**Meeting Minutes**

**Wood County Planning Commission**

**November 2, 2021**

**5:30 pm**

The Wood County Planning Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, November 2, 2021 at the County Office Building in Bowling Green, Ohio.  Planning Commission staff members in attendance were: David Steiner and Jamie Stanley. Planning Commission members in attendance were: Steve Arnold, John Brossia, Ted Bowlus (arrived late), Brendyn George, Doris Herringshaw, Craig LaHote, John Musteric, Jeffrey Schaller, and John Schuerman.  Fifteen (15) guests were in attendance.

Chair John Musteric called the meeting to order.

**Old Business**

The agenda item from October 2021, Subdivision plat pre-approval for Williamsburg on the River in Washington Township was tabled. It was then un tabled for discussion upon reopening old business.

**New Business**

Mr. George made a motion to approve the October 2021 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Ms. Herringshaw seconded the motion.

Mr. Musteric called for a vote.

Mr. Arnold - ABSTAIN, Mr. Bowlus – YES, Mr. Brossia - YES, Mr. George – YES

Ms. Herringshaw - YES, Mr. LaHote - YES, Mr. Musteric - YES, Mr. Schaller – YES, Mr. Schuerman - ABSTAIN, Mr. Swope – ABSENT, Mr. Wineland – ABSENT.

The motion to approve carried. Vote: 7 yes, 2 abstain and 0 no.

**Subdivision– Washington Township**

Mr. Steiner explained that the applicants, Danberry and Feller Finch & Associates, had submitted a preliminary plat entitled “The Reserve at Williamsburg on the River” for preliminary approval. Mr. Steiner explained that the plat consists of 32 single family lots covering approximately 43.82 acres of land in Section 36 of Washington Township and will be adjacent to the existing Williamsburg on the River development.

Mr. Steiner explained that the proposed plat currently consists of approximately 43.82 acres in Section 36 of Washington Township. The existing Williamsburg on the River development borders it to the north and east. It is bordered by Back Bay Road, and access to it will be through stub streets off of Back Bay Road.

Mr. Steiner explained that the subject plat was on the October 2nd 2021 Planning Commission meeting agenda, however Commission members voted to table the item until a new plat drawing was submitted that corrected and addressed all plat drawing errors and concerns identified in the drawing as submitted in October. This newly submitted drawing has these errors being corrected and the areas of concerns being addressed.

Mr. Steiner stated the parcel where the proposed plat is located is zoned R-2 Residential. Mr. Steiner explained that the lands surrounding the parcel to the north and east are zoned R-2 Residential and the lands to the south and west are zoned A-1 Agricultural. Mr. Steiner stated that the land use in the area is lower to medium density residential within the Williamsburg on the River development, with lower density residential development and agricultural land uses occurring further away from the existing development.

Mr. Steiner explained that the floodplains located on the parcel are on the existing lakes and all utilities are available to the site.

Mr. Steiner explained that the subject plat is the final stage of development of the long established Williamsburg on the River development. Mr. Steiner explained that the original development dates back to the 1960’s. Mr. Steiner explained that there has been another phase added since then, and the subject plat is the last phase.

Mr. Steiner stated that public water is available per a waterline from the Village of Grand Rapids and sanitary sewer is available via a package plant that has been designed to service the Williamsburg on the River development. Mr. Steiner explained that the developer seeks to preserve several of the existing trees on the property and intends to utilize bioretention methods and conservation easements to control runoff.

Mr. Steiner stated that the developer has asked for the following variances from the Wood County Subdivision Rules and Regulations:

1. They wish to eliminate the curb and gutter requirement for the streets.
2. They wish to install 20’ ft. of pavement with 2” inch stone shoulders on each side.
3. They wish to eliminate sidewalks.
4. They wish to eliminate streetlights.
5. They would like a variance from the maximum cul-de-sac length. They would like to have a cul-de-sac that is 1,033’ ft. instead of the current maximum of 800’ ft.
6. They want to eliminate the requirement for street trees. The developers plan to place conservation easements throughout the subdivision in order to preserve the existing trees on the site.

Mr. Steiner explained that the concerns about storm water runoff will be addressed as the developers are required to meet current applicable rules and regulations before the final approval will be granted. Additionally, Mr. Steiner explained that the move to place the stormwater infrastructure under county maintenance would help.

Mr. Musteric addressed the letter he sent with apologies for sending it out late. Mr. Musteric did indicate his displeasure that all of the deficiencies in the submitted plat were not rectified. Mr. Musteric also stated that each of the requested variances be voted on independently.

Mr. Steiner read two letters into the record from the Williamsburg on the River (WOTR) homeowner’s association and resident, Karen Higgins. See attached.

Mr. Musteric opened the floor for comments. Multiple residents of WOTR responded and indicated their thoughts on the plan and the willingness of the developer to meet with them and discuss their concerns. The majority expressed that they were onboard with the proposed plat.

Mr. Wade Smith (developer) explained his position as to meeting the current rules and the desire to meld the new development with the established one. Mr. Smith explained that the variances were requested in response to conversations with current homeowners and that the stormwater issues will be mitigated by meeting the current rules and regulations in place.

Mr. Musteric asked about the existing road widths and asked Mr. Steve Powell, Washington Township Trustee is there had been trouble maneuvering them. Mr. Powell explained that it is a concern that would benefit from alternate access points.

Mr. George stated that from a Township perspective that rules and regulations are created for a purpose and that the current road width requirements serve a purpose and as such should be taken into consideration.

Mr. Steiner explained that the Planning Commission staff has no issues with granting these variances. Mr. Steiner explained that given the nature and location of the existing Williamsburg on the River development, and the unlikely possibility of future development occurring in this area, these variances are more than reasonable. Additionally, Mr. Steiner explained that not granting these variances would negatively impact the overall aesthetic of the established development.

After discussion about stormwater mitigation and awareness of the potential issues, Mr. Musteric stated that each variance would be discussed and voted on individually.

Variance 1: No Curb and Gutters

Mr. Schaller made a motion to approve the variance and not require curbs and gutters. Mr. LaHote seconded the motion.

Mr. Musteric called for a vote.

Mr. Arnold - YES, Mr. Bowlus – YES, Mr. Brossia - YES, Mr. George – YES

Ms. Herringshaw - YES, Mr. LaHote - YES, Mr. Musteric - YES, Mr. Schaller – YES, Mr. Schuerman - YES, Mr. Swope – ABSENT, Mr. Wineland – ABSENT.

The motion to approve carried. Vote: 9 yes, 0 no.

Variance 2: Pavement Width – 20 feet

Mr. Arnold made a motion to approve the variance for a pavement width of 20 feet. Mr. Scheurman seconded the motion.

Mr. Musteric called for a vote.

Mr. Arnold - YES, Mr. Bowlus – YES, Mr. Brossia - YES, Mr. George – YES

Ms. Herringshaw - YES, Mr. LaHote - YES, Mr. Musteric - YES, Mr. Schaller – YES, Mr. Schuerman - YES, Mr. Swope – ABSENT, Mr. Wineland – ABSENT.

The motion to approve carried. Vote: 9 yes, 0 no.

Variance 3: No Sidewalks

Mr. La Hote made a motion to approve the variance and not require sidewalks. Mr. Bowlus seconded the motion.

Mr. Musteric called for a vote.

Mr. Arnold - YES, Mr. Bowlus – YES, Mr. Brossia - YES, Mr. George – YES

Ms. Herringshaw - YES, Mr. LaHote - YES, Mr. Musteric - YES, Mr. Schaller – YES, Mr. Schuerman - YES, Mr. Swope – ABSENT, Mr. Wineland – ABSENT.

The motion to approve carried. Vote: 9 yes, 0 no.

Variance 4: No Streetlights

There was discussion over why or why not to have streetlights and pros and cons were discussed.

Mr. Scheurman made a motion to approve the variance and not require streetlights. Ms. Herringshaw seconded the motion.

Mr. Musteric called for a vote.

Mr. Arnold - YES, Mr. Bowlus – YES, Mr. Brossia - NO, Mr. George – NO

Ms. Herringshaw - YES, Mr. LaHote - YES, Mr. Musteric - NO, Mr. Schaller – YES, Mr. Schuerman - YES, Mr. Swope – ABSENT, Mr. Wineland – ABSENT.

The motion to approve carried. Vote: 6 yes, 3 no.

Variance 5: Cul de Sac length of 1033 feet which is longer than the maximum allowed

There was discussion about the impact of the cul de sac length on accessibility needs.

Mr. Musteric made a motion to deny the variance to exceed the maximum cul de sac length and not allow a cul de sac length of 1033’ feet. Mr. George seconded the motion.

Mr. Musteric called for a vote.

Mr. Arnold - NO, Mr. Bowlus – NO, Mr. Brossia - YES, Mr. George – YES

Ms. Herringshaw - NO, Mr. LaHote - NO, Mr. Musteric - YES, Mr. Schaller – NO, Mr. Schuerman - NO, Mr. Swope – ABSENT, Mr. Wineland – ABSENT.

The motion to DENY the variance failed so the variance was granted. Vote: 3 yes, 6 no.

Variance 6: No tree planting plan required to be filed.

Upon discussion, it was stated that the design and the plan to preserve the existing trees negated the need for a specific tree planting plan.

Mr. LaHote made a motion to approve the variance and not require a tree planting plan. Mr. Schaller seconded the motion.

Mr. Musteric called for a vote.

Mr. Arnold - YES, Mr. Bowlus – YES, Mr. Brossia - YES, Mr. George – YES

Ms. Herringshaw - YES, Mr. LaHote - YES, Mr. Musteric - YES, Mr. Schaller – YES, Mr. Schuerman - YES, Mr. Swope – ABSENT, Mr. Wineland – ABSENT.

The motion to approve carried. Vote: 9 yes, 0 no.

Mr. Steiner noted he feels quite strongly that the Planning Commission should make approval of the plat conditional on the developer placing the adequate infrastructure in the plat under County maintenance. Mr. Steiner explained that this will provide a method whereby the County has the fiscal means to repair and replace the infrastructure if needed as it wears down in the future.

Mr. Steiner explained that after taking all of this into consideration, the staff recommends that the Planning Commission grant conditional preliminary approval to the plat with noted deficiencies and variances addressed.

Mr. Steiner explained that if the plat receives preliminary approval, the developer has one year to submit a final plat and during this one year period developers typically submit their construction plans to the various agencies, begin building roads, installing utilities, laying out lots, etc.

Mr. Bowlus made a motion to give preliminary approval to the plat with the noted deficiencies (1-7) in the Engineer’s letter to be fixed and the variances applied. Ms. Arnold seconded the motion.

Mr. Musteric called for a vote.

Mr. Arnold - YES, Mr. Bowlus – YES, Mr. Brossia - YES, Mr. George – YES

Ms. Herringshaw - YES, Mr. LaHote - YES, Mr. Musteric - YES, Mr. Schaller – YES, Mr. Schuerman - YES, Mr. Swope – ABSENT, Mr. Wineland – ABSENT.

The motion to approve carried. Vote: 9 yes, 0 no.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

**CHAIRMAN’S/COMMISSION MEMBERS’ TIME**

**DIRECTOR’S TIME**

**Staff Activities**

Mr. Steiner shared that Mr. Erik Wineland issued his resignation from the Wood County Planning Commission and that the Commissioners would be looking for a new member.

Mr. Steiner referred the members to the Staff Activities report.

Mr. Steiner noted that there has been a significant increase in zoning questions.

Mr. Steiner stated that the staff had assisted Middleton and Troy Townships with zoning questions.

Mr. Steiner and Ms. Stanley met with the Middleton Township Zoning Inspector, a real estate developer and a representative from an engineering firm to discuss how to best plat a parcel of land within an existing subdivision in Middleton Township.

The staff answered several questions and advised several landowners and potential land purchasers regarding how to parcel off, combine and or reconfigure parcels of land.

The staff provided information to the Wood County Economic Development Commission regarding industrial zoning requirements, particularly maximum lot coverage requirements.

Mr. Steiner noted that the PY2020 CHIP grant is well underway and work continues on it.

Mr. Steiner stated that the office prepared for the State audit of the PY2018 CHIP grant and as of Friday it was clean.

Mr. Steiner stated that he placed the PY2020 Village of Bloomdale Village Hall parking lot project out to bid.

Mr. Steiner noted that the office received a grant agreement for Sugar Ridge Residential Public Infrastructure Grant (RPIG) grant. $750,000 dollars to assist with installing sanitary sewers in the unincorporated village of Sugar Ridge and surrounding area.

Mr. Steiner noted that the office held a variance hearing for a resident in the Maumee River Floodplain who wished to keep a dike they had constructed in the floodplain.

Mr. Steiner stated that the office worked with a landowner along the Maumee River on a floodplain project involving replacement of existing rip-rap.

Ms. Stanley shared that 9 rural addresses were issued from September 25, 2021 through October 25, 2021.

Ms. Stanley shared that seven (7) parcel splits and two (2) parcel combinations were processed.

Mr. Steiner noted that there have been multiple zoning classification requests from citizens, title companies and real estate professionals.

Mr. Steiner stated that the 2022 budget for the Planning Commission was submitted to the Wood County Commissioners and included a request for an intern and a web site update.

**Motion to Adjourn:**

Mr. Herringshaw made a motion to adjourn the November 2, 2021 Planning Commission meeting. Mr. George seconded the motion. Commission members responded in full support. The meeting adjourned.