

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF NORTHVILLE  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
January 29, 2019**

**DATE:** January 29, 2019  
**TIME:** 7:00 PM  
**PLACE:** Northville Township Hall  
44405 Six Mile Road

**APPROVED: February 26, 2019**

**CALL TO ORDER:** 7:00 PM

**ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Lisa Anderson, Timothy Guerriero, Eric Lark, George McCarthy, Fred Shadko,  
Jayne Watson, Tim Zawodny

**Excused:** None

**Staff:** Jennifer Frey, Township Planner

**Approval of Minutes:**

Planning Commission – October 30, 2018

**MOTION by McCarthy, support by Guerriero, to approve the October 30, 2018 Planning Commission minutes as published.**

Voice vote: Ayes: All  
Nays: None

**Motion approved unanimously.**

**Other Minutes:**

Zoning Board of Appeals – October 17, 2018  
Zoning Board of Appeals – November 14, 2018  
Board of Trustees Special – October 11, 2018  
Board of Trustees Regular – October 18, 2018  
Board of Trustees Regular – November 15, 2018  
Board of Trustees Regular – December 13, 2018

**MOTION by McCarthy, support by Shadko, to receive and file the minutes from the Zoning Board of Appeals October 17, 2018 and November 14, 2018 meetings, the October 11, 2018 Board of Trustees Special meeting and the October 18, 2018, November 15, 2018 and December 13, 2018 Board of Trustees Regular meetings.**

Voice vote: Ayes: All  
Nays: None

**Motion approved unanimously.**

**Correspondence:** None.

**Brief Public Comments:** None.

**New Business  
Public Hearing**

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>1. <u>JPUDAM18-0001</u></b> | Mill Ridge   |
| Representative:                | Tim Loughrin, Robertson Brothers Homes                 |
| Location:                      | 6 Mile Road, west of Ridge Road                        |
| Request:                       | PUD Amendment #3 to change duplexes to detached condos |
| Action:                        | Recommend to Board of Trustees                         |

James Clarke, President, Robertson Brothers Homes, 6905 Telegraph Road, Suite 200, Bloomfield Hills, MI was present on behalf of this request to modify the Mill Ridge PUD concept plan and PUD agreement to allow for the balance of the site to be developed with detached condo units in place of the approved duplexes. The topic was discussed at the October 30, 2018 Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Clarke said that at the October meeting, the Commission wanted:

- A reduction in the number of units.
- A representation of the transition from the duplex product to the detached product.
- To make sure the materials matched or at the least were more transitional from what was existing.
- A softening of the straight run on the west side of the property.

Robertson Brothers reduced the overall number of units by 5 homes to 77 overall, and had paired the new detached homes with varying setbacks to mimic the duplex massing down the street. The project revisions and density reductions resulted in approximately 29% overall open space which was up from the required 25% in the prior plan. All development standards of the AAC provisions of the PUD Ordinance would be met, with the exception of side entry garage requirements. Overall density was 2.6 dwelling units per acre, down from the 2.77 dwelling units per acre shown in October. They met the minimum setbacks for detached homes in the AAC provisions, and in most cases exceeded them.

Mr. Clarke said they had re-oriented some of the community elements by:

- Turning the orientation of the Bocce Court in the middle of the site.
- Bringing the Pergola into the center of the open space.
- Changing the orientation of units 25 and 26, giving a better transition from the duplexes to the single-family homes.

Robertson Brothers had commissioned new architectural designs from TK Design, who developed 3 elevations with 6 color schemes each, all of which were in the packets. Materials were cement-based Hardie board siding and shake, brick and stone.

Addressing the issue of softening up the straight line on the western road, Mr. Clarke pointed out that all the infrastructure for that road was already installed. They did articulate each two-unit grouping, with two units moved forward, two moved back, etc., pairing the units to give visual variation for someone driving down the road.

The 1830-square-foot homes had 2 bedrooms, 2-baths, and a den. They were eliminating the 2,400-square-foot 1-1/2 story product, which was too big for the targeted buyers and was not selling.

The combination of duplexes and detached homes would still only provide 20% side-entry garages. Residents and potential residents did not like making turning movements to enter their garages. They had upgraded the garage door fronts, and in all cases the garage set back 5 feet or more from the front of the house.

The white trim shown on the color boards was maintenance-free white aluminum, wrapped around the soffits and facias.

Mr. Clarke concluded his presentation.

Referencing her January 7, 2019 review letter, Township Planner Frey gave her review of this request for Mill Ridge PUD Amendment #3.

Regarding site layout:

- Unit 18 abutted Consumers' gas well easement. A minimum 10-foot setback must be provided, consistent with the approved plan, to provide access to the north side of the unit.
- The driveway for unit 40 was less than 10 feet from the edge of the road. The orientation of the unit and the driveway configuration should be adjusted.
- The orientation of unit 33 should be adjusted so the front of the house was visible as someone entered the development, rather than the side of the unit.
- On the west side of the development, the majority of the driveways/garage doors were aligned on the same side of the house. It might be desirable to flip some of the driveway locations to reduce repetition.

Regarding building elevations:

- The base material on each elevation should be identified.
- Were the copies of the color material packages acceptable or would a sample board with each color package be required?

If the recommendation to the Board of Trustees was a favorable one, all the modifications and changes would need to be made before the proposal went to the Board, and the Township Attorney would need to review the new draft agreement.

The narrative provided with the submittal indicated the change was to introduce a detached ranch floor plan. However, item h of the letter indicated no more than 41 units should be built as a Cape-Cod style home. The reference to Cape-Cod style units appeared to be a holdover from the duplex plan and should be eliminated.

Township Planner Frey noted that the January 18, 2019 Fire Department memorandum asked for the submittal of a scaled drawing and a description of fire hydrant placement and fire lane signage; those items could be handled during site plan review. The December 19, 2018 Engineering memorandum noted that the distance provided for the water main between units 48 and 49 needed to be verified.

Township Planner Frey concluded her review.

Chair Lark opened the public hearing. Seeing that no one came forward to speak, Chair Lark closed the public hearing and brought the matter back to the Commission.

Commissioner Shadko agreed that it might help soften the western road elevation if some of the driveways were flipped, though that would also put two driveways next to each other.

Mr. Clarke said putting driveways next to each other did not make for good neighbors. The garage was designed to sit on the high side, so that there were not extra steps to the garage. If the garages needed to be flipped, the garages might have to be expanded or set back further. Again, people did not like their driveways to be right next to each other. While the west side was somewhat monotonous, the monotony at least was looking at front porches, and not garage doors. They had tried to address this concern via the in-and-out articulation already described.

Commissioner Shadko said he liked the variety of renderings, and the inclusion of the premium garage doors, all of which had windows.

Commissioner Zawodny said he generally agreed with Township Planner Frey's comments regarding flipping the homes on the western street, and he also understood the pragmatic concerns described by Mr. Clarke. Units 49 and 50 already had side-by-side driveways. Perhaps two others could be flipped, such as 45 and 46, which looked like they were set back as a pair. If Unit 1 could be flipped then someone entering the subdivision would not see a garage as their first view. Unit 40 should be rotated one way or the other to help alleviate the drive condition there. Flipping the driveways offered a tradeoff. Perhaps there was a way to provide enough separation to be good neighbors, but at the same time repetition could be reduced not only in the looks of the homes, but also in the streetscape, where there was now a tree/drive, tree/drive, tree/drive all the way down the street.

Commissioner Zawodny asked if the existing duplex units used aluminum trim for the soffits and upper fascia boards as the approved material. Mr. Clarke said they did use aluminum. The white color on the elevations at the base was brick. They were providing a maintenance-free exterior.

Township Planner Frey said she would confirm the use of aluminum product with the Building Department.

Commissioner Zawodny appreciated the reduction in units and the diversity of elevations, along with the setbacks for the garages. He would like a few more side entrance garages.

Commissioner Zawodny referenced the December 14, 2018 Robertson Homes letter, where the applicants described selling more duplexes due to heavily discounted sales pricing, which did not allow for an economically viable project. Commissioner Zawodny was still trying to understand what this meant. Mr. Clarke said they had not sold any of the 2 story units. They were selling the ranches that were part of the duplex pairings, but were not selling the larger homes on the other side of the ranches.

In response to a comment from Commissioner Shadko, Mr. Clarke said they were being told the reason the product was not selling was both because they were 2-stories, and because they were duplexes. People wanted detached ranch homes.

Mr. Clarke said they would move Unit 18 south. Regarding Unit 33, they had tried to landscape that entrance drive which was why there was a different orientation for that unit. Commissioner Watson was concerned about headlights entering Unit 33 if it was shifted to orient more toward the entrance drive. Discussion offered several options for shifting the orientation of 33 and 34 so that landscaping could remain and be enhanced at the entrance.

Chair Lark said he also didn't recall approving aluminum for the use as it was being proposed. Was there a problem with using the siding material going forward? Mr. Clarke said the aluminum would not be seen because the gutter covered all but a fraction of an inch of the fascia. The soffit was open-vented.

In response to a question from Commissioner Anderson, Mr. Clarke explained how they would be able to move Unit 18 south by moving the other units down also. In a similar fashion, lots 50 and 51 could be moved modestly north, which would give a few more feet between units 48 and 49.

In response to a question from Chair Lark, Mr. Clarke said a single-loaded cul-de-sac was proposed to the west of the subject site. Township Planner Frey said the project to the west had lost its approval status.

In response to a further question from Chair Lark, Mr. Clarke said they had no issues with any administrative comments in the review letters.

Commissioner Anderson asked if any pedestrian benches would be provided near the pergola. Mr. Clarke said there would be benches in the pergola and benches at the bocce court.

Commissioner Shadko wondered who would maintain the off-site pedestrian path along 6 Mile Road east of the property to Ridge Road, and the emergency access from Ridge Road via the pathway shown on the Final PUD plan; in either case he did not want path maintenance to be the Township's responsibility. Mr. Clarke said that maintenance would be the responsibility of the property owner or Robertson Brothers.

Chair Lark asked about the stub road that led to Units 18 and 19. Mr. Clark said he did not anticipate cars driving to the end of the road and having to turn around. They did not plan a



**Motion carried unanimously.**

2. Zoning Ordinance Discussion – Building Materials

Commissioner Zawodny complimented Township Planner Frey on the work done and questions presented for this discussion item. He would like to also include in the discussion images and zoning developmental tools he is familiar with for similar developments in other southeastern Michigan cities. He suggested delaying detailed discussion for another month, in order to be able to include additional information for the planning commission to discuss.

A brief round table discussion followed, including the following points:

Commission “Likes”:

- Attractive, welcoming pedestrian entrances
- Brick facades.
- Architecture that helped provide a reason to come to Northville Township. Architecture should be warm and welcoming.

Commission “Dislikes”:

- Manufacturing ends of buildings constructed of block.
- Exposed transformers, HVAC equipment, etc.
- Lack of Landscaping.
- Shift from red brick to gray/black brick appeared heavy and industrial.

Township Planner Frey reviewed process. After the Commission discussed this issue in greater detail at a future meeting, she would draft an amendment to the Ordinance which would be scheduled for a public hearing, after which the Commission would make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

**Department Reports:**

**Eric Lark, Zoning Board of Appeals**

- Reported on the January 16, 2019 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting.

**Fred Shadko, Board of Trustees**

- Reported on the Cooper Standard Project. The Commission discussed the landscaping on the project, which followed the approved site and landscape plan.
- Reported on the Hospital Buildings Demolition.
- Reported on the joint Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (Plymouth Township, Northville Township, Land Bank) established for MITC Project.
- Gibson House demolition put on hold for one year.
- Landfill Complaints.
- Administrative appointments: Clerk Sue Hillebrand tt retire effective Feb. 15. Margorie Banner would be Clerk, Fred Shadko would be Treasurer, and the Commission voted to appoint Scott Frush to fill Fred Shadko's Trustee position.

**Township Planner Frey**

- The Planning Department Annual Report would now be part of the Public Services Annual Report, and would be presented to the Commission in March.
- Group emails among the Planning Commission, except as originated by the Township announcing meetings, agendas, etc., should be avoided, in order to avoid violations of the Open Meetings Act. Any replies to a group email from the Township should be directed only to the email's author. Do not hit "reply all." All discussions and deliberations shall occur only in a public meeting.

Subcommittees should be used rarely, if at all, and could only meet as publicly noticed open meeting, with minutes taken and a record of any actions taken to be part of the public record.

- Senior Housing at Ward Church was under administrative review.
- Township Planner Frey introduced Cindy Zeitz, who was replacing Dawn Barton, who was retiring.
- The Commission discussed the possibility of having electronic packets.

**Extended Public Comments:** None.

**Adjournment:** 8:35 p.m.