

**MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MIDDLETOWN MUNICIPAL BUILDING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2014**

PRESENT:

Sandy Farry
Charles Parkerson
Fred Thomas
Bill Rushwick
George Hyjurick
Robert Burnett
Mike McCann
Pat Duffy, Zoning Officer
Wayne Kiefer, Township Engineer
Andrew Brown, Township Traffic Engineer

ABSENT

1. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL.

- a. Ms. Farry called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Ms. Farry took roll call with all seven members present (listed above). Mr. Duffy, Mr. Kiefer and Mr. Brown were also present.

2. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MINUTES

- a. Mr. Parkerson motioned to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2014 regular meeting. Mr. Thomas seconded. The vote was taken and the minutes were approved by vote of 5-0 as submitted (Mr. Rushwick and Mr. McCann abstained).

3. REVIEW OF S/LD # 14-1 SKETCH PLAN REVIEW FOR INGERMAN - POSEL, WOODBOURNE ROAD, TMP 22-047-198, 22-047-199, 22-047-200.

- The applicant's attorney, Thomas Hecker, Esq. introduced the applicant's project team and gave a brief overview of the project. Next, the applicant's landscape architect, Adam Benosky, R.L.A of Boehler Engineering presented the sketch plan, the site features and summarized the current versus proposed zoning requirements. The existing drainage basin will be enlarged. Lara Schwager of Ingerman Development Company spoke next and described the project as "renters by choice" upscale apartments in addition to the option of owning a townhouse. She described the site as a natural transition zone for the A-O Apartment – Office zoning district between the commercial along Route 1 and the single family homes in Highland Park. Ingerman Development will manage the apartments after construction.

Next to speak was Dave Minnow, the applicant's land planner who echoed Ms. Schwager's view of the transition zoning for the proposed site being a sound planning policy. Mr. Minnow discussed the proposed upscale apartments would attract the young professional and the retired from workforce markets. The architectural drawings were presented and showed garages along the perimeter for the townhouses and garages in the apartment buildings. Mr. Hecker stated that the perimeter garages form a buffer with the adjacent properties and that the traffic and stormwater issues will be designed and reviewed during the land development approval process.

Mark Roth of McMahon Associates, the applicant's traffic engineer, stated that a traffic impact study would be completed during the land development process. There are two roads proposed to access Woodbourne Road and the one closest to Route 1 would be restricted from left turns leaving the proposed site and the other road closest to Highland Park would have full access. Mr. Roth also noted that the Township is funding a PennDOT traffic improvement plan that will help with the traffic concerns in this area and made mention that the proposed residential development would generate 290 peak trips in the afternoon versus a 300,000 SF commercial retail site that would have 1,400 peak trips in the afternoon.

- The Township Engineer, Township Traffic Engineer and Zoning Director review letters were read to the audience. Handouts of all the review letters were submitted to the 100 plus people in attendance.
- The Planning Commission discussed the project with the applicant indicating traffic problems on existing roads and no direct access to Route 1 as major issues. Mr. Parkerson stated the transition zoning concept is not a bad idea but the proposed development was too intense. Mr. Hyjurick questioned Ms. Schwager to find out that Ingerman will keep the apartments but could possibly flip the townhouse construction to others. The roads and recreation areas will remain private. Mr. Burnett voiced his concerns with the parking shortage and that access through the shopping centers simply will not work. At this point, Mr. Benosky responded that the parking numbers shown on the plan were incorrect and that the plan does have the required 1085 parking spaces. Mr. Thomas asked about the two paper street connections with Highland Park and Ms. Schwager replied that they have no plan to utilize those connections to their site.
- About 20 residents from the Highland Park area spoke out against the proposed development. A summary of the resident concerns are as follows:
 1. Traffic is a major problem already without this development
 2. Heartwood and Hedge Roads are already major cut-through streets
 3. Drainage issues – prior flooding in Highland Park from the existing basin on site
 4. Lack of open space in area and south of Route 1 in general
 5. Threat to wildlife and nature
 6. Apartments will devalue the surrounding home prices
 7. Impossible to manage the number of people living in an apartment
 8. More police presence will be needed which could lead to higher taxes
 9. Townhouses are not buffers or transition buildings
 10. Apartments could become low income housing in future
 11. Don't threaten the residents with "it's either this or a commercial development"
- Lara Schwager responded to the resident concerns that they can build a big box commercial site by-right. Ingerman feels the residential development is a much better choice for the community.

At this point the applicant concluded their presentation and did not state their future intentions.

4. ZONING ISSUES

Mr. Duffy stated there is an in-law suite application for the upcoming Zoning Hearing Board meeting.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held on March 5, 2014.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Thomas made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Hyjurick. The vote was taken and the motion to adjourn was unanimously approved. The time of the adjournment was 9:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Duffy, Zoning Officer

cc: Planning Commission
Township Manager
Township Engineer
Township Traffic Engineer
Fire Marshall