

HILLSBOROUGH TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
April 11, 2019

Chairman Carl Suraci called the Planning Board Public Meeting of April 11, 2019 to order at 7:37 p.m. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting took place in the Courtroom of the Hillsborough Township Municipal complex.

Chairman Suraci announced the meeting had been duly advertised according to Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, Public Law 1975 ("Sunshine Law").

ROLL CALL

Mayor Frank DelCore - Absent	Sam Weinstein - Present
Robert Wagner, Jr. - Present	Ron Skobo - Present
Committeeman Shawn Lipani - Present	Kenneth Hesthag, Secretary - Present
Robert Peason - Present	Surajit Deb (Alt. #1) - Present
Carl Suraci, Chairman - Present	Vacant (Alt. #2)
Neil Julian, Vice Chairman - Present	

Also present: David K. Maski, PP, AICP, Planning Director; Eric M. Bernstein, Esq., Board Attorney (Eric M. Bernstein & Associates); Robert Yuro, PE, CME, Board Engineer (T&M Associates); Michael Lombardozi, CSR, CRR, Covering Court Reporter; and Caz Bielen, Board Videographer (Premier Media, LLC).

CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES

- February 07, 2019

A motion to approve was made by Mr. Peason, seconded by Committeeman Lipani. No comments.

Roll Call: Mr. Skobo - yes; Mr. Peason - yes; Mr. Wagner - yes; Secretary Hesthag - yes; Committeeman Lipani - yes; Vice Chairman Julian - yes; Chairman Suraci - yes. Motion carries.

- March 28, 2019

A motion to approve was made by Mr. Skobo, seconded by Secretary Hesthag. No comments.

Roll Call: Mr. Skobo - yes; Mr. Wagner - yes; Secretary Hesthag - yes; Mr. Weinstein - yes; Mr. Deb - yes; Committeeman Lipani - yes; Vice Chairman Julian - yes. Motion carries.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS

None

PLANNING BOARD BUSINESS

None

BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

None

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES

None

APPLICATIONS

- **Amwell Terrace, LLC - File 19-PB-01-MSPV** - Block 200.01, Lots 4, 5 and 6 - 380 - 384 Amwell Road. Applicant to consolidate lots, and is seeking preliminary and final major site plan approval, 'c' bulk variances; and waivers, to demolish existing structures and construct 126 dwelling units housed within nine residential apartment buildings, with associated improvements, on property located in the MUID-1, Multifamily Inclusionary Overlay District of the Gateway A Zoning District. (EC Review: 03-25-19)

Michael O'Grodnick, Esq. of Savo, Schalk, Gillespie, O'Grodnick & Fisher, representing the applicant, described the proposal as an application for preliminary and final site plan approval with bulk variances and waivers necessary to construct a multi-family residential development consisting 126 dwelling units within nine buildings, some of which would be affordable units. The buildings range in size from 12 to 18 units per building, and include garages on the first floor level for tenant parking. Recreational facilities and amenities ancillary to the residential, including a leasing and management office, are proposed.

This project has been prepared in accordance with Hillsborough Township ordinance 2017-20, as adopted on December 12, 2017. It's also consistent with the settlement with the township regarding township's COAH requirements as imposed by the Fair Housing Act, and implemented by the Superior Court, as memorialized

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in agreement dated November 20, 2018. The subject property is located in the Gateway A zone with overlay, and is 9.378 acres in size. This application proposes that all three lots be consolidated into one lot. In accordance with the ordinance, a 20-foot-wide buffer is proposed along the south and east property lines, where the residential zones or existing residential uses exist. Sidewalks are proposed together with other improvements, such as a playground area, pathways, benches, picnic tables, for use of the residents. The only variances identified are a 'c' bulk variance for a second curb cut onto Amwell Road for ingress and egress, where only one curb cut is permitted, and for maximum width of a curb cut for the second driveway, where 24 feet is required, and 33 feet with a non-landscaped median is proposed. The applicant is requesting a waiver for parking buffers, where a 30 feet wide buffer is required for adjoining streets and property lines, and 6.71 feet is proposed on the western property line near the existing Auto Zone for a few parking spaces.

Mr. O'Grodnick stated proper notice had been provided. He informed the Board of the four primary witnesses present he planned to call for testimony: Mike Ford, PE, Site Engineer; Jay Troutman, PE, Traffic Engineer; Mark Berkowsky, AIA, Architect; and Art Bernard, PP, Professional Planner. Mr. O'Grodnick said Principal, Henry Stein; and Environmental Consultant, Tom Offenord were also in attendance should the Board request additional testimony.

Exhibits:

- A-1** - Engineering drawings (total of 8 pages) - Reduced 11 x 17 copies of screen exhibit
 - Sheet 1: Colorized Existing Conditions Exhibit;
 - Sheet 2: Colorized proposed Condition Exhibit;
 - Sheet 3: Colorized Proposed Condition Exhibit;
 - Sheet 4: Colorized Tree Mitigation Exhibit @Beekman Garden Apartments;
 - Sheet 5: Colorized Tree Mitigation Exhibit @New Center Village Square & New Center Greens Garden Apartments;
 - Sheet 6: Colorized Tree Mitigation Exhibit @Hillsborough Gardens Apartments;
 - Sheet 7: Color Photo of Interior Curbing;
 - Sheet 8: Colorized Freestanding Sign
- A-2** - Colorized Architectural Elevations Drawings (Revised Sheet A-13)
- A-3** - Architectural Plan - Rendered Elevation from Amwell Road (Sheet A-4)
- A-4** - Architectural Plan - First Floor Plan Building 1(A-1)

Michael Ford, PE, PP of Van Cleef Engineering, was sworn, accepted by the Board, and gave the following testimony:

Mr. Ford reviewed the engineering exhibits that had been marked. He said the consolidated lots will total 9.378 acres. All of the existing dwellings and structures would be removed. In addition to the frontage on Amwell Road, the property also has frontage to the south, on Steinmetz Road. However, no access is proposed off of Steinmetz Road. After orienting the Board with the property, Mr. Ford stated there has been a wetland delineation done. NJDEP issued a wetland LOI in 2014. The wetland is at the southeast corner of the property. There is an existing drainage feature at that location that drains to the rear of the property and to properties off-site, and eventually to the Royce Brook. A State Open Water was identified. This carries with it a riparian zone of 150 feet. Those critical areas have been identified on the plan. The impact to these areas has been minimized. A small portion of the wetlands will be disturbed as part of the utility crossing; and also for sanitary sewer access. Mr. Ford said they intend to average impacts and have submitted applications to NJDEP.

Mr. Ford pointed out directly north of the site the assisted living facility, which has two driveway accesses. He said the two lanes heading toward Route 206 currently merge in front of this property. They have met with the County and are in the process of designing a left-turn only lane into this project and into the Bridgeway facility. The merger of lanes will become more controlled and take place closer to the Piney Woods intersection. Mr. Ford said they had made application to the SCPB and some comments have shared. He said the County fully supports the left-turn lanes, and informed them that this section of Amwell Road is scheduled to be milled and repaved this spring or early summer. Rather than the road be restriped in this section by the applicant, the County is looking for a contribution to support the restriping of the pavement as part of that resurfacing project.

Mr. Ford went on to describe Sheet 2 of Exhibit A-1. Adding to what Mr. O'Grodnick had previously stated, Mr. Ford said there will be 126 units in total, 31 of which will be affordable, or just over 24% of the entire project, in accordance with the overlay zone. The project has been designed in strict conformance with those standards. There are commercial uses to the west and north of the property, and existing residences to the south and east. A substantial 20 foot buffer of Evergreen plantings is required along the immediate residential neighbors. The driveway access will be directly across from the Bridgeway facility, with unrestricted access for turning, and a dedicated left-turn in. The second driveway, for which a variance is

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required, would be dedicated for right-turn in / right-turn out only. The second access is proposed to improve circulation through the U-shaped driveway. It also provides additional access for emergency vehicles, and better circulation for school buses.

The first building, Building #1, would include the community's recreational facility, fitness center, and rental offices. A

parking area immediately adjacent to that building is proposed. A 30 foot setback would be required for the parking area, which is immediately along the westerly property line, adjacent to the Auto Zone facility. The required number of parking spaces has been exceeded, so if the Board was not in favor of this variance request, parking spaces in this area could be cut back to provide for an enhance buffer. Sanitary sewer and public water are available in the road. The preference of New Jersey American Water is to provide a single service to the existing main in Amwell Road, which would immediately enter a valve pit and meter chamber, once on this site, and then to a backflow preventer hot box. The on-site water main would be owned and operated by the applicant. The one point of metering for NJ American would yield a single bill to the operator

of the apartment complex. The Operator would then have individual meters for the residents.

There is existing sanitary sewer in Amwell Road but it is shallow. Since the property drains from Amwell Road to the rear of the property; there is an opportunity to provide a gravity sewer connection to the sewer in Steinmetz Road. That would require crossing the wetlands at the easterly boundary. There would be a small portion of wetlands that would be disturbed, and would be restored with natural vegetation but maintained so that the sewer line can be maintained.

The site drains to the rear towards Steinmetz. A stormwater management basin is proposed at the rear of the site, beyond the critical areas. There is a small portion of wetland transition area that would be impacted by the configuration of the detention basin, and as part of the buffer averaging. The total existing and proposed wetland area would be the same as existing condition, if not better, with the compensation area for the transition area. The detention basin is an infiltration basin. Quantity, quality and recharge are required to be addressed. The DRCC issued a memorandum, dated 01-04-19, indicating the stormwater management facilities comply with State regulations. The only request was to have a conservation and maintenance agreement with regards to the critical areas and stormwater management facility, which the applicant would agree with.

Part and parcel to the 2017 ordinance were strict requirements with regard to providing for pedestrian access. There are sidewalks throughout the community, and sidewalk connections to Amwell Road. Currently, there is not a sidewalk along the frontage of this property. Sidewalk would be installed here, as well as a missing link of sidewalk along the frontage of the Auto Zone property. Existing sidewalk to the west could then be utilized for access to Route 206 and beyond.

The applicant owns and operates numerous other apartment complexes, and has found rather than have independent trash enclosures; it is more efficient to have one centralized location where a trash compactor is provided, for both recycling and for normal trash. The trash would be in about a 35 cubic yard metal container. The container would be enclosed in a masonry structure immediately attached to the trash compactor. There would be a similar compactor for recycling. Reviews received suggested relocating the trash compactors, which has been revised. A stormwater discharge pipe from the detention basin, within the riparian zone, was also proposed in the area of the trash area. Upon further discussions with NJDEP, a reevaluation included removal of that discharge. The discharge would be immediately adjacent to the trash enclosure, discharging to an existing swale. The woods would be maintained. There is a conservation area at the south of the property that would be revegetated with about 56 additional trees in that area. This was suggested by the Environmental Commission to help jump start the reforestation and to have that area placed in a conservation area. The applicant has agreed to comply. The parking would comply with RSIS Standards.

Mr. Ford stated they had met with the transportation coordinator for Hillsborough Township Schools. He said he believes they will be agreeable to pick-up and drop-off of school-aged children on site, rather than on Amwell Road. The applicant would comply with any suggestions from the Board as to the preferred location.

Mr. Maski asked if the Board of Education has signed off on the location.

Mr. Ford said as of April 3, the Board of Education suggested Amwell Road. He said he had been before the Board with another location and heard abundantly clear that the Board was not in favor of having bus stops on Amwell Road or any main road. Mr. Ford said with that in mind, he reached out to the BOE to set up a meeting later in the month to talk about the specific on-site location for a bus stop.

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Mr. Bernstein had Mr. Ford clarify the "Board" he referenced for the meeting last week was the Planning Board. Mr. Ford said communication with the public school has been specifically with the transportation supervisor, Lisa Bennett.

Mr. Ford said a presentation had been made to the Environmental Commission on March 25, and spoke in length about tree mitigation. The initial submittal of this application included a request for an economic hardship waiver. However, the applicant will not be pursuing that waiver and will instead be providing the trees as per the calculations of the tree mitigation ordinance. The final numbers may vary, but the calculation as of now is 525 trees required. The plan currently shows a proposal of 172 trees. Exhibit Sheet 3 includes the additional 56 trees, bringing the tree count up to 261, not including street trees, leaving 264 trees to be provided. Exhibit Sheets 4, 5 and 6 show yellow dots representing those 264 plantings at other sites controlled and operated by the applicant: Beekman Gardens (153 plantings); New Center Village Square, and New Center Greens Garden Apartments (81 trees); Hillsborough Garden Apartments (30 plantings). There are overhead power lines on the last property so the opportunity for plantings is limited by PSE&G.

Vice Chairman Julian asked Mr. Maski for his thoughts on allowing for plantings on alternate sites.

Mr. Maski said if the Board is willing to consider this as a viable proposal; it should be considered a waiver. The ordinance provides only two options: a cash (in lieu of) contribution, or donating trees to the Parks Department.

Mr. Ford said details would be provided to the satisfaction of the Board's professionals. All of the 264 off-site plantings would be placed prior to the 50% CO issuance for the project.

Mr. Wagner asked if the applicant would be responsible for planting all of the trees. He also questioned if any approvals would first be required from a Homeowner's Association or from the Township.

Mr. Ford said the applicant would be responsible to plant the trees. The properties are privately operated by the applicant as the controlling entity. The species of trees can be reviewed with the professionals as well, and would be similar to the tree mitigation plantings on-site.

Mr. Maski said Sheets 2 and 3 of the exhibit do not match the site plan submitted. At some point the differences will need to be addressed.

Referencing the exhibit, Mr. Ford said the plan had been layered to create the exhibit, but all of the trees and plantings are identical to the Landscaping Plan submitted for the application. All of the sidewalks; trash enclosure location and dumpster; stormwater management facility; discharge location for the detention basin are all identical. The exhibit is a combination of multiple sheets and technical details that are part of the package.

Mr. Maski said page 3 is an alternative design.

Mr. Ford agreed. He said page 3 said the changes to the original plan are the relocation of the trash compactor; the enhanced landscaping of the open field area, which is in the riparian zone; and the discharge for the stormwater management basin has been pulled back out of the riparian zone. These are enhancements for the area at the rear that will be placed in a conservation easement.

Mr. Maski said the outfall has been changed so the stormwater will need to be reviewed by the Board Engineer.

Mr. Ford said it is the same amount of discharge; it is just pulled back, but certainly will be done to Mr. Yuro's satisfaction.

Mr. Maski said the changes with the landscaping will also require review.

Mr. Ford agreed. He went on to describe the community portion of Building #1. In addition to the indoor recreational facility, there is also a tot-lot that is centrally located between the two driveways, with circulating pathways and benches. There was a suggestion in the reports to place the tot-lot within a fence. He said while they would comply with any requirement of the Board, the location was chosen because it is far enough away from any parking area or driveways. The applicant's preference is to not fence the playground in to make it a "caged" environment. The tot-lot is not meant to be used after hours so there is no significant lighting proposed for this area. Minimal building mounted lighting is proposed for security

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purposes, subject to the approval of the Board Engineer. Minimal lighting is also proposed throughout the community. Some locations are at .0 footcandles, which would require a waiver. The design of the community offers shielded lighting, and the buildings provide a buffer to the surrounding properties from the activities within the complex.

Mr. Ford discussed review memorandums. He said the applicant will agree to comply with all four bullet points noted on the Chief Fire Marshal's memo dated March 4, 2019, to Chief Weniger's satisfaction. Regarding the April 10, 2019 Environmental Commission memorandum, information will be provided as to what is being stored in the existing pole barn on Lot 6. The applicant is no longer seeking a hardship waiver so request #2 is no longer applicable. This site is not within a Farmland Preservation Area, as designated by the Somerset County Agricultural Board. The applicant has agreed to provide reforestation in the riparian area, as shown on page 3 of the exhibit.

Mr. Maski asked when the information on what is being stored in the pole barn will be submitted.

Mr. Ford said the pole barn will be demolished. There is nothing of an environmental hazard or of a harmful nature being stored. A list can be provided.

Vice Chairman Julian reiterated the cutting season for the Long-Eared Bat is November 1 through March 31.

Mr. Ford acknowledged the action would require NJDEP approval. He said they expect the NJDEP permit for the utility crossing for the sanitary sewer will include a condition, which is a restriction on the timing of tree removal. That is associated with this area being a potential location for the Northern Long-Eared Bat. It is not a prohibition of removing the trees but a restriction on the timing for removal, such that it does not affect that species. Mr. Ford stated they would comply.

The March 20, 2019 memorandum from Mr. Maski points out a hose connection is to be provided at the location of the trash enclosure. The connection is not proposed: relief is requested. The other ASD Overlay District waivers will be reviewed by the architect.

Mr. Maski asked to hear about the signage.

Mr. Ford referenced page 7 of the exhibit, the photo showing the type of brick paver walkways proposed immediately in front of the apartment complex buildings, where there are driveways. Walkways in the middle of the buildings would also receive that treatment. The walkways at the end of each building would be standard concrete. Sidewalk from the last buildings closest to Amwell Road, up to and including the sidewalk on Amwell Road, would all be standard concrete. Walkway access to the recreational facilities would have the brick pavers treatment. The circular walkway around the tot-lot would be standard concrete, as would the sidewalk immediately adjacent to the parking spaces on either side of that open space.

Mr. Ford said the site sign was in compliance with the 20 square foot maximum. The applicant would prefer to have the site sign centrally located between the east and west driveways. It would be placed perpendicular to Amwell Road, and have external ground-mounted LED lighting, with appropriate landscaping. Mr. Ford said with regards to other signage, they would agree, as a condition of approval, to work with the professionals for on-site directional signage for the management office, and identification on each building.

Mr. Maski informed the Board the exhibit plan had not been presented prior to the hearing, so without having had the benefit to review, he would not be stating whether or not any waivers are required at this time.

Mr. Maski read from his report that all streets and utilities shall be privately owned and maintained by the property owner.

Mr. Ford agreed.

Mr. Ford next addressed the T&M memorandum, dated April 3, 2019. He said he would only highlight a few of the comments, but that they would agree, as a condition of approval, to comply with all other comments, to the satisfaction of the Board Engineer. Mr. Ford noted the memorandum requested testimony be provided for a few of the comments, not necessarily that they require discussion. As noted previously, NJ

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American Water suggested the single-service tap be provided. The lighting has been discussed. The applicant requests that all landscaping only need to be reviewed by the Board Engineer, T&M Associates; not by the Environmental Commission or the Tree Preservation Committee. The landscaping will be irrigated. This application was designed to be in strict compliance with the overlay adopted in 2017, and the testimony presented has addressed the impacts.

Mr. Yuro said he was satisfied with the testimony regarding item F. Additional information is needed with regards to the EIS, which Mr. Yuro agreed to work with Mr. Ford on.

Mr. Ford said the absence of fencing at the tot-lot was discussed. The only other request is related to Item D(12). He said the analysis can be provided, but noted none of the units will have basements. There is no below ground structure that could be impacted by water.

Mr. Yuro agreed mounding analysis need not be required.

Mr. Yuro asked that the brick pavers testified to be clearly identified on the plan so that it is not mistaken for concrete.

Mr. Ford agreed.

Mr. Yuro said in relocating the trash enclosure to the rear of the property; it is now roughly 800 - 1,000 feet away from the farthest unit that someone would have to walk or drive to, in order to discharge their garbage and recycling. He cautioned against the potential for having trash cans littering the curb lines in the future. Mr. Yuro referenced the comment in his report to have two or three other trash enclosure locations throughout the property, but would defer to Mr. Ford's testimony and the applicant's experience with his other developments regarding the compactor.

Mr. Bernstein asked Mr. Ford if the applicant would be willing to a condition of approval that there will be no trash pick-up outside of the existing residential units, nor any trash containers be allowed to be placed outside of any residential units.

Mr. Ford said they would agree; there will only be the one location.

Mr. Yuro asked how many times a week the compactor will be removed from the property.

Mr. Ford said it would all be privately managed by the owners of the apartment complex. All pick-ups would be done as needed. This site would not be participating in the County's recycling program.

Mr. Yuro noted his comment to widen the throat of the easterly driveway which has full movement in and out. The suggestion was to widen the initial throat from 24 feet to 30 feet.

Mr. Ford said they are working on the details of the design for the right-in/right-out driveway with the County. It will require an island, and therefore will be about 33 feet wide, requiring a waiver. He said the easterly driveway is at 24 feet, but they would comply with widening the throat to 30 feet, as requested by Mr. Yuro (additional waiver required).

Mr. Yuro said the off-site sanitary sewer will be coming off the rear of the property to Steinmetz Road. There appears to have a narrow right-of-way and a narrow cartway. He asked for additional testimony as to the location of the pipe and on any impacts for the adjoining properties.

Mr. Ford said the heading south, to connect to the gravity sewers, the line has to be run down Steinmetz Road some distance. The sewer line has been located on the north of Steinmetz. Steinmetz Road is awkward in that it tees and then runs along other properties. The sewer is on the opposite side of the houses. The pipe would be run along the edge of the cartway, if not in the grassed area. The location has already been discussed with the HTMUA and granted approval of the sewer extension as of February 27. The HTMUA would have jurisdiction. The line within the public right-of-way is owned and operated by the HTMUA; all on-site would be private. Approval by the Somerset-Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority has already been secured, as of March 25, 2019. The sewer extension will be within the public right-of way; no private easements are required.

Mr. Yuro said the plans submitted indicate 608 replacement trees will be required. Testimony was given that 525 trees will be required. He asked if the 525 is based on the revised landscaping.

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Mr. Ford said the 608 referenced was an error. He said the details would be submitted and done to Mr. Yuro's satisfaction.

Mr. Maski clarified a variance was required for removal of more than 20% of the trees; a waiver was required for off-site plantings.

Mr. Ford agreed.

Committeeman Lipani asked if there will be any electric car charging stations provided within the development.

Mr. Ford said he did not have the answer. He said he was informed no external stations are proposed, but that there would be an abundance of garage and driveway parking. The units themselves have electric and conduit that could have provisions for electronic car charging stations. The unit would only be available to the tenant at that location.

Committeeman Lipani said if you had an apartment that did not have a garage, you would not have access to a charging station.

Mr. Ford agreed.

Committeeman Lipani asked if it was possible to add a few stations for those who would not have access.

Mr. Ford agreed to add charging stations.

Mr. Bernstein asked that the number of stations be provided prior to the completion of the application.

Mr. O'Grodnick said the applicant had no issue with location and amount.

Mr. Ford said at a minimum, it would be two.

Open to the public.

Bob Kennedy – Steinmetz Road

- Mr. Kennedy asked for information about Evergreens on Steinmetz Road.

Mr. Ford said the southern portion is existing wooded area that would be maintained, not disturbed.

- Mr. Kennedy asked if there was consideration for a fence to prevent pedestrian migration into the residential yards.

Mr. Ford said a fence was not proposed.

- Mr. Kennedy expressed his concerns with the lack of consideration of privacy for the existing neighbors. He said the existing woods are half dead. He asked how these neighbors will be able to keep the residents of this development off their private properties.

Mr. Ford said Evergreen plantings will be provided, just not the length of Steinmetz Road.

- Mr. Kennedy said trash compactors are noisy. He said he was pleased to see the location moved and requested that any additional be kept away from the residential properties.

Mr. Ford stated there are no plans to have more than one location.

Robert Engesser – Amwell Road

- Mr. Engesser spoke against the application. He asked if the units will be rentals or for purchase.

Mr. Ford stated they will be rentals.

- Mr. Engesser expressed his concerns regarding the trash.

Mr. Ford reiterated only one trash area is proposed.

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- Mr. Engesser asked how the sanitary sewer would be extended without going on private property.

Mr. Ford showed the area on the display. He said the sewer is proposed in the existing right-of-way on Steinmetz Road, beyond the speaker's property. Mr. Ford stated information could be provided to Board Engineer to further demonstrate the sewer line was being placed in public lands, not on private property.

Mr. Yuro accepted the offer.

- Mr. Engesser asked about balconies.

Mr. Ford said the design of the buildings would be addressed at the time of the architect's testimony.

Susan Gulliford - Hunt Club Road

- Ms. Gulliford asked for information on the use of the existing pole barn.

Mr. Ford said he did not have knowledge at this time, but that it looked like it was for residential use, not commercial. The information will be provided to the Board, as stated.

- Ms. Gulliford asked if the affordable units will be distributed throughout the project.

Mr. Ford deferred to the architect's testimony.

- Ms. Gulliford asked why the buildings are so close to the easterly property line.

Mr. Ford stated they meet the building setback requirements of the ordinance. The buildings are not any closer than are permitted by code.

- Ms. Gulliford asked Mr. Ford if he said the purpose of the westerly drive was to improve interior circulation.

Mr. Ford said it also provides a secondary access for emergency vehicles to the property, and helps facilitate the school bus stops.

- Ms. Gulliford asked if an option would be to make one a primary access and the other an emergency only access.

Mr. Ford said that was correct.

- Ms. Gulliford asked the distance between the two driveways.

Mr. Yuro offered it is 200 feet.

- Ms. Gulliford asked if that seemed too close a distance, given the amount of traffic from the surrounding non-residential uses.

Mr. Ford said the County has jurisdiction of Amwell Road. The neighbor to the north will also be benefitting from the left-turn only at the Bridgeway driveway.

- Ms. Gulliford asked about school bus stops. She referenced the stops on Amwell Road for the Westering Place development.

Mr. Ford said Amwell Road stops for that development are temporary. Once the construction of the project to the rear is completed, the buses will be able to go through the development for on-site pick-up and drop-off.

- Ms. Gulliford asked for information on the stormwater basin.

Mr. Ford said it will be an infiltration basin so it will have a sand bottom to promote recharge.

- Ms. Gulliford asked how close the trash compactor will be to the nearest house on Steinmetz.

Mr. Ford said it is more than 150 feet from the rear property line, and beyond the riparian zone.

Mr. Yuro noted the closest home would be roughly 300 feet away.

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- Ms. Gulliford questioned if the compactor would only be run during the day, not at night.

Mr. Ford agreed and said it is not run all the time either; used only to compact the garbage. It will be further buffered by the additional landscaping.

- Ms. Gulliford commented that the County typically waits for a project to be completed prior to repaving. She asked if the County still plans on repaving prior to construction of this project.

Mr. Ford said as of the County's review dated March 11, that was the intention.

Robert Engesser - Amwell Road

- Mr. Engesser asked the location of the affordable units.

Mr. Ford deferred to the architect's testimony.

Chairman Suraci reminded the audience that this project is part of the Township's affordable housing plan, which has been mandated at the State level and now from the Courts. He informed the public there will be a Town Hall Meeting on April 18, hosted by Mayor DelCore, to talk about affordable housing.

Break 9:12 - 9:24pm

Mark Berkowsky, AIA, of Berkowsky and Associates, Inc. was sworn in, reviewed his credentials, was accepted by the Board and gave the following testimony:

Mr. Berkowsky said the design is based on successful projects that have been completed for this applicant in West Winsor and Ewing Township. For Hillsborough, the architecture has been modified to reflect the use of enhanced materials, as well as to conform to the relevant ASDO requirements of the ordinance. The project meets all design standards and guidelines, with the exception of the pitch on the roofs.

There are nine buildings in total which are similar in design style, but slightly different to reflect the size and unit configuration. The buildings are based on 5 or 6-unit modules, which are joined together to form buildings consisting of two or three unit buildings. The 6-unit module generally consists of two 1-bedroom apartments along the first floor, along with five garages serving the six units. The second and third floors consist of four townhouse-style units, consisting of 2 or 3 bedrooms. There are minor configuration changes in the other layouts but all are similar. All of the 3-bedroom units, most of the 2-bedroom units, and half of the 1-bedroom units will have garages. There will be 110 units with garages and 16 without. All of the townhouse-style units will have balconies. There are 71 3-bedroom units; 41 2-bedroom units; and 14 1-bedroom units, for a total of 126 units. Of the total, 95 are market-rate units, 31 are affordable units. The affordable units are distributed throughout the site in Buildings #1, 2, 5, 6 and 7. The only difference in the unit is what the tenant will pay but the quality of the project is the same. All of the first floor units are handicap adaptable, in accordance with New Jersey Barrier Free requirements. Unit sizes range from approximately 825 square feet for a 1-bedroom unit; and the 2 and 3-bedroom units range from 1,000 to 1,200 square feet. In Building #1 there is also a sales office, which is a 3-bedroom unit; and a fitness center.

The exhibit shows the elevation from Amwell Road. The buildings are all 3-stories. All roof types are gabled or hipped. The main roof pitch is 4 ½ & 12, which is less than the design guidelines. A waiver is requested for the building height due to the roof pitch. The standard is a 9 & 12 pitch, which is twice of this elevation. The width of the building is 68 feet. That creates a building height of 44 feet as shown. The smaller roofs are 10 & 12 pitch; the gabled roofs are 8 & 12, all to make the proportions visually appealing. The balance of the roof guidelines are adhered to. The outdoor HVAC units are screened with solid panels on the upper floors, and landscaping on the first floor. The roofing materials are dimensioned asphalt shingles; and some painted metal standing seam for several of the smaller roofs, to provide interest. All of the roofing materials will be brown and grey earthtones to comply with the requirements. The window designs and layout meet the guidelines. The façade treatment is similar in all elevations, and utilize earthtone vinyl clapboard siding and shakes, and manufactured stone veneer. All other materials and colors are in accordance with the standards. The use of materials proposed reflect LEED standards for type and style, including locally sourced materials, recycled materials, and materials with low emittance to reduce indoor air pollutants.

Mr. Maski asked if the dormers shown are false dormers.

Mr. Berkowsky confirmed they are false dormers.

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Committeeman Lipani asked the ceiling heights.

Mr. Berkowsky said the ceilings range between 8 and 9 feet.

Committeeman Lipani commented there are no elevators, only stairs.

Mr. Berkowsky agreed.

Mr. O'Grodnick asked Mr. Berkowsky to elaborate on the pitch of the roofs.

Mr. Berkowsky said in order to meet the standard of the 9 & 12 pitch, as opposed to the proposal of 1 ½ & 12, it would double the height of the roof, and create a roof area double in height than proposed, from 10 feet to 20 feet just in roof area alone. That would require a variance.

Chairman Suraci asked if the buildings shown in the architectural packets, showing Buildings #1, 6, and 7, are similar to the other buildings.

Mr. Berkowsky said the building that fronts on Amwell Road is displayed because it is visible from the street, but all of the other building designs are similar, depending on the module.

Chairman Suraci asked if the affordable units have been specifically identified.

Mr. Berkowsky said affordable units will be within Buildings #1, 2, 5, 6 and 7. A chart can be provided to further identify these units. He said they do not like to designate the units because it is a private issue based on income and where you live.

Chairman Suraci commented other applicants have provided this information so it would be helpful to see.

Mr. Berkowsky agreed to comply.

Committeeman Lipani asked if there was a different elevation for the Clubhouse building.

Mr. Berkowsky said the side of Building #1, shown as Elevation A, will be visible from Amwell Road. The right-hand side is the sales office; the left is the fitness center side access. Additional decorative accents have been added to make it compatible with the design of the community. The side entrance is just for utility maintenance.

Exhibit A-4 shows the first floor of Building #1. The right-hand side shows the layout of the sales office, which is a 3-bedroom unit; and the fitness center, showing the utility maintenance entrance, which does not appear to be so, faces the side visible from Amwell Road.

Committeeman Lipani asked the hours for the fitness center.

Mr. O'Grodnick said the owner has indicated the hours will be 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., seven days a week, and accessible only to the residents. Further testimony would be provided by the Planner.

Chairman Suraci asked for more information on the units, and the difference between those showing a third bedroom vs. a den.

Mr. Berkowsky said the first floor units are single level units. The other units are townhouse-style units, with the bedrooms being stacked over the living areas. The second and third floor units are separate from the first floor units. The units with the dens would be considered 2-bedroom units.

Chairman Suraci asked who would be testifying on the community impacts.

Mr. O'Grodnick said they have an economist to testify, as needed.

Chairman Suraci said he would be interested in hearing how the units with two bedrooms and a "den" with closets were calculated. He said you know what they will turn in to.

Mr. Bernstein asked if the applicant is willing to commit that any 2-bedroom unit which has a den will be a 2-bedroom unit.

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Mr. O'Grodnick said that would be an appropriate condition to impose.

Mr. Bernstein said further, that there will be no sleeping area in the den.

Mr. O'Grodnick agreed.

Mr. Berkowsky clarified the dens do not have closets.

Board members disagreed, saying the plan shows there are.

Mr. Bernstein asked Mr. Berkowsky to indicate the difference between a "closet" and a "storage area".

Mr. Berkowsky agreed they are one and the same. Responding to Mr. Yuro, he said the storage areas are designed to have a half-wall.

Chairman Suraci said the Board does not have floorplans for Buildings 2 through 5. He asked Mr. Berkowsky to describe floorplans for those buildings, and asked if the Board could receive copies to see how similar they are.

Mr. Berkowsky agreed to provide the additional floorplans.

Committeeman Lipani asked for information on which units of Exhibit A-4 the garages serve.

Mr. Berkowsky said the garages only serve the upper floor units. He further clarified the two garages to the outside each have a stairway to access the upstairs unit. The one center garage would serve the lower 2-bedroom unit. The two remaining garages have access to the stairs. He confirmed the low to moderate income units would not have garages.

Mr. Bernstein raised the issue that the previous testimony stated only 16 units would not have garages, which would mean some would. He asked which specific units would not have garages. Mr. Bernstein reiterated the need for the full set of architectural plans. He asked Mr. Berkowsky to identify the units in the exhibit for Building #1.

Mr. Berkowsky said Building #1 consists of 6, 6, and 4 unit modules that comprise Building #1.

Mr. Bernstein clarified there are 16 units in the building. Of those units, how many will have garages.

Mr. Berkowsky agreed there are 16 units represented. Of those 16 units, there are 10 garages, 6 without.

Committeeman Lipani said Building #3 notes 15 market-rate buildings units with 15 garages. So, any building that has market-rate units will have a garage.

Mr. Berkowsky agreed.

Mr. Maski asked Mr. Berkowsky to confirm they would only be requesting one waiver from the ASDO standards.

Mr. Berkowsky agreed.

Open to the public.

Meryl Bisberg – Hickory Hill Road

- Ms. Bisberg asked for information on the configuration of the buildings and the count of affordable units.

Mr. Berkowsky said of the affordable units, there will be five 1-bedroom units; eighteen 2-bedroom units; and eight 3-bedroom units. He confirmed some of the townhouse-style units will be affordable.

- Ms. Bisberg asked if the 280 parking spaces noted include the designated parking spaces for the units.

Mr. Berkowsky said that is for the outside parking.

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- Ms. Bisberg asked if there will be designated “visitor” parking spaces.

Mr. Berkowsky said he believed there would be open parking, and deferred to the engineer.

- Ms. Bisberg commented on the assumption of 60 school-aged children associated with this development. She was advised to hold her questions and comments for another witness, and further to attend the Town Hall meeting the following week.

Mr. Bernstein asked if the count on the affordable housing is in accordance with the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls.

Mr. Berkowsky stated it was.

Jay Troutman, PE, of McDonough & Rae Associates, was sworn in, reviewed his credentials, was accepted by the Board, and gave the following testimony:

Mr. Troutman said a fully detailed study was done and submitted to the Board, dated November 13, 2018. It was submitted and reviewed by the Board’s professionals. The study shows the access and circulation pattern shown on the plans will provide adequate roadway capacity for traffic to enter and exit the site. The main feature of the traffic work studied was described by Mr. Ford, which is the restriping along Amwell Road. The access drives were designed accordingly with the roadway. After determining the benefit of having two driveways, a meeting was set up with the County to determine whether or not they would be agreeable, since the County has jurisdiction. The County appreciated the benefit of having the two access system, but requires turning restrictions on the western driveway. The County liked the restriping concept and having head-to-head left-turn lane, and a four-way intersection with the Bridgeway site to the north. Those plans have since been submitted; the details are being worked out. The second driveway provides a benefit for school bus circulation, emergency vehicle access. And promotes the free flow of traffic. There are no conflicting traffic movements created by the right-in/right-out driveway.

Mr. Troutman addressed Mr. Yuro’s comment in his report. He said the question was presented that once the bypass opens if it would change how traffic is oriented to and from the site. Mr. Troutman said it would. Right now there is a lot of shopping and school traffic to the west. He said they forecasted left-turns out because of that. Commuters might shift over heading to the bypass, so there may be a changes in the left-turn out movements to right-turn out, which may be easier.

Mr. Bernstein advised the Board would need a motion to extend time to continue.

A motion to extend the time for testimony was made and seconded. All were in favor, none opposed; motion carried.

Committeeman Lipani asked Mr. Troutman to discuss the peak-hour movements.

Mr. Troutman said the total peak-hourly trip generation in the morning was calculated at 13 entering trips and 45 outbound trips, for a total of 58 trips. The evening peak-hour is the reverse, 45 inbound trips and 26 exiting, for a total of 71 trips within the one-hour snapshot.

Committeeman Lipani asked of those trips, how many were left-hand turns going west on Route 514 (Amwell Road).

Mr. Troutman said about 60% of the trips would be left-hand turns out, which is about 27 trips in an hour.

Committeeman Lipani said the testimony provided was that the number of right-hand turns may increase once the bypass is open.

Mr. Troutman confirmed some of the left-hand turns may shift to right-hand turns at that time.

Mr. Yuro asked if the peak-hour counts were over both driveways.

Mr. Troutman said they were.

Mr. Yuro asked how many cars he expects to be queued up in the morning existing the site.

Mr. Troutman said the vehicle queues and the capacity analysis are fairly low, at less than a car a minute.

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Questions from the public.

None.

After discussion of a carry date, the Board decided on May 23.

A motion to carry File 19-PB-01-MSPV to May 23, 2019 without further notice was made and seconded.

Roll Call: Mr. Skobo – yes; Mr. Peason – abstain; Mr. Wagner – yes; Secretary Hesthag – yes; Mr. Weinstein – yes; Mr. Deb – yes; Committeeman Lipani – yes; Vice Chairman Julian – yes; Chairman Suraci – yes. Motion carries.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Maski reminded the Board the next meeting is scheduled for April 25.

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. All were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

*Submitted by:
Debora Padgett
Planning Board Clerk*

Approved