

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF NORTHVILLE
PLANNING COMMISSION
July 28, 2020**

DATE: July 28, 2020 **APPROVED: August 25, 2020**
TIME: 7:00 PM
PLACE: Meeting held remotely via video/teleconference

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, pursuant to Executive Orders issued by Governor Whitmer, participation in the Planning Commission meeting was held remotely via zoom webinar video/teleconference. Members of the public body and members of the public participating electronically were considered present at the meeting and could participate as if physically present, as outlined on the Township website and posted per Open Meeting requirements.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chair Zawodny via video/teleconference at 7:02 p.m. Chair Zawodny explained process for tonight's remote meeting.

ROLL CALL:

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

Excused: George McCarthy

Staff: Jennifer Frey, Township Planner
Robert Belair, Deputy Director of Public Services

Approval of Minutes:

Planning Commission – June 30, 2020

MOTION by Guerriero, support by Anderson, to approve the June 30, 2020 Planning Commission meeting minutes as presented.

Roll call vote: Ayes: Anderson, Guerriero, Lark, Shadko, Watson, Zawodny

Nays: None

Motion approved 6-0.

Correspondence:

Comment received from Mr. and Mrs. Jelso regarding PPUDAM20-0001, PUD Amendment #4; this will be read during the Public Hearing for that item.

Brief Public Comments: None.

**New Business:
Public Hearing**

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. PPUDAM20-0001 | PUD Amendment #4 |
| Representative: | Jim Clarke, Robertson Brothers Homes |
| Property Owner: | Jim Clarke, Robertson Mill Ridge, LLC |
| Location: | 17170 Garden Ridge and 17178 Garden Ridge |
| Request: | Convert last duplex building to two detached units |
| Action: | Recommend to Board of Trustees |

Referring to her July 20, 2020 memorandum, Township Planner Frey explained that Robertson Brothers Homes was requesting to amend the PUD to allow the last remaining duplex unit to be built as two detached units, matching the detached units previously approved for the balance of the site. The amendment pertained to units 13 and 14 as referenced on the submitted drawing. The changes complied with setback requirements for the detached units. The elevations would be one of the approved detached units and would need to meet the diversity requirements for adjacent units. The Township Attorney did not have any changes, subject to the Township's verification of the exhibit to the amended PUD.

The Planning Commission was being asked to make a recommendation to the Township Board of Trustees, after holding a public hearing on the request. Any favorable recommendation should be conditioned on the following:

1. The amendment shall reference the detached units by number in item C.
2. The exhibit shall identify the location of the units.
3. The signature page shall be updated with Marjorie Banner as the Township Clerk.

Jim Clarke, President, Robertson Brothers, 6905 Telegraph Road, Bloomfield Hills, was present on behalf of this application, as was Tim Loughrin, also of Robertson Brothers.

Mr. Loughrin explained that about a year ago Robertson Brothers had come to the Commission and asked them to consider revising the plan from a duplex project to a detached condominium project, based upon what they found the market was looking for after a couple of years of the development being open for sales. The Commission had granted that request, and the change had been a successful one. Tonight's request was to change the last two duplex units – which had not been started – to detached condominium homes.

Mr. Loughrin said all the duplex units had been sold at a loss.

Mr. Clarke said the loop road had been completed, and they were now open for sales on the south of the community. They anticipated putting in the final amount of land development next year if sales continue as they have with the detached condominium products.

Chair Zawodny asked for Commission comments and questions.

Commissioner Watson said that originally the Commission had asked that the transition from duplex to single homes be smooth, and she felt that as much as possible, the developers had provided that smooth transition. She supported this request.

Commissioner Shadko asked for an update on sales activity. Mr. Clarke said they had sold 5 detached units, with one reserved. 16 duplex units were constructed and sold. There were 61 units yet to be sold.

Commissioner Lark commented that unit 14 now appeared to be closer to 36. Had unit 36 closed? Mr. Clarke said unit 36 had not been sold. Their sales representative had talked to all the homeowners about this proposed change, and as far as he knew they were all in favor of it.

Chair Zawodny confirmed that the units under construction were 48, 41, 40, 43 and 44. Mr. Clarke said that was correct; additionally unit 38 was reserved.

Commissioner Lark noted that the driveways were offset; this met a past Commission concern. He supported this change, subject to hearing the neighbor letter during the public hearing.

Commissioner Guerriero said he had no additional comments; he was also interested in the neighbor input.

Commissioner Anderson had no additional questions.

Chair Zawodny said that with the sold units, there was still nothing sold or actively planned for the area north of the watershed. Mr. Clarke said that was correct.

Chair Zawodny had some concerns regarding tonight's request. When the change was proposed from duplexes to single family units, the Commission had understood the market as explained by the developer; everyone wanted the project to be successful. However, when Chair Zawodny drove the development prior to tonight's hearing, he felt there was a distinct difference in the appearance of the duplexes in that portion of the development vs. the character of the single family homes. His concerns mirrored those given in the letter from the owners of Unit 30 that would be read in the public hearing. There was a difference relative to the open space between units 14 and 36, and that would be apparent to the owners across the street in the units that were already constructed. Was it possible to delay action on these units until everyone was moving out of the current pandemic structure and environment?

Mr. Clarke emphasized that the remaining duplexes had all been sold at a loss. Robertson Brothers had reached out to their investors for 1/3 more in equity for this project, or another \$1 million in addition to the \$2million already invested, in order to keep this project afloat. Robertson Brothers didn't have any latitude. The single family homes were selling; the duplexes were not. The ranches had also sold. If this was left unresolved, units 13 and 14 would be more or less a dirt pile for the next 2-3 years. Or, if allowed, they could complete the project with grass, landscaping, etc. Mr. Clarke felt this made more sense,

although it did reflect a change from the original plans. This project had been dire at best, but Robertson Brothers had done everything they could and it appeared to finally be moving forward in a successful direction.

Commissioner Anderson asked who was buying the properties. Mr. Clarke said they were getting purchasers as they had originally thought from the active adult demographic who wanted the 1800 square foot homes; additionally buyers were all finishing the lower level basements. The base price of \$450,000 was being raised with extras to over a \$600,000 finished price, giving people choices so they had what they wanted. It had just taken an extra two years to get to this point.

Chair Zawodny said the single family homes provided a different approach to overall massing of the development, including the visual perception of open space. For those who had purchased the duplexes, having duplexes across the street might be more appealing than the single family units.

Chair Zawodny opened the public hearing at 7:25 pm.

Chair Zawodny read written comments received from Mike and Sue Jelso, lot #30, 17169 Garden Ridge Lane, directly across the street from the units being discussed this evening. The Jelso's strongly disagreed with the requested change, stating that the single family homes would not provide design continuity. They stated that "This is not the neighborhood style we chose to move into, but understand the need to switch styles to promote sales. Our preference is to see the duplex built as originally planned."

Chair Zawodny asked for any other public comment. Seeing that no one raised their hands via the Zoom platform, Chair Zawodny closed the public hearing at 7:27 pm and brought the matter back to the Commission for further discussion or a motion.

MOTION by Guerriero, support by Anderson, in the matter of PPUDAM20-0001, PUD Amendment #4, Robertson Mill Ridge, LLC, 17170 Garden Ridge and 17178 Garden Ridge, that the Planning Commission recommend approval to the Board of Trustees of this application to convert the last duplex building to two detached units as submitted, with the following conditions:

1. Amendment shall reference the detached units by number in item C.
2. Exhibit shall identify locations of detached units.
3. Signature page be updated with Marjorie Banner as the Township Clerk.

It came out in discussion of the site plan (agenda item 2 below) that as units 13 and 14 will be renumbered to units 94 and 95, those numbers should be used in the PUD agreement, as referenced in conditions 1 and 2 above.

Roll call vote: Ayes: Anderson, Guerriero, Lark, Shadko, Watson

Chair Zawodny said that while he understood concerns regarding marketability, he also understood the concerns of the neighbors and their expectations when they purchased

their home, and also remembering prior conversations when this was originally approved, he would vote against this motion.

Nays: Zawodny

Motion approved 5-1,

- 2. PAM20-0002 Site Plan Amendment
Representative: Jim Clarke, Robertson Brothers Homes
Property Owner: Jim Clarke, Robertson Mill Ridge, LLC
Location: 17170 Garden Ridge and 17178 Garden Ridge
Request: Convert last duplex building to two detached units
Action: Approve, Approve with Conditions, Postpone, or Deny

Township Planner Frey said the proposed site plan modification was consistent with the PUD Amendment just discussed, and with the requirements for the detached units. This would replace the same page in the approved site plan set; all other sheets, including landscaping, of the approved site plan would remain in effect.

Mr. Clarke pointed out that what had been units 13 and 14 would be renumbered to the end of series, or 94 and 95.

Township Planner Frey said those numbers should be so identified on the PUD agreement as well as the site plan documents. This change should be referenced in the motion under Agenda Item 1 above, and any drawings that referenced 13 and 14 would need to be changed to show them as units 94 and 95.

In response to a question from Commissioner Guerriero, Township Planner Frey said that all the perimeter landscaping, detention pond landscaping, and open space landscaping remained the same. The only thing that would change would be the foundation plantings, and those would be one of the options available for the detached units.

MOTION by Guerriero, support by Lark, in the matter of PAM20-0002, Site Plan Amendment, Robertson Mill Ridge LLC, 17170 Garden Ridge and 17178 Garden Ridge, to approve the application to convert the last duplex building to two detached units, as submitted, with the following conditions:

- 1. Affirmative action by the Board of Trustees on PUD Amendment #4.
- 2. Identification of the detached units be shown as 94 and 95 on all relevant site plan and PUD amendment documents.

Roll call vote: Ayes: Anderson, Guerriero, Lark, Shadko, Watson, Zawodny

Nays: None

Motion approved 6-0.

Other Business: None.

Department Reports:

Jennifer Frey, Township Planner

- August Planning Commission will be remote.
- Updates on previously approved projects:
 - Starbucks drive-through is in for construction plan review
 - Chick-fil-A has started site work. They hope to open by Thanksgiving.
 - Pictures had been provided of the Village of Northville façade stone, which had been installed with staggered blocks/shadow lines.
 - Village at Northville central park feature had been dedicated with 2 sculptures by local artists.
 - Board of Trustees approved the Glades development; site plan will come before the Planning Commission.

Fred Shadko, Board of Trustees

- Report on new traffic signals on Haggerty Road near Chick-fil-A.
- Ribbon cutting had been held for bike/hiking trails on Seven Mile Road property.

Eric Lark, Board of Zoning Appeals

- Three cases had been heard at the July 15 BZA meeting; two requests had been granted, one denied.

Bob Belair, Deputy Director of Public Services

- Chick-fil-A construction and traffic signal update.
- Clement water main project was out to bid.
- Expansion of water and sewer building would be on August Planning Commission agenda.

Extended Public Comments:

None.

Adjournment:

Motion by Shadko, support by Guerriero, to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 pm.

Voice vote: Ayes: All.
 Nays: None

Motion approved unanimously.