

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
Monday, October 13, 2014
7:00 pm

I. ATTENDANCE

The Planning Commission held its first regular meeting of the month on Monday, October 13, 2014 at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

Commission:	Rob Crassweller, Chairman	Staff:	Jeffrey Ressler, Zoning Officer
	Marc McMaster, Vice Chair		
	Ralph Wheland		
	Kurt Homan		
	Richard Killian		
	Scott Harkcom		
	Lisa Strickland		

Others in attendance included: Heather Bird, Recording Secretary; John Sepp, PennTerra Engineering; Richard Keyser, Toll Brothers

II. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Crassweller called the Monday, October 13, 2014 Ferguson Township Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

III. THE COTTAGES AT STATE COLLEGE BY TOLL BROTHERS

Mr. John Sepp, Penn Terra Engineering along with Mr. Richard Keyser, Vice President of Commercial Development for Toll Brothers presented the Cottages at State College to the Commission. The project is located at the corner of Blue Course Drive and Whitehall Road. The project will involve the extension of Blue Course Drive, built as a public roadway, which will serve as the main access to the park and provide access to the future Regional Park. The project will be entirely a cottage style home development. The 38 acre tract is zoned R4, the highest density allowed in the Township, which under straight zoning would allow for 665 units while this project proposed 268 units. Under a Planned Residential Development (PRD) the ordinance allows for 20 units per acre or 764 units, this project has density under 7 units per acre. The project includes pervious coverage of 46.7% which is approximately 1.25 acres less than what is allowed under a PRD. The area is designated for high density housing by the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan. The building may go up to 42 feet which would be the peak of the roof, but most units will average 34 to 35 feet. The clubhouse may reach approximately 52 feet. The housing design meets the community demands of a student oriented population and includes units that accommodate more than three unrelated individuals in a dwelling unit. The project includes onsite parking. The construction of Blue Course Drive Extension will serve the future Regional Park. The project includes a drainage way throughout the project, this will landscaped in accordance with the Township's riparian buffer criteria. The type of units in the project allow for a wider buffer area along the drainage way.

Mr. Sepp provided a comparison of the plan currently submitted to the original plan proposed. The original plan proposed 492 units with 1,544 beds; the current submission proposes 268 units with 1,093 beds. The impervious area is smaller, the total open space is larger from 19.2 acres to 22.5 acres, the contiguous open space is larger by 1.5 acres and the amount of parking stalls has increased. The new plan proposes 1,120 parking stalls for 1,093 beds. The previous plan was at .8 parking stalls per bed and this new plan is a little over 1 parking stall per bed. Toll Brothers changed the project to be cottage style homes. These types of housing communities have been well received. The lease agreement language restricts gathering hours and frequency and outlines the management enforcement of community rules and regulations. Residents will be fined and/or evicted for violations to the community policies. The Cottages will include onsite management security. They may offer a subsidized unit to a local police officer which results in a more secure property. At least one property manager will live on site. CATA has been consulted on the best place to locate bus pull offs and the best route for buses to travel. The buffer areas between the established neighboring communities will be large. The buildings will have sprinkler systems. The Cottages of State College is a collaboration of expertise, sustainable land development, quality construction and

exceptional property management. The amenities for the project include a clubhouse, pool areas, fitness centers, volleyball, indoor basketball, outdoor grilling area, movie theater, golf simulator, study rooms and CATA bus route accessibility. This project will be an asset to the community.

Mr. Homan stated that he prefers this plan over the previous submission and he questioned if the bus route will go into the development? Mr. Sepp answered that yes they will enter on Blue Course Drive or via the second full access and go throughout the development exiting at the opposite access.

Mr. Harkcom asked about the location of the clubhouse. It does not seem to be centrally located as in the previous plan. Mr. Sepp stated that in the previous plan the amenities were centrally located within each building and the plan did not include a separate clubhouse. Mr. Harkcom asked if the east and west part of the project could operate independently of each other. He is looking in the future, 10 – 15 years when Blue Course Drive may extend to Route 45. Mr. Sepp responded that the possibility of that was not looked at with the project but stated that Blue Course Drive will be constructed as a boulevard including pedestrian cross walks. Mr. Keyser stated that if that were to happen something similar to University of Arizona could be done with stop lights for pedestrians. Mr. Harkcom commented on an item on page 5 of the narrative which stated that building cottages would be better use of land and cause less soil erosion than the current agricultural usage. Mr. Sepp responded that the comment was related entirely to drainage way, not the project overall.

Mr. Wheland asked what the motivation was for the improvements to this plan over the previous submitted plan. Mr. Keyser stated that one was the amount of work needed to prepare the land and the way the buildings would fit. They felt that the land was more suited for a cottage style project. The Retreat at State College proved that this type of project could be very successful. Mr. Wheland questioned the unit provided to a police officer, what would be expected of the officer. Mr. Keyser stated that maybe parking their car in front of their unit in order to make their presence known.

Mr. Killian did not have any questions, but commented that this plan is much better than the previously proposed plan.

Ms. Strickland agreed that this plan is better than the previously proposed plan but is concerned with the security of individuals. Mr. Keyser stated that this type of project tends to attract more responsible individuals. Mr. Sepp stated that Williams and Associates, another partner, has not seen a safety concern in similar projects.

Mr. Pribulka asked Mr. Sepp to explain the buffers that will be provided. Mr. Sepp stated the property will have a minimum 25-30 foot landscape buffer including a fence along the Tussey View Estates property. Williams and Associates discussed the idea of landscaping then a fence and then further landscaping.

Mr. Crassweller questioned the difference between recreational and common open space. Mr. Sepp stated that recreational open space is an area where you could be active, while common open space would not be an area to be active in. Mr. Crassweller stated that the plan shows recreational open space on the right of the plan, neighboring Tussey View Estates, and he does not feel the plan should include recreational open space there. Mr. Crassweller questioned why are the majority of the 6 unit buildings on the outside of the development? Could these be moved inward in the development? Mr. Crassweller asked if they have done these Cottage Style units before. Mr. Keyser confirmed this is the first time for Toll Brothers. Mr. Crassweller commented that he likes that sprinklers will be in all of the units. Lastly, Mr. Crassweller questioned the possibility of all the trees on the site affecting the drainage way in a negative way. Mr. Sepp stated that they project has hired Dan Jones and with his expertise a problem should not occur.

Ms. Strickland asked if the church located in front of the project has made any comments. Mr. Sepp stated they have not received any comment from them.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES SEPTEMBER 22, 2014

Mr. Harkcom made a motion to APPROVE the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes from September 22, 2014 including the correction of changing Mr. McMaster called the meeting to order to Mr. Crassweller. Mr. Wheland seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

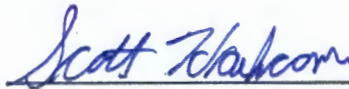
V. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McMaster made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed unanimously.

With no further business, the October 13, 2014 regular Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Scott Harkcom", is written over a horizontal line.

Scott Harkcom, Secretary
For the Planning Commission