minutes were approved as written.

NEW BUSINESS –

Schuler Lot Line Adjustment Plan
6 & 7 George Court - MDR District
Request by Stanley Schuler

Mr. Jay Musselman of Musselman Associates was present with his client Stan Schuler, owner of the property at 7 George Court. Musselman informed the Commission that Mr. Schuler would like to adjust the property line between his property and his son's property at 6 George Court. This would add 11,000 sq. ft. to his property and reduce that from his son's. There are no utility services to the existing garage. Carman pointed out the staff comments from the building/zoning department stating that there were not permits obtained for the existing garage. This needs to be cleared up before this can be completed but this does not delay the action tonight. Musselman questioned the zoning officer's comment regarding the driveway. They are not proposing any new driveway, just keeping the existing one. Grube motioned to recommend approval of the lot line adjustment for Schuler conditioned that all items in the township engineer's letter are satisfied as well as all township departmental comments. Stoneback seconded this motion. There were no questions on the vote from the Commission or audience. Wilkins called for a motion which was approved by all.

OLD BUSINESS –

Zoning Map Amendment – Planned Industrial/Commercial (PI/C) to High Density Residential (HDR) Van Buren & Corriere Roads
Request by Palmerview Acquisition, L.P.

Mr. William Rearden of Bohler Engineering and Mr. John Forde of BPG Development Company were present seeking approval for amendments to the zoning map. Bruno recommended that the Commission hear the complete presentation of the four different items and then make their decisions. This first one is to re-affirm the zoning amendments that were first submitted by the Mandy Group. This prior developer received approvals but the new owners are seeking further approvals.

Rearden stated they would like to change the zoning district from PI/C district to HDR district. This would make this area consistent with the zoning in the area and allow the developer to take advantage of the various density bonuses permitted.

Zoning Text Amendments

Definitions, HDR District, HDR-2 District, Flood-Prone Areas, Accessory Uses and Traditional Village Option

Requested by Palmerview Acquisition, L.P.

Rearden stated that these text amendments are the same as what was reviewed previously. Carman stated she and other township staff are very confident that the items that were not agreed upon previously are satisfied now. Rearden stated that the retaining walls for the bridge have changed from the original plan but noted they are not a traditional retaining wall. These walls have to have plans that are designed by a structural engineer and have certain aspects that have to be approved by the township engineer. These walls will at some point be dedicated to the township and we don't want any problems in the future.

Madison at Palmerview – Van Buren & Corriere Roads

Conditional Use Application

Requested by Palmerview Acquisition, L.P.

Rearden understood that all these requests are predicated on the text amendments being approved, that everything has to mesh together. They are asking for approval of six (6) conditions. He stated that the significant part of the project is the extension of Corriere Road. This is a very large undertaking by them and with this they would like the infrastructure density bonus under the Traditional Village option which they would then get to add additional density – a 25% increase. This was previously approved and will remain the same. They would also like conditional use approval on having midrise apartments in the HDR District. They feel it is beneficial to provide this type of unit due to the topography of the area. There would be 4 habitable floors and 1 floor for parking. The third is to allow the building height of the low-rise apartments up to 48 feet or 3.5 stories in the HDR district. This would only be on the western side of the development. Also the “top” would be the features for the roof. They would also like approval for reducing the setback from the PI/C zoning district. The required distance is 100 feet

but for the Traditional Village they would like to reduce it to 50 feet. There are conditions that have to be met to get this reduction besides the zoning district. Finally, they would like conditional use approval for the construction of the bridge, paved road, parking area and grading in the flood plain. The flood plain components are very strict and they have done detailed flood plain studies. They are reducing the elevation but still stay in the requirements. They have to do a FEMA application. Russek stated they have reviewed the information and they don't see any flaws in the technical calculations.

Wilkins asked if there were any questions on anything so far, from the audience.

Bill Dengler questioned the HDR-2 District. What is going on in this district? Carman informed him that this is just a clarification, so that the same language that applies to townhouses in the HDR district will also apply in the HDR-2 district. Dengler asked how the public can review these changes. Bruno told him to contact township planning staff to review them.

Madison at Palmerview – Van Buren & Corriere Roads
Revised Preliminary/Final Plan
Request by Palmerview Acquisition, L.P.

Bruno reminded the Commission that the last developer received approval for a preliminary plan. Plans were then revised and have been reviewed by the township engineer. Rearden stated they do not have any problems or questions on any of the engineer's comments. Russek stated they are addressing some detailed comments on calculations for planning of the road layout; etc. If there is a significant change they would have to come back to this Commission, otherwise the engineers can work out the issues. Bruno asked about the security to be posted for improvements. Since they are asking for certain deferrals which would not take place immediately, the security would need to be posted for a longer amount of time. This will have to be worked out.

Wilkins then discussed the Planning Director's comments. Rearden noted that the landscaping plan is just the bulk of the immediate area and not detailed for the entire development. They discussed a walking path and Rearden noted the area that was discussed was where the drip fields were going to be and they are 18" below ground which is the flood plain area and they don't feel it is conducive for walking paths and benches. Forde stated they are providing other features and the bridge is wide enough for pedestrians and bike riding. The land used for open space may not be located within 15 feet of any principal building nor parking area. A waiver should be requested for the clubhouse area. Two acres are required for common open space as part of the Traditional Village. The SALDO also requires that the developer provide recreation space or a contribution. Carman recommended improving Fox Run Park which is directly across

the street from this development. On their own property there is not a large area that is able to be used for recreation so this would be a good source of recreation instead of having fees paid in lieu of land. Carman gave other suggestions such as protection of the Bushkill Creek. There is another proposed development adjoining Fox Run Park which shows a bike path coming into the park from the other end. This could be a joint effort from both developers. Township's thoughts for future plans for this park would include a picnic area, pavilion, small playground, future parking and improvements. These are discussions that the Board of Supervisors has to decide on as well as the voluntary traffic contribution. Forde stated they are doing substantial road improvements and will discuss this with the Board.

Blanchfield motioned to recommended preliminary/final approval by the Board of Supervisors for Madison at Palmerview Apartments conditioned that all comments in the township engineer's letter dated October 5, 2012 are satisfied; all township departmental comments dated October 4, 2012 are satisfactorily addressed; proposed zoning map amendment is approved by the Board of Supervisors; proposed zoning ordinance text amendments are approved by the Board of Supervisors; conditional uses that were requested and reviewed are approved by the Board of Supervisors; waivers and deferrals that were requested and discussed are approved by the Board of Supervisors; an additional waiver request for the requirement of land used for open space not being allowed to be located within 15 feet of any principal building or parking area; the recreation contribution/fee is addressed and approved by the Board of Supervisors, and the voluntary traffic contribution is addressed and approved by the Board of Supervisors. Motion was seconded by Grube. There were no questions by the Commission or audience. Wilkins called for a vote which was approved by all.

Blanchfield motioned to recommend approval by the Board of Supervisors for the requested Conditional Uses, with the condition that the text amendments are approved as well as the zoning map amendments. Motion was seconded by Rickert. There being no comments or questions from the audience, Wilkins called for a vote which was approved by all.

Grube motioned to recommend approval by the Board of Supervisors for the requested zoning text amendments. Grandinetti seconded the motion. Seeing no comments or questions by the audience, Wilkins called for a vote which was approved by all.

Briglia motioned to recommended approval by the Board of Supervisors for the zoning map amendment. Grandinetti seconded the motion. Bruno stated that this is just re-affirming prior recommendation of approval. There were no further questions or comments. Wilkins called for a vote which was approved by all.

Planning Director's Comments – None.

Public Comment – None.

On motion by Rickert, seconded by Stoneback, and agreed by all, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Diane Grube, Secretary