

The regular meeting of February 9, 2004 of the Washington Township Planning Board was called to order by Vice Chairman DiSalvo at 7:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

CLASS IV: Charles DiSalvo, R. Gregory Jones, Kathleen McGroarty, Howard Popper, Geoffrey Price  
 ALTERNATES: Mark Bauerlein  
 CLASS I: Eric Trevena  
 CLASS II:  
 CLASS III: Kim Ball Kaiser,  
 OTHERS ABSENT: Leavens, Walsh, Cullen  
 OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Buzak, Attorney Cafoni, Engineer Hall, Clerk Kesper, Planner Banisch

Adequate notice of this meeting was sent to the Observer-Tribune and the Morristown Daily Record on January 16, 2004 and posted on the Bulletin Board on the same date. Five notices were mailed, as there were five requests.

**\*\*NO NEW CASES OR WITNESSES SHALL BE HEARD SUBSEQUENT TO 10:30 PM\*\***

Pledge of Allegiance

***MINUTES***

1. Minutes from the January 28, 2004 Regular Meeting

Mr. Price made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Kaiser. A voice vote was taken; Mr. Bauerlein abstained, all others were in favor and the motion carried.

The meeting was opened to the public for items not on the agenda. There were no comments from the public and the meeting was closed to the public for items not on the agenda.

***DECISIONS ON COMPLETENESS***

None

***APPLICATIONS***

1. Long Valley Village (Claremont Valley LLC) – Block 28, Lots 17.01, 18 and 18.02 - Request for two lot minor subdivision, lot line adjustment and preliminary site plan for 29,600 sf shopping center - Deemed Complete October 22, 2003 – Previously Heard December 8, 2003 – Public Hearing Continued - Expires – February 28, 2004

Mr. DiSalvo announced that this application has been adjourned to February 25, 2004 at the applicant's request.

2. U.S. Homes – Block 19, Lots 5, 6, 7 – Newburgh and Schooley's Mountain Road - Senior Housing Overlay Zone – 122 Acres – Concept Plan for 197 Age Restricted Housing Units

Joel Kobert, Applicant's Attorney  
Stan Omland, Applicant's Engineer  
Michael Graves, Applicant

Mr. Graves made a presentation to the Board regarding the type of house that they plan on building on the Roehrich farm. Mr. Graves characterized the homes as approximately 2,000 to 2,500 sq. ft 2-bedroom ranch style home, approximately 40' in width, each with a two-car garage. The potential for upgrades with lofts and second floors are options available to buyers of the base unit. Mr. Graves explained that the subdivision is to be a gated community with (no fence around the subdivision) two electronic gate controlled access points, which are proposed boulevard-type entrances from Schooley's Mountain Road. The northerly most boulevard would include a guard house. Mr. Graves stated the starting price for these homes would be in the low 300,000's.

Mr. Graves gave a brief overview of the US Home Corporation indicating that US Home had built approximately 200,000 homes since its inception and has built approximately 6,000 in New Jersey. Mr. Graves identified three projects currently underway, one in Jackson Township, one in Waretown and another in Florence Township, with the Florence Township project being most similar to what was being proposed in Washington Township. Mr. Graves explained that the proposed neighborhood would be directed toward active adults of retirement age (55 years or older). Mr. Graves stated that US Home's experience is that the project will likely draw upon buyers currently residing within approximately 10 miles of the subdivision. He expects that a substantial number of the future residents would be snowbirds who would spend several months of the year away from these homes in Washington Township.

Mr. Omland explained that his office prepared the concept plan before the Board, which is a fully conforming subdivision, which requires no variances except for the setback of an existing building currently used by Heath Village. A 5-acre lot would be subdivided from the Roehrich tract and the existing building fails to meet the required front yard setback from Schooley's Mountain Road (approximately 30' vs. 100' required). Mr. Omland stated that recreation facilities to be provided include a Clubhouse, which is to be located as a focal point when entering the tract on the main driveway, tennis courts, pool, bocce court and gazebo. The plan provides a walking path through the tract along the wetlands, which bisects the tract. Near the Musconetcong, the path would turn north along the edge of the wetland buffer. The path could be either paved or another material, such as woodchip base.

Mr. Omland stated that RSIS requires sidewalks along both sides of the street, which may not be necessary and applicant would like to provide sidewalk on one side of the street. Lots are not drawn at the minimum to provide larger yard areas and create a better streetscape and neighborhood appearance.

Planner Banisch reviewed his comment letter and recommended that homes in the development should be moved away from the Schooley's Mountain Road/Newburgh Road corner to preserve the open vista. He questioned whether lot sizes could be reduced or if attached housing could be provided to help achieve the vista. He stated that the master plan calls for a site for a firehouse and emergency squad building in the northerly portion of the township and stated that the ordinance requires the senior housing development to hire their own private ambulance/medical transport service. He explained that in response to a request from the applicant's cultural resource consultant he had contacted Ms. Stokes from the Historic Preservation Commission regarding this site. Ms. Stokes provided information that there may be some historic significance to the site, and suggested that the farmhouse should be saved if possible.

Mr. Banisch explained that the development would generate the need for approximately 20 affordable housing units under the new COAH rules and stated these units should be provided within the development. Mr. Banisch suggested a loop trail around the subdivision and noted that the Master Plan calls for parkland in the northerly portion of the Township.

Mr. Kobert stated that providing land for a firehouse and emergency services and for parkland may raise legal issues. He stated that the COAH's new rules are not in effect and that the applicant prefers to make a contribution for the provision of affordable housing, such as for an RCA.

Mr. Graves stated that US Home does not want to provide attached housing in the development. He stated that a loop path around the neighborhood raises security concerns for residents that may be away some months during the year.

Mr. Omland stated that lots larger than the minimum are desired for a better streetscape in the subdivision.

Mr. Hall stated that sidewalks are required along Schooley's Mountain Road. He questioned why the path provided along the edge of wetlands was not located closer to the river as called for in the ordinance. Mr. Hall called the Board's attention to the fact that several homes were located within the delineated floodplain on the plan and suggested moving the houses out of this area.

Mr. Hall stated that the intersection of Newburgh Road and Schooley's Mountain Road should be realigned as part of this project.

Mr. Omland answered that base elevation of homes would be maintained above the floodplain limit when constructed. The path was kept out of the wetlands buffer because it was not known how the path would be constructed and whether this would impact permits required.

Mr. Kobert stated that the intersection realignment could be accommodated.

Mr. Cullen stated that parking should be provided for trail head access to the path. He stated that a site was needed for an emergency squad building, but probably not for another firehouse in this location.

Mr. Trevena mentioned the 2000 Garmen traffic study, which called for the realignment of the intersection. Mr. Trevena stated that trees on the tract in the vicinity of Route 24 should be preserved and retained. He stated that a berm should not be provided and that establishment of a hedgerow would be more in keeping with local community character.

Mr. Price suggested that one way to protect the view shed may be to relocate the clubhouse to the vicinity of the corner of Newburgh Road, which may have the effect of accommodating the developer's needs and the Board's desire to protect the view shed to the extent possible.

Mr. Graves answered that US Home would evaluate the suggestion to accommodate the Board.

Ms. Kaiser stated that the path should be extended around the neighborhood. She noted that the houses seemed rather large and suggested that a mix of smaller homes would be a good idea and accommodate the needs of more residents. Ms. Kaiser suggested that reuse of the farmhouse as a spa may be an appropriate reuse that may help retain the building and at the same time respond to residents needs. Ms. Kaiser expressed concern about the road layout and questioned whether a more traditional layout such as grid would result in a better neighborhood.

Mr. Walsh noted that Washington Township is a rural community and that architectural design of the homes should better reflect and reinforce that character. Rural character should be incorporated into the design. He stated that more affordable homes should be provided to respond to the needs of residents.

Mr. Popper suggested that the design was an overall poor look and that the architecture should better reflect Washington Township's community character. He stated that gates are not appropriate to a neighborhood in Washington Township. He stated that the protecting the viewshed from Schooley's Mountain Road is important and should be incorporated into the layout and added that once the scenic vista is lost, it will be lost forever. He stated that a traffic study is needed to assess the impacts of traffic on Schooley's Mountain Road.

Mr. Leavens stated that the Musconetcong River is receiving Wild and Scenic River designation and that sensitivity toward the River should be incorporated in the design. He stated that porous pavement and other groundwater recharge techniques would be important to limit stormwater impacts to water quality in the Musconetcong. He stated that the appearance from Route 24 should be mitigated. He stated that the neighborhood should include a mix of housing types and range of prices to better respond to local needs and suggested a range of \$200,000 to \$450,000.

Mr. Bauerlein stated that he agreed with what has been stated by other Board members and added that he felt exterior lighting impacts from the neighborhood would require measures to limit that impact. He stated that he agreed that the clubhouse and recreation area should be moved.

Members of the public expressed concern about the visual and traffic impacts of the development. Members of the public offering commenting included Bob Torres, Olga McFall and Mervyn Haines.

3. Ward (Valley Ventures) – Block 35, Lot 14 -One East Mill Road – C-1 Zone - Request for Waiver of Site Plan for Antique Store

David Ward, Applicant  
Jeanine Batistoni, Applicant  
William Harrington

Mr. Ward explained that when he appeared before the Board in February 2000 the Board approved the use of the garage as office space. He stated that this work had been done but he would like to change the use of this area from office space to a small antique store.

The board reviewed the uses and parking requirements remain the same between the two uses.

Mr. Ward stated that there would be a small sign that will indicate the antique store entrance is in the rear. There would not be any other changes to the site.

Mr. Leavens made a motion to approve the site plan waiver request for a change of use subject to the sign being approved by the Historic Preservation Commission, seconded by Ms. Kaiser. A voice vote was taken; all were in favor and the motion carried.

4. Elegant Homes – Block 42 Lot 12 – Hackelbarney Road - R-5 Zone – 66.8 Acres - Request for 11 Lot Preliminary Subdivision – Deemed Complete October 22, 2003 – Previously Heard December 16, 2003 – Public Hearing Continued Expires March 8, 2004

Mr. DiSalvo announced that this application has been adjourned to March 8, 2004 at the applicants' request.

### ***RESOLUTIONS***

04-08 TM Group – Block 42, Lot 12 – R-5 Zone – 71.84 acres –Approval of Final Subdivision Approval of 12 Lots

The Board reviewed the resolution previously distributed to the board and there were no comments or changes.

Mr. Bauerlein made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Ms. Kaiser. A roll call vote was taken:

Ayes: Bauerlein, DiSalvo, Kaiser, Leavens, Popper, Trevena, Walsh

### ***DISCUSSION/ CORRESPONDENCE***

1. C.E. Denzler's 2003 Housing Construction Report  
Noted for the record
2. Morris County Planning Board Correspondence Re: Cross Acceptance Time Frame  
It was noted that the response date has been extend to March.
3. NJDEP Correspondence from Bradley Campbell RE: Stormwater Regulations

Noted for the record

4. Vouchers

Mr. Price made a motion to approve the vouchers reviewed by the Chairman and found in order and send same on for payment. Seconded by Ms. Kaiser. A voice vote was taken; all were in favor and the motion carried.

5. Toll Brothers Subdivision

Mr. Hall stated that the DEP is requiring the applicant to do a phase II archeological study and that this is holding up the signing of the preliminary plans. Toll Brothers wants to start to do tree clearing, approximately one to two acres because they are under the same time restrictions as the golf course because of the Indiana Bat. Toll Brothers has told him that they will be getting a letter from the DEP that this work will be allowed prior to the conclusion of the archeological study. He explained that normally work on a site is not permitted to begin until preliminary plans are signed. He asked the Board if they wanted the applicant to appear before them or if it was okay to let them start work if the DEP letter is received.

The Board discussed the issue and it was decided that Toll Brothers must come before the Board for a review of the trees to be taken down and explain why this work needs to be done.

Ms. Kaiser made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Leavens. A voice vote was taken, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

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Virginia R. Kesper, Clerk