

Village of Riverwoods
Plan Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes March 16, 2023

A meeting of the Village of Riverwoods Plan Commission was held on Thursday, March 16, 2023 at Village Hall. Chairperson Laurie Breitkopf called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Present:

Laurie Breitkopf, Chairperson
Karl Blalock
Jay Datt (arrived 7:15 pm)
Sherry Graditor
Stephen Levin
Carey Rothbardt

Also Present:

Kris Ford, Mayor
Michael Clayton, Village Trustee
Henry Hollander, Village Trustee
Rick Jamerson, Village Trustee
Bruce Huvad, Village Attorney

1. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Blalock moved to approve the minutes from the March 2, 2023 Plan Commission meeting. Commissioner Graditor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

2. Visitors wishing to address the Plan Commission

There were no visitors wishing to address the Plan Commission on non-agenda items.

3. Old Business

Continuation of Public Hearing for 3750 Deerfield Road (Federal Life property) on application of Lexington Homes L.L.C. to consider (i) zoning text amendments to Sections 9-4A-3 and 9-11-12 of the Village Code, (ii) rezoning the subject property to the 1-R 42,000 Square Foot (Exclusive Of Road Easements) Single-Family Residential District, and (iii) granting a special use permit for a Residential Planned Unit Development under Section 9-11-12 of the Village Code as amended, for a townhome development.

Mr. Huvad explained the Public Hearing was continued in January, February and earlier in March because staff and the developer have been working together on a plan that addresses the Village's concerns. The zoning relief that is now being requested by Lexington is different from what it requested six months ago. Lexington is no longer seeking a text amendment or relief from the Woodland Protection Ordinance. The new site plan has fewer units and more green space. The petitioner will present a new site plan and republish for the next Plan Commission meeting on April 6, 2023. The Plan Commission will not take any final action tonight.

Attorney Hal Francke, Nate Wynsma with Lexington Homes and Sharon Dixon, landscape architect from Dixon Design, were present. Mr. Francke explained that Lexington has had ongoing discussions with homeowners from Meadowlake and the Village and has made numerous changes to the original plan. He believes this plan provides a number of benefits to the community.

Mr. Wynsma summarized the previous presentations from October with a 69-unit plan and November with a 59-unit plan. Since then, Lexington met with Meadowlake homeowners, Village staff and consultants and made changes to the plan. The new plan incorporates many of the concerns and comments from the Village and residents.

The new plan has 54 units, additional open space and is more livable. It includes 231 parking spaces, 108 of which are parking spaces inside the townhomes, 108 are driveway parking spaces and 15 are guest parking spaces along the access roads. The proposed plan has sidewalks and paths within the development and connectivity to Deerfield Road. The proposed building elevations have two different color pallets and the side and rear elevations have been enhanced. Mr. Wynsma explained that Lexington has presented renderings to give more realistic views of how the development will look and feel throughout the site. The storm water management areas will have naturalized plantings and the side slopes will be 4:1 instead of 3:1. The Village and residents stated that open space was needed in the townhome areas. Lexington limited the pavement areas and added a rain garden as well as large landscape areas between building 10 and the entry drive and on the east end of the property with a neighborhood gathering area. There are courtyards between buildings for gathering areas. There will be a foot bridge north of the townhome buildings across the storm water outfall.

Mr. Francke explained that the relief requested for the development has changed from the original plans. Lexington is asking for approval of a Special Use for a multi-family housing development with specific bulk regulations that are determined by the Village Board based on Plan Commission recommendations. Lexington is requesting rezoning the property from O & R1 Office and Research District to 1-R District.

The project benefits include:

1. Provision of a new housing option for existing residents seeking to stay in town but downsizing.
2. Dedication of right-of-way and granting of easements that will facilitate construction of planned Deerfield Road improvements.
3. Construction of storm water management improvements that will facilitate the construction of planned Deerfield Road improvements.
4. Dedication of right-of-way and granting easements that will facilitate the construction of an access road that will provide an alternate access route to and from Deerfield Road for commercial properties at the corner of Deerfield Road and Milwaukee Avenue.
5. Improvement of drainage conditions by working with the Village and property owners to the east.
6. Construction of affordable housing units.
7. Contribution for construction of additional housing units.

Mr. Francke added that its traffic consultant KLOA has provided an addendum to the traffic impact study.

Lee Brown with Teska Associates explained that Lexington made significant changes in response to the challenges presented by earlier designs. The internal circulation is much better, but there are physical tweaks needed with sidewalk interconnections to enhance the liveability of the development. The most significant changes include the storm water management areas, which are now more consistent with other areas in the Village. There is a lot more usable, walkable open space.

Mr. Huvad noted the slopes of the detention areas have been increased, the amount of impervious surface has been reduced and native plantings will be used, which will help meet storm water standards. The Village will ask Lexington to provide a storm water analysis and an adjusted landscape plan. The photometric plan must meet the Village's residential outdoor lighting ordinance.

Ms. Graditor would like to receive updated submissions, including additional information about native plantings and traffic, before making a decision. Mr. Rothbardt asked what the plan is for affordable housing. Mr. Huvad explained the old plan was for three onsite units and payments-in-lieu for seven additional units. Mr. Wynsma explained the new proposal, which has fewer total units in the development, would include three onsite units and payments-in-lieu for five additional units (for a total of eight units). Mr. Franke noted that most affordable housing is rental. It is a lot more challenging to offer affordable for-sale units, as proposed in this project. Mr. Huvad added it has been proposed that the Village will partner with a not-for-profit agency on maintaining the affordable unit restrictions.

Mr. Blalock noted these units are for residents that are downsizing. He asked if elevators may be installed in the units. Mr. Wynsma explained Lexington will offer an

option for an elevator and will provide more details in the updated package. He noted that 40-50% of the prospective buyers are expected to be downsizing, and two or three units will be purchased as a second home. 40% of buyers are expected to be younger buyers without children. About 10-12% of the buyers are expected to have school-age children. Lexington will provide an updated estimate of school requirements resulting from this development.

Mr. Wynsma added that the homeowners' association would maintain all exterior items such as landscaping, building exteriors and snow removal.

Mr. Blalock asked for more details on protection of the woodlands on the property. Mr. Wynsma explained that a portion of the existing woodlands would be maintained. The storm water basin and outfall areas would be cleared. The woodland is not good quality. Lexington would work with the Village Ecologist to clean up and clear appropriate areas of the woodland.

Mr. Levin asked if there would be any negative effect of the development's storm water management to the existing homes. Mr. Wynsma explained the property currently takes runoff from Federal Life and Thorntons. The storm water system is designed to contain the water in the ponds. There will be no runoff from this property to the Meadowlake properties to the north. Mr. Huvad noted the watershed standards are now more stringent than when the Federal Life building was built. Todd Shaffer, principal with Haeger Engineering, concurred that the standards are more stringent. There will be improvements to the water flow with this development. Lexington will clarify this point in the updated exhibits.

KLOA Traffic Engineer Luay Aboona explained the new plan calls for a single access point with Deerfield Road rather than two access points. The access road will accommodate traffic into and out of Colonial Court as well as the development. There will be left and right turn lanes at Deerfield Road with stop sign control. There will be five guest parking spaces on the loop road.

Lila McClellan asked where guests would park if there are more than two vehicles in the garage and two vehicles in the driveway. Is there a concern about too few parking spaces during holidays? Lee Brown stated that he was not concerned about parking.

Mary Oler asked if this presentation would be added to the Village website. She asked when residents can respond to this presentation. Ch. Breitkopf stated that the presentation would be uploaded to the website. She added that there will be an additional public hearing or hearings, and that residents may send comments to the Plan Commission. Ms. Oler asked for additional renderings showing vantage points from Chicory Lane, the end of Foxtail Lane and along the West Lake. She also asked about the building height versus the Federal Life building. Mr. Huvad explained the Federal Life building is about 45' high and the proposed townhomes are 35' high but

have to be raised from the flood plain by about 2 feet. The height of the townhomes should be somewhat less than the Federal Life building. Ms. Oler asked about windows looking into Meadowlake, light pollution and safety. Would there be fencing between the Federal Life property and Meadowlake? Mr. Wynsma said there would not be fencing. Ms. Oler asked for demographic statistics and the number of bedrooms per unit. Mr. Wynsma noted the units will have 2 or 3 bedrooms.

Gene Averbuch raised concerns about potential flooding and runoff from toxic construction materials. He asked what guarantees would be provided for damages from flooding or toxic runoff. Mr. Wynsma noted the storm water design will be reviewed and approved by the Village Engineer. Lexington will be required to post a surety bond with the Village until the improvements are complete. Mr. Averbuch asked if they would be able to draw if there was flooding during construction. Mr. Huvard explained Lexington must pass inspections to ensure everything was completed as specified in the plans. Mr. Shaffer stated that regarding toxic runoff, Lake County constantly inspects all erosion control during construction.

Jeff Smith asked how many trees would be removed and how they would be remediated. He asked Lexington to provide an overlay transparency of the Federal Life building versus the proposed development, so people could see the net impact of the development. Mr. Wynsma showed an aerial perspective of the existing property. He will bring a transparency to the next meeting. Mr. Wynsma noted that part of the challenge of generating the perspectives from Meadowlake is gaining access to the Meadowlake property to take photographs. Mr. Averbuch will grant permission to his property. He will contact his neighbors for additional access.

Randy Yaffe noted Meadowlake's zoning was changed to multi-family after Meadowlake was developed. Mr. Huvard explained that in 1986 (after Meadowlake was developed), the 1-R District was changed to allow multi-family housing as a Special Use because the Village had no multi-family zoning. The Village Attorney at that time felt it made sense to allow multi-family in that district because Meadowlake is the densest of Village districts with the smallest lots. Mr. Yaffe noted there is no fencing proposed. Fencing is important. Meadowlake residents are worried about liability from children swimming in the lake. The proposal also does not discuss planting new trees and bushes in the woodland buffer area. Mr. Yaffe believes residents are not against a development, but want a development that is organic and more consistent with Riverwoods. He suggested adding more buffer between Meadowlake and the townhomes.

Mr. Huvard noted the next Plan Commission meeting is scheduled for April 6, 2023, which is Passover. He asked if there was another date in April that the Plan Commission could meet. Commissioners agreed to move the next meeting to April 20, 2023 at 7:30 pm.

Mr. Rothbardt moved to continue the Public Hearing to April 20, 2023 at 7:30 pm. Ms. Graditor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

4. New Business

There was no new business.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business or discussion, Mr. Rothbardt moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Blalock seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 pm.

The next scheduled meeting of the Plan Commission is April 20, 2023 at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,