



City of Ann Arbor
Formal Minutes - Final
City Planning Commission

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
<http://a2gov.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Tuesday, March 19, 2013

7:00 PM

City Hall, 301 E. Huron Street, 2nd Flr.

9-a 13-0302

Hideaway Lane Revised Planned Project Site Plan for City Council Approval - A Proposal to construct 19 single-family units and 13 parking spaces. The 4.57 acres site, located at 2000 Traver Road, currently contains 9 attached townhouses and 1 single-family home. Driveway and utilities were installed as part of the previously approved Hideaway Lane site plan (expired). Staff Recommendation: Approval

DiLeo presented the staff report.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Thomas Partridge, resident of Ann Arbor, said he wanted to impress upon the Planning Commission to ask for affordable and accessible housing, including accessible by public transportation. He said this is a ranch compared to the project that was discussed at City Council the previous evening. He said this site should have been considered by the developer for multiple family housing. He said the Planning Commission should call for this housing to be affordable for all races and incomes. He said we have continued to engage in segregationist housing and historic pernicious discrimination needs to end.

Noting no further speakers, the Chair declared the public hearing closed.

Moved by Derezinski, seconded by Giannola, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Hideaway Lane Planned Project Site Plan and Development Agreement.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Giannola asked if this will be a public street or a private street.

DiLeo said it will be private.

Giannola asked if this was to be a condo.

DiLeo said yes.

Giannola clarified that these are single family dwellings on a single site.

Briere asked about maintenance to the street.

DiLeo said this would be the responsibility of the condominium association.

Briere asked about snow plowing and trash collection.

DiLeo said the association will provide this, with trash pick-up provided by the City or through private contract.

Briere asked if it is possible to cluster buildings in R4A zoning districts.

DiLeo said the code allows this, but doesn't treat single family in R4A the same.

Derezinski asked about the nearby creek, noting the recent work on the creek. He asked if there was any concern for flooding, given the proximity to the creek.

DiLeo said this was reviewed by the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commission. She also noted there is at least a 25 foot natural features buffer between the creek and the buildings, and that the stream channel is quite deep and narrow, so it would take a lot to overflow the banks.

Woods asked about the two homes on the north side of the site and its encroachment on the bioswale natural feature.

DiLeo explained that this swale was turned into a wetland as part of the earlier construction on the site, so this buffer is newly established as part of this project. She said staff supports this because, if this layout had been built as proposed, as part of the earlier construction, the City would have allowed it.

Woods said she is trying to understand the impact. She asked the petitioner about whether he is assured that these buildings will not flood.

Bruce Michael, petitioner, said this wet area was designed to collect storm water and go into a catch basin. He said there is very little drainage that goes into that wet area. He said it won't flood.

Briere said the earlier approved project was for townhomes.

DiLeo said the earlier proposal was to retain the original townhouse building on site, plus add 22 single-family homes, similar to the current plan. She said the current plan uses the existing drive and utilities, with

a similar layout.

Briere asked for a rendering of what the buildings will look like.

Michaels passed around a copy to the Commission.

Clein asked if there were comments from the Fire Department on their review, since he felt there was not an adequate radius provided. He also asked about parking for the residents.

DiLeo said the Fire Marshal denied the initial submittal, and the plan was revised to include a turnaround, which was acceptable. She said each unit has a two car garage. She pointed out the additional parking on the plan.

Clein asked about Unit 10, and if it crossed over the buffer line.

DiLeo said they are right on the buffer line, but not over it.

Clein asked how this is handled during construction.

DiLeo said this is overseen by the Land Development inspector, adding that the line is coincidental with the limits of grading.

Clein said Traver Creek is a sensitive waterway.

Westphal asked for comments on the layout.

DiLeo said this type of spacing is pretty typical of the city's Old West Side. She said this could probably be laid out as an R1D development. She noted the short drives, narrow driveways, with a lot of sharing of elements, with built in efficiencies.

Westphal asked how this would affect the home price.

DiLeo said this cost is spread out over more people, so it would affect cost to build.

Westphal asked about neighbors being notified.

Michaels said it did not require a meeting, only the mailing of the postcard notification, which went to approximately 1,100 residents and owners.

Westphal asked if there was a response.

Michaels said he heard from residents of the townhouse, wanting to know what was going on, adding that they will be happy that something will be built and not the attractive nuisance that it has been. He said they will be meeting with those residents as they will have to deal with the condominium association as part of this project.

Woods asked about the buffer from the railroad.

DiLeo said that there is a steep climb from the site up to the railroad, which acts as a deterrent, along with it being fully vegetated, and a small child could not really climb it. She said older adults would be able to access it.

Woods asked for the distance and whether a fence would be added.

Michaels says it's a 25-30 foot difference in grade, and they will vegetate with a line of evergreens, which would act as a deterrent.

Woods asked if this is where the mitigation will be planted.

Michaels said mitigation trees are spread throughout the site.

Westphal asked if there is a legal railroad crossing at this location

DiLeo said there is not.

Westphal asked if there was a way to make a connection to the bus stop on Plymouth.

DiLeo said it would require crossing the railroad and the creek.

Michaels said there is also a deep ditch on the other side.

Briere asked if any of the units are designed to be accessible to people with physical limitations.

Michaels said this would be difficult, since the porches are elevated; however, ramps can be added to the garage, for entry. He noted they have units with a first floor master and bath and they can modify the unit for the user.

Briere said there may be a need for school or city bus service with the addition of families. She asked the petitioner if they have discussed this issue with AATA.

Michaels said they have not yet discussed this. He said most of the

residents will have cars.

Briere said he should design this so there is an easy walk to Northside Elementary School.

Michaels said they have sidewalks that connect at the edge of the site.

Giannola asked if there will be common open space.

Michaels said the area along Traver Creek will be a place where people will gather, noting it was not a swampy situation.

DiLeo said this project meets the active open space requirement between front porches and open space, and they are providing a park contribution for parks within walking distance.

Clein asked if they owned the panhandle that extends along the right of way.

Michaels said no.

Clein said he noticed that garages are at grade and the porch has steps. He asked how the grade will be handled in the garage.

Michaels said there will likely be 2 3 steps in the garage, but hasn't been determined exactly at this preliminary stage.

Clein asked about the storage area shown on the layout, adding that he realized interior layout is not within the Commission's purview.

Michaels said that the storage space is not adequately laid out at this stage, and is yet to be determined.

Clein suggested that the rear elevation could use another window.

Michaels said they will likely move the storage area to the side.

Westphal said he feels this meets the planned project standards, particularly in the layout of the houses. He said this is a project that they don't see too often but certainly meets the needs of the community.

On roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.

Yeas: 7 - Wendy Woods, Kirk Westphal, Diane Giannola, Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Clein, Tony Derezinski, and Sabra Briere

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 - Bonnie Bona, and Eric A. Mahler

Moved by Derezinski, seconded by Giannola, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby authorizes the disturbance of the natural features open space per submitted plans.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Briere asked if there is an alternative mitigation plan included.

DiLeo said there was an alternative analysis and the City felt the presented plan was the one with the least disturbance.

Briere asked if this information could be included in the packet that goes to Council.

Westphal asked about the encroachment being "high quality".

DiLeo clarified that the wetland established well, which means it likes the conditions and is worth protecting.

Westphal asked if this has to do with plant species.

DiLeo said there is a nice amount of water to support the plants they chose.

Westphal observed there is sometime a struggle and it can be difficult finding the right mix. He said this mix is worth noting if lessons are to be learned.

DiLeo said similarly, the wetland shelf is thriving.

Clein asked how these nice wetlands get protected during construction, even though the project is not impacting the wetlands directly.

DiLeo said they will be using filter fence and hay bales.

Michaels said they may set up a super silt fence, noting that they will be doing some mitigation as well that will include removal of fragmites and adding of scrubs, which will be pretty sensitive to monitoring during construction.

Michaels said the previous developer obtained a wetland fill permit when they did the second phase of the development which did not get fulfilled. MDEQ has said the petitioner is not legally obligated to finish what the

previous owner didn't fulfill, however, the current petitioner has stepped up to do this. He said they are also doing enhancement to wetlands on the south side of the site. He said they are mindful as well as sensitive to the needs of the development and wetlands.

Clein asked about removal of soil during construction.

Michaels said that because of the proximity of the houses they will dig the basements all at once. He said they will be picking up groundwater when they hit clay so they can route it to the wetland.

Clein asked where they will stockpile soil.

Michaels said they will have to truck it out.

Clein said this alleviates his concern about erosion into the creek.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.

Yeas: 7 - Wendy Woods, Kirk Westphal, Diane Giannola, Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Clein, Tony Derezinski, and Sabra Briere

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 - Bonnie Bona, and Eric A. Mahler

Moved by Woods, seconded by Briere, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the alternative mitigation plan for 153 caliper inches of required tree replacement and 14% of required wetland mitigation.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Briere asked where the alternative mitigation will be.

DiLeo said the woodland will be through a cash contribution and the wetland will be the "wetland shelf".

Briere asked how such a cash contribution would be used by the City; for street tree replacements or in parks.

DiLeo said it needs to be used for the management of restoration of an important natural resources. She said it could be used for invasive species removal or replacement of trees.

Briere asked if we have a record of how these contributions have been used, noting that if there is a record this could be added to the Council packet submittal.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.

Yeas: 7 - Wendy Woods, Kirk Westphal, Diane Giannola, Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Clein, Tony Derezinski, and Sabra Briere

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 - Bonnie Bona, and Eric A. Mahler