

APPROVED

Village of Riverwoods
Plan Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes September 7, 2023

A meeting of the Village of Riverwoods Plan Commission was held on Thursday, September 7, 2023 at Village Hall. Chairperson Laurie Breitkopf called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Present:

Laurie Breitkopf, Chairperson
Karl Blalock
Jay Datt
Sherry Graditor
Stephen Levin

Absent:

Carey Rothbardt

Also Present:

Kris Ford, Mayor
Vivian Hofeld, Deputy Village Clerk
Steve Witt, Director of Community Services
Henry Hollander, Village Trustee
Bruce Huvad, Village Attorney

1. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Graditor moved to approve the minutes from the August 3, 2023 Plan Commission meeting. Mr. Blalock 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

Continued discussion of sub-area plan amendment to the Comprehensive Plan for the Wolters Kluwer site, to consider possible land uses other than office and research.

Lee Brown from Teska Associates noted this is the opportunity to do some planning prior to drafting the tools to make things work. The Village typically responds to developers by considering the guidelines in the Zoning Ordinances without the background of how the standards or measurements were derived. There is a tool that

shows residential development, what it looks like from the air and street, and the subdivision with densities. Mr. Brown suggested the commissioners go into other communities to help them understand there are a number of items that make it both comfortable and safe without looking at the density and building height.

Mr. Brown suggested a number of questions to consider when touring other locations to gain a better sense of what makes the development function and/or what they do not like:

- Does this constitute a neighborhood? (A place that lends itself for positive human interaction among residents)
- Does the home orient to the public so that it welcomes visitors to the front door?
- Does the landscaping make the dwellings more attractive? Does the landscape provide shade?
- Where is the parking? Does vehicle parking dominate the public image of the dwelling?
- Do individual units have private open space?
- Are there any public open spaces?
- Do the streets seem difficult to navigate?
- How is waste handled? How is mail handled?
- How are delivery vehicles accommodated?

The Commissioners can discuss if there should be a new Zoning District that follows with a change to the Comprehensive Plan or a new Planned Unit Development (PUD). This would include a series of conditions that the Village would want to measure these developments against. These can include:

- Safe and understandable circulation
- Comfortable/attractive space (R.O.W., parks, etc.)
- Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations
- Usable open space
- Defined private spaces
- Parking
 - Adequacy
 - Unobtrusive
 - Convenient
- Attractive building materials
- Details and fenestration that diminish the sense of building bulk and monotony
- Maintainable site grading and site improvements
- Comprehensive storm water management as an amenity

Mr. Brown noted the aesthetics and architecture are not considered, but the building materials should be attractive. He showed various developments that the commissioners should tour and pointed out some differences. Mr. Brown suggested the commissioners make notes on what they like before looking at the density. He also

discussed various parking options to consider. Mr. Huvard ~~questioned whether does not believe~~ Riverwoods residents really that want to “downsize” want to a unit of 1,600 or 2000 square feet house; or would they prefer rather, they want larger but still, low maintenance homes.

Mr. Huvard noted the Wolthers Kluewer site has 13 acres of woods on the 48-acre site, which lends itself to clustering away from the woods. One of the advantages of clustering is creating offsetting open space to make the site feel less dense. Mr. Blalock questioned whether the acres of woodland would be part of the open space. Mr. Brown believes the woodlands are untouchable. Riverwoods cherishes the woodlands so the standards set for the development should preserve the woodlands. Pathways could be added to make that portion of the site useable.

Ch. Breitkopf believes there is a wide variety of styles in the tours. She thinks the question of density comes up more if the development is unattractive. Mr. Huvard noted some of these properties that we will be touring are medium-density. Ch. Breitkopf believes the landscaping, architecture and contouring make huge differences. Ms. Graditor explained the Commission will have to come up with parameters including density, height, quality of construction, landscaping, open space, etc. Mr. Brown explained there are a number of different type of examples in the tours.

There are two groups of alternatives to consider for the Wolthers Kluewer property; with the adaptive reuse of the building vs. and removal of the building without. The existing building would provide a lot of density and allow for the areas outside of the woodlands to be built with less density.

Trustee Hollander questioned whether it would be beneficial to differentiate the density as a whole versus the buildable area density and how to make an interaction between the two. He believes the Village may have an idea of what they want, but does not know how to put it into Zoning. Trustee Hollander questioned if an application could be denied if the development meets all of the recommendations and Zoning requirements, but does not have an appealing aesthetic. Mr. Huvard believes there will be appearance guidelines as part of any large scale the commercial development. The Village does not regulate the appearance of single family homes. It would be difficult to regulate appearance in residential. But for multifamily or denser developments, tThere can be guidelines that can help define what can be approved and provide a basis of not approving something because of appearance. Mr. Brown discussed the possibility of differentiating between density as a whole and buildable area density. He suggested other communities consider the number of impervious surfaces, buildings and the intensity in sub areas versus the overall site density. Traditional Zoning will not be helpful in this situation; rather, a PUD Ordinance would allow for relatively intense segments of the area versus the overall density (which would have other standards).

The commissioners will tour the developments and take notes before the October 5, 2023 Plan Commission meeting.

4. Comments from the Chairperson

Ch. Breitkopf introduced Steve Witt, the new Director of Community Services for the Village.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business or discussion, Mr. Datt moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Graditor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm. The next scheduled meeting of the Plan Commission is October 5, 2023 at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeri Cotton