

CENTERVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Work Session

Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Mr. Clark the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

Attendance: Mr. Paul Clark, Chairman; Mr. Jeff Gammell; Mr. Jim Brunner; Mrs. Carolyn Meininger; Mr. Jim Briggs; Mr. Jim Durham. Absent: Mr. Mark Leonard. Also present: Mr. Steve Feverston, City Planner; Mr. Ryan Lee, Planner; Mr. Scott Liberman, City Attorney; Mr. Greg Horn, City Manager; Mr. Bill Covell, Economic Development Administrator.

Mr. Feverston reviewed the Major Use Special Approval application submitted for the Corner of Centerville/North Parcel which was tabled at the previous Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission. The issues of concern included the preservation of trees on the overall site especially along Wilmington Pike; the drop in grade extending from north to south on the site; the alignment of the access point onto Brown Road with that of the existing Rollandia Golf Course; sight and noise buffering; and, the proposed access points along Feedwire Road.

The existing house is proposed to be relocated within the Residential Planned Development, R-PD, zoned area on the northeastern portion of the site directly south of Brown Road. Two (2) access point will be situated along Wilmington Pike approximately 600-700 feet apart. Feedwire Road will have one (1) full movement access to align with the access to the existing Target store on the south side of Feedwire Road and a second right-in/right-out access approximately 600-700 feet west toward the Wilmington Pike intersection. The developer is proposing preservation of the existing treeline along Wilmington Pike to range in a width of 40 feet to 160 feet. Public streets will be constructed within the site to help control traffic circulation complete with sidewalks, lighting, and street furniture.

Mr. Feverston stated the following points at the previous meeting during the public hearing were those to be addressed by the applicant:

1. The percentage of trees to be preserved on the site is to amount to approximately ten percent (10%).
2. The alignment of the access along Brown Road to match that of Rollandia on the north side of Brown Road.
3. Noise and visual buffering to the existing residential development on the west side of Wilmington Pike.
4. The grade of the property and how the buildings will fit into the topography within the site itself.
5. The access points on Feedwire Road may not be workable locations.

Mr. Feverston stated he consulted with Mr. Mike Engler, City Horticulturalist, about the minimum area needed to protect the stand of trees on the property. His comments were that controlling the development on the property is key. The trees to be preserved must be protected with chain link fencing to prohibit any entrance into that area at the time of development. The minimum width necessary to preserve trees is twenty (20) feet. Each individual lot should be plotted by an arborist to determine those specific areas to establish the appropriate width through the tree areas.

Mrs. Meininger stated in order to preserve the trees and green space, she encouraged the use of a parking garage rather than having the appearance of a sea of asphalt to satisfy the parking requirement. She also suggested the use of a larger gateway feature in the development to create something visually different and unique rather than what currently exists in the adjoining retail developments. In order to preserve the trees on the site, Mrs. Meininger suggested the outlots be pushed back from Wilmington Pike as well as having Lot #9 eliminated from any development on that lot.

Mr. Steve Kelly, Bear Creek Capital, Mr. Bill Hollenkamp, Cole-Russell Architects, and Mr. James Beechkamp, Landscape Architect, were present to discuss the issues of concern raised at the previous meeting.

Mr. Kelly indicated that in speaking with property owners after the last Planning Commission meeting that live along Wilmington Pike, their concerns were satisfied with the proposed landscaped median to be constructed in front of their homes rather than having a five (5) lane roadway. The homeowners indicated that would give them more opportunities to exit their properties in a safe manner as it would provide breaks in the traffic flow. Mr. Kelly stated that more trees could be saved going in a north to south direction based on the angle of the property along Wilmington Pike providing a more compressed area of trees on the northeast corner of the site. The new plantings to be installed as part of the development will be mature in a 20-30 year time frame. Feedwire Road will be improved with a median for tree plantings as well. All outlots along both roadway will be developed into the existing tree canopy. Mr Kelly stated that landscaped islands will be provided throughout the development in the parking field which will help establish the edge of how the buildings will be fixed on each lot. He stated a water feature remains an amenity they wish to incorporate into the site. He stated it is their preference to not provide access to the retail center from the residential area as they do not want to encourage traffic of any kind to extend through the buffer area and into the loading areas for the retail uses. Mr. Kelly stated the alignment of the access point along Brown Road should be able to be accomplished with provisions made in the engineering of the site. He stated there is a large amount of scrub growth to be removed within the existing treeline areas. After that clearing takes place, Ohio species of plantings are to be installed to provide a more dense landscape where trees will be limbed up as well. The development will be sloped toward I-675 to incorporate the topography on the site into the overall design. Mr. Kelly stated architectural features can be introduced into the design of the buildings that will driven by the change in grade. He stated the gateway features are to be included in a park-like setting at the intersection

of Wilmington Pike and Feedwire Road. He stated they agreed with the staff recommendation to work out the gateway enhancements in order to identify the appearance of the development as being unique. A forty (40) foot wide treeline should be able to be transposed over the length of the site along Wilmington Pike. Mr. Kelly stated a parking garage is not a possibility as they development is considered a suburban type retail development that would not support a structure of the sort. The development would have to be much larger for a parking garage.

Mrs. Meininger stated the plans submitted for the development appear to be very walkable, however, the description being presented of the center will not promote that aspect on the site.

Mr. Kelly stated the critical amenities to this site included the sidewalks, street lighting, and street furniture to be provided within the overall development. The front of the center will encourage pedestrian walkways and will extend to perhaps a community center on the northern portion of the site, a grocery store, or a larger type use available through a pedestrian access between the uses.

Mr. Durham stated the revised plan is a vast improvement over the original plan in terms of internal circulation. He stated the architecture on Lots 1-9 will be driven by the corporate architecture of each individual user. The remainder of the center will not be consistent architecture in a cohesive manner.

Mr. Kelly stated a set of design guidelines had been provided to encourage a pallet of buildings materials and colors to be used throughout the site. Those standards encourage 4-sided architecture on each individual building and address signage structures as well.

Mr. Durham stated there is no question the most fantastic looking buildings can be constructed, new plantings can be installed, the streets can provide many amenities; however, the one unique thing this site has to offer is the trees. He stated that ten percent (10%) of the existing trees, limbed up, with new plantings installed, is not unique. That type of development could be constructed on any site. The only unique thing about this particular site is the trees and their preservation. The community views this site for the trees and their preservation. The community views this site as the land along Wilmington Pike with the trees and they will only view it as a unique development if the trees are preserved.

Mr. Kelly stated if this site was developed as a residential development, most of the trees would be removed. He stated they have preserved a lot of the trees and would still accomplish the needed visibility along Wilmington Pike for their center. He stated he did not see any other options in developing the site other than what is being proposed.

Mr. Durham stated he felt the focus of the main entrance to the development should not be along Wilmington Pike, but rather from Feedwire Road. He stated the volume of traffic coming to the center from a regional standpoint would be from I-65 and its main exposure would be along Feedwire Road.

Mr. Gammell stated there is a retail development in the Columbus area that has preserved a large stand of trees and provides its main access point on the opposite side.

Mr. Kelly stated that the restaurant uses will be located along Wilmington Pike and each will need visibility and a larger access.

Mr. Gammell stated that 4-sided architecture will be required to each of those outlots. He asked how proper screening could be achieved for the potential furniture store to be located along Feedwire Road.

Mr. Kelly stated the potential user is aware the loading areas must be screened and will provide the proper buffering for all of those situations along the main thoroughfares.

Mr. Clark stated the southwesternmost access point on Feedwire Road appeared to be problematic.

Mr. Kelly stated that will be a secondary right-in/right-out access point and they have determined there is adequate spacing from the intersection.

Mrs. Meininger stated she did not like the existing access points along Feedwire Road as they create traffic congestion and pose safety issues. She stated the proposed access points along Feedwire Road must be well positioned.

Mr. Feverston stated Lockwood, Jones and Beals is preparing a traffic study concerning the future development of the site in question.

Mr. Clark stated that Conditions #5 of the staff recommendations suggests the access points are to be approved by the City Engineering Department. He asked if that would not be possible, would that access point be eliminated.

Mr. Kelly stated it would then be eliminated.

Mr. Clark stated the original plan proposed a town center. He asked if that was still a possibility.

Mr. Kelly stated that incorporation of the public streets eliminated that concept from the plan, but the development will provide a lot of pocket parks throughout the site.

Mr. Briggs stated he agreed with Mr. Durham's comments. Mr. Briggs stated that it was his opinion that the trees being referred to as a treeline, is actually a forest. Removing 90% of the trees will take the forest aspect away which will eliminate the uniqueness to the property. He asked what the phasing of the development would be.

Mr. Kelly stated the development is expected to occur in three (3) phases depending on the marketing which will drive the development.

Mr. Covell stated all street improvements will be completed in the first phase of the development.

Mr. Clark asked Mr. Beechkamp his impression of the treeline.

Mr. Beechkamp stated in selectively preserving trees on a site, you are creating your own plague. First, you have to determine which trees are currently living, dead, diseased, etc., in order to determine how many trees can be preserved. Then steps have to be taken to preserve those trees over a long period of time as some trees will not live after a few years due to disturbance of the root system.

Mr. Clark stated in order to determine what trees could be preserved, an arborist would have to be required to study each particular area on the site.

Mr. Beechkamp stated that was correct.

Mr. Durham stated when a large amount of trees would be removed from the site, the negative community reaction would be enormous.

Mrs. Meininger stated the public thought is that not only will the trees be preserved, but the existing house will remain in its place on the site. She stated from what is being proposed, neither of those ideas would be accomplished.

Mr. Brunner stated the front entrance to the center being relocated to Feedwire Road is very intriguing. Since the west side of Wilmington Pike is residential, it will be important to preserve the trees as much as possible. He stated once an arborist walks the site, the members should be more informed as to how many trees can be saved and what options are available.

Mrs. Meininger stated the Create the Vision Comprehensive Plan indicates this study area should be unique in its development. She stated the proposed plan does not satisfy that goal. She stated she wanted to consider a development plan that would achieve the goals contained in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Kelly stated the members must realize the front door to the development is Wilmington Pike. He stated it was his belief the proposed plan creates a unique setting.

Mr. Clark asked for comments by the members as to how each would vote on this particular plan.

Mr. Durham indicated he would vote no based on no effective buffer provided to the existing residential properties on the west side of Wilmington Pike and his idea that the plan should be oriented with its main entrance from Feedwire Road.

Mr. Kelly reiterated the orientation needed to be toward Wilmington Pike and not Feedwire Road. He stated that in working with staff and having the public hearings in front of the Planning Commission at the last regular meeting, it was too late to change the layout of the plan.

Mr. Gammell stated his concern remained with the preservation of the trees and the questions as to how many trees could be saved has not been answered. He stated assuming ten percent (10%) of the trees could be saved, he felt that was not enough. The entrances to the site are acceptable, but an option would be to reorient the main entrance to Feedwire Road. Mr. Gammell stated with the information provided, at this point he would vote no.

Mrs. Meininger stated although she appreciated the walkways provided through the development, she could not see many people using them. She remained concerned with the right-in/right-out access on Feedwire Road. Mrs. Meininger stated that with the information provided to her at this point, she would vote no.

Mr. Briggs stated the plan being proposed is not special enough for this special piece of property as it does not make a unique statement. He stated as the plan is situated, the same plan could be placed anywhere. It needs to make a unique statement and provide a different atmosphere than other retail developments.

Mr. Clark stated a provision should be added that if trees to be preserved were lost at any time, they would have to be replaced. He stated he would most likely support the plan for approval.

Mr. Kelly stated they felt good about coming to the Work Session to discuss their proposal and thought it would satisfy the concerns of the members. He stated the plan offers a lot of common areas throughout the site and they will continue to work on the preservation of the trees. Mr. Kelly indicated they think they have a strong plan and would like the support of the Planning Commission to take forward to Council.

#### COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Feverston stated staff is currently working with the Property Maintenance Task Force to revise the standards in the Property Maintenance Ordinance. It is the desire of Council to incorporate that ordinance into the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Clark asked the status of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

Mr. Feverston stated Article 9 was just received and is being reviewed by staff. It is anticipated the UDO document will be the subject of a public hearing in the spring.

Study Areas J and K to be amended to the Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed by Council this month.

Mr. Feverston stated the upcoming applications to be reviewed by the Planning Commission will include Tim Horton USA, Ross Hummer dealership, revisions to Heartland Credit Union, and a record plan for Centerville Mill incorporating the overall site into one (1) lot.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

*Paul Clark*

