

ATTENDANCE

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Organization</u> | <u>Committee or Other Role</u> |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ara Kervandjian | 1752 North Atherton Street Associates | Developer |
| Bill Steudler | Planning Commission | Alternate Member |
| Bob Poole | 1752 North Atherton Street Associates | Developer |
| Doug Erickson | Patton Township | Staff |
| Eli Hughes | Resident | Alternate Member |
| Greg Garthe | Centre Regional Planning Agency | Staff |
| Heidi Nicholas | 1752 North Atherton Street Associates | Developer |
| Jim Payne | Resident | Primary Member |
| Karen Dabney | Resident | Alternate Member |
| Mark Ballora | Resident | Primary Member |
| Mel Mark | Resident | Primary Member |
| Michael Marx | Resident, Ferguson Township | Primary Member |
| Phil Park | Resident | Primary Member |
| Rich Schmidt | Planning Commission | Primary Member |
| Tony Buda | Resident | Primary Member |

NOT IN ATTENDANCE

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Organization</u> | <u>Committee or Other Role</u> |
|------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Anita Thies | Resident | Alternate Member |
| Bob Prosek | Planning Commission | Alternate Member |
| Brenda Walsh | Resident | Alternate Member |
| Dale Hershberger | Resident | Alternate Member |
| Kate Domico | Planning Commission | Primary Member |
| Lynn Mona | Resident | Alternate Member |
| Mary Lou Dubil | Resident | Other |
| Ram Narayanan | Resident | Other |
| Rick Maher | Resident | Primary Member |

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM by Township Manager Doug Erickson.

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS: PROPOSED MIXED-USE OVERLAY DISTRICT 2

a. Maximum Height

Township Planner Greg Garthe presented a 3D geographic information systems (GIS) rendering of a 65 foot tall building with a 20 foot tall landmark feature on the roof, which represented the most recent proposal for maximum height. The tool was prepared by Centre Regional Planning Agency Staff, and was intended to represent a simplified version of the proposed hotel on the *Patton Crossing* site. Mr. Garthe showed the building from a number of vantage points that were used by the committee at the December 12, 2017 meeting to demonstrate the visual impact to the surroundings. The rendering included some trees and adjacent structures to attempt to approximate conditions in the area.

Jim Payne commented that the residents on the committee supported a maximum building height of 50 feet in the proposed Mixed-Use Overlay 2 District (MXD2). Bob Poole responded, noting that the developers are really only asking for an addition of 5 feet to the maximum building height limit because the R3 (Medium Density Residence) part of the property currently permits buildings up to 60 feet tall. *Staff notes that this maximum height limit applies to multi-family residential structures with 13 or more units per structure in the R3 district, and that such structures have been proposed with the conceptual Patton Crossing plan.*

Mr. Payne asked the developers why they had previously asked for the maximum height limit increase on 20% of the site, adding that he calculated the building footprint of the hotel to be only 2% of the site. *The current MXD2 proposal is for 15% of the site.* Heidi Nicholas indicated that the development group was not certain exactly how big the building would be, so they wanted the flexibility.

Ara Kervandjian noted that the current proposal of a 65 foot maximum building height plus a 20 foot landmark feature was a significant decrease from the previous proposal of 80 feet plus a 25 foot landmark feature. He indicated that the reduction would have financial implications for the developers due to the loss of at least one floor from the building.

Mel Mark commented that the 80 foot maximum was a recommendation from the Planning Commission, not the current standard allowed under existing zoning. Mr. Poole stated that 65 feet was not his preference, but that the developers were willing to decrease their request in response to the concerns from the residents. He added, however, that they could not compromise on the requested setbacks and impervious coverage because they needed those changes to make *Patton Crossing* happen.

Mr. Mark stated that the reduction in the maximum height request was good, and he supports the concept of mixed-use, but is still concerned about the total density of the proposal.

Mr. Payne noted that the residents on the committee were representatives of the greater community, and they had to find points of compromise and feel confident “selling” the proposed MXD2 changes to the community as a whole. Mr. Erickson reminded the group that their charge was to provide a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to consider, and that the Township had generally supported the concept of a mixed-use development as an alternative to what could be developed under the existing regulations on the site. Eli Hughes suggested that since the committee may not come to consensus on all issues with the MXD2 proposal, they should provide two opposing positions to the Board of Supervisors so that they can consider both perspectives. One position would be from the residents, and the other would be from the developers. Mr. Erickson commented that the ideal situation would be to provide a consensus position, but understood that the committee may not be able to provide one.

Mr. Erickson asked for input from the Planning Commission members on building height. Bill Steudler said that he appreciated the developers compromising on height, and that the 3D renderings showed that a 65 foot tall building with a 20 foot landmark feature was not objectionable in his opinion. He also mentioned that 65 feet was

reasonable, and noted that the building would not be an unattractive plain block wall, but would instead have some pleasing architectural elements. Rich Schmidt noted that the Planning Commission spent a lot of time discussing height, and that the project would have impacts to him because he lives in Park Forest, so he does sympathize with the concerned residents in the area. However, he has visited a similar type of site in Virginia, and generally felt that the benefits outweighed the negative impacts. He said that he talked to some friends living near that site and received similar feedback.

b. Setbacks

Mr. Erickson asked the residents how far from the residential areas they hoped to see tall buildings placed. Several residents said 200 feet. Mr. Erickson noted that the existing R3 setbacks were much less than that. Tony Buda said he didn't want to be unreasonable, but also didn't want to see tall buildings 30 feet from the property lines adjacent to residential areas. Ms. Dabney said she wanted the developers to move the tall buildings away from the back of the site due to the elevation at the rear of the property. Mr. Payne and Mr. Mark agreed. Mark Ballora stated that the residents' position was that they wanted the tall buildings moved forward on the site, toward North Atherton Street. Mr. Kervandjian indicated that he did not want to change the location of the proposed hotel because it is the focal point of the development and affects aesthetics, traffic flow, and other elements of the site layout, and it wasn't just an arbitrary decision.

Karen Dabney commented that she did not want to see a 65 foot tall building adjacent to existing residential areas because she had privacy concerns. A tall building toward North Atherton Street, or in the middle of the site away from the neighboring residential areas would be preferred. Mr. Kervandjian asked what the difference was between a tall hotel and a tall apartment building abutting residential properties. Ms. Dabney indicated that the difference was that hotel guests were transient, and not residents of the community.

Ms. Dabney said that the 30 foot building setback and a 14 foot parking setback proposed in the MXD2 was too little. She said she would like to see at least the 90 foot setbacks that the C2 district requires, and would not like to see parking in the setback areas.

Mr. Poole said that nobody would see the setbacks, and that Copper Beech residents will see the development as a good thing. Mr. Hughes stated that he used to live in Copper Beech, and that walking to places such as Walmart was an asset. He also noted that many of the people living there are temporary residents, such as students, and do not have the same vested interest in the community as permanent residents. He said his perspective changed when he became a permanent resident of Park Forest.

Michael Marx commented that all of the elements of the proposal are interrelated, and that it's not just the building height that is a concern for the neighbors. The setbacks,

impervious cover, and traffic are among the other concerns for people living in the area. Mr. Marx left at 8:10 PM.

Mr. Mark asked whether a 75 foot setback was reasonable for the developers. Mr. Poole said the setbacks are not negotiable and that nobody will see them. He added that the developers would like to let the Board decide what is reasonable. He echoed Mr. Hughes' comment about transient residents in Copper Beech, and added that the developers could make more money building student housing, but that was not their intention.

Mr. Poole stated that he could develop a 60 foot tall building 50 feet from the property line under the existing regulations, and that a 200 foot setback was unreasonable. He asked the residents what setback they wanted. Mr. Mark said that the residents hadn't come to an agreement on a specific setback proposal.

c. Impervious Coverage

Mr. Erickson reminded the group that the impervious cover limits were one factor in determining the overall density of the development that can be built. He asked the committee if they had an ideal impervious coverage limit. Mr. Buda indicated that large setbacks and substantial buffering from the neighboring residential areas were a higher priority to him than the maximum impervious coverage.

3. OTHER DISCUSSION

Phil Park commented that mixed-use is a far better use of the property than the current regulations would permit. He said he was unclear on the specific merits of the objections to the project by the residents on the committee. He stressed that the Board needed to see the merits of the arguments for and against the project.

Mr. Erickson indicated that the Township wanted to see the property developed at its highest and best use. The 2015-2016 Open Space Task Force had considered it for Township open space purchase, but it was too expensive based on its location along North Atherton Street.

Mr. Park said that the affordable housing that would be required by the proposed MXD2 regulations would help replace some of the former mobile home parks that used to be in the North Atherton area.

Ms. Nicholas said she felt that the development group had made a lot of compromises and had turned away proposals from businesses wishing to locate on the site now, such as gas stations, which the developers were not considering. She said the developers are hearing a lot of negative feedback, and that too many changes will make the concept plan fall apart.

Mr. Poole said they could make more money developing under the existing zoning of the site, but they wanted to do something different even though it was riskier for them. They

could develop student housing now, but it might look like the large buildings next to Walmart.

Mr. Payne said that he liked the concept of mixed-use, but asked whether the developers could scale down their proposal. Mr. Poole asked what Mr. Payne felt was too large or dense about the proposal.

Ms. Dabney commented that she wanted to see the area stay suburban and did not want to see a big city. She added that Mr. Schmidt's example of the similar site in Vienna, VA may be great for some people, but wasn't appealing to everybody. She said the concept has some potential, but she is concerned about the density of the development, the traffic it could incur, and the safety of residents in the area. Mr. Erickson asked if the residents generally shared Ms. Dabney's position. The residents said yes.

Mr. Mark said he is concerned about the substantial increase in commercial development that could occur if the MXD2 regulations were approved, and is apprehensive about the amount of people that would use the site. He asked if the developers could scale down their concept but still make it work financially. Ms. Nicholas said that student housing built under the existing regulations was likely to introduce more people to the area than the Patton Crossing concept. Mr. Payne said that the mixed-use development would introduce more traffic because of the commercial elements of the project. Ms. Dabney agreed, noting that students often ride the bus, bicycle, etc. and don't have additional cars. She said this development would bring more traffic because of the commercial uses, and North Atherton Street would be in a state of gridlock. She commented that students wouldn't make the traffic situation as bad.

Mr. Park said he didn't think the proposal was overly dense in the big picture of things. He reiterated that both the advocates and the opposition groups needed to clearly explain the merits of their positions on the project.

Mr. Poole encouraged the residents to make their case to the Board. Mr. Erickson asked the residents to indicate how much they would like to see the proposal "scaled down."

Ms. Dabney brought up the potential access road to the development from Park Forest Avenue. She prefers it to be gated and used only by emergency services or CATA buses. Mr. Park said he believed that a "right-in, right-out" access road may be an asset to Park Forest residents. Mr. Kervandjian commented that the access would benefit the residents of Park Forest. Mr. Ballora and Mr. Buda disagreed, expressing concern for traffic cutting through Park Forest. Mr. Buda said that Michael Marx has been dealing with the cut-through traffic near his house on Park Lane, and that this development will exacerbate that situation. Ms. Dabney said she did not want to see the traffic cutting through Park Forest. Mr. Erickson indicated that he would contact Ferguson Township's Public Works Director to get some information on their recent traffic study of the Park Lane area, which may help address some of the traffic concerns.

In closing, Mr. Erickson asked each of the residents to summarize their ideal changes to the proposed height, setbacks, and impervious cover.

Mr. Payne said he would like the tall buildings placed closer to North Atherton Street, and a maximum height of 65 feet is ok if the setbacks are increased. Mr. Buda and Mr. Ballora agreed. Mr. Payne also stated that he would like the area where increased height could occur to be limited to 5% of the site.

Ms. Dabney said she would like to see a height limit of four stories and gate-controlled access to and from Park Forest Avenue. Mr. Ballora agreed. Ms. Dabney also said that the type of use should determine the setback, and that she did not support allowing parking in side and rear yard setbacks.

Mr. Mark said he'd like to see a maximum height of 50 feet adjacent to residential areas with a 65 foot setback. He also supported gated access along Park Forest Avenue.

Mr. Steudler indicated that he supported the proposed regulations in their current form, and that the Planning Commission put forth something that was fair to both the developers and the community. He added that the access along Park Forest Avenue would eventually facilitate a connection through the site to Martin Street, which was important to him. Mr. Schmidt agreed and indicated support for providing two opposing positions to the Board for consideration.

Mr. Erickson indicated that he would work with the developers and the residents to draft position statements to present to the Board of Supervisors. He also noted that the committee may not need to meet again.

4. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 PM.