

Butler Township Planning Commission

February 2, 2021

The Butler Township Planning Commission held their regular Planning Commission meeting on Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Butler Township Municipal Building, 290 South Duffy Road, Butler, PA 16001.

In attendance were Planning Commission members: Chair Ron Henshaw, Vice Chair Sam Zurzolo, Brenda Collins, and Fred Maihle, Jr. Secretary Ernie Oesterling, Mike Liebler, and Richard Schontz, Jr. were absent.

Also in attendance were Engineer Jonathan Garczewski with Gateway Engineers, Solicitor Brian Farrington with Lutz, Pawk, & Black, and Zoning Officer Jesse Hines.

Chair Henshaw called the meeting to order followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Approval of December 1, 2020 Minutes

Motion by Collins to approve the minutes of December 1, 2020, seconded by Maihle, Jr. and carried unanimously.

Public Comment

No comments.

Reorganization of Board

Motion by Maihle, Jr. to reappoint Ron Henshaw as Chair, Sam Zurzolo as Vice Chair and Ernie Oesterling as Secretary, seconded by Collins and carried unanimously.

Highfield Trails – Lot Consolidation

South Duffy & Highfield Roads

Mr. Brad Simmons with Sheffler & Company, Inc. was in attendance to represent the Highfield Trails Lot Consolidation.

The referenced Consolidation Plan is located along Highfield Road between South Duffy Road and South Boundary Street in the R-1 (Single Family Residential) Zoned District. The plan proposes to consolidate 290 adjoining lots and 10 right-of-ways into Parcel A.

Mr. Simmons gave an overview of the plan.

Engineer Garczewski referenced Gateway Engineers' letter dated January 13, 2021, C-25664. There are still outstanding comments.

Motion by Maihle, Jr. to table the Highfield Trails Lot Consolidation, seconded by Collins and carried unanimously.

Highfield Trails - Subdivision

South Duffy & Highfield Roads

Mr. Brad Simmons with Sheffler & Company, Inc. was in attendance to represent the Highfield Trails Subdivision.

The referenced Subdivision Plan is located along Highfield Road in the R-1 (Single Family Residential) Zoned District. The plan proposes a cluster development of 113 single family lots with public and private improvements.

Mr. Simmons gave an overview of the plan. He explained that he received a determination letter regarding the density for the project. He stated that they will be revising the plans to eliminate 12 lots, ten along South Duffy Road and two in the interior. He is requesting to be tabled until the March Planning Commission to correct this issue.

Vice Chair Zurzolo questioned the plans for the monument and if there was any way to keep the monument where it is located. Mr. Simmons stated that the monument will be relocated. Maihle, Jr. is also concerned with moving the monument.

Maihle, Jr. questioned how they can sell community association property and if the community has a part in the sale. Mr. Simmons stated that he believes that they have bylaws and does not believe it is community owned. He believes a board would make the decisions.

Chair Henshaw questioned parking and stormwater from Highfield Association Property. Mr. Simmons stated that there will be an access easement for Highfield Association to access parking. He explained that the stormwater will be a sheet flow with yard drains that will distribute to the stormwater system.

Engineer Garczewski referenced Gateway Engineers' letter dated October 21, 2020, C-25664. There are still outstanding comments.

Solicitor Farrington explained that the Highfield Community Association is its own self-contained entity. They would have a board that would have the authority to sell to anything they own to a third party.

Mr. Ken Shultz of 232 Abner Drive was in attendance. He has been researching Highfield Community and has requested its bylaws. He explained that the organization is being questioned. He does not object to houses being put on the property, but he does object to the density. He would like to see setbacks, lot sizes, and traffic study. He is concerned with maintaining the integrity of the community. He is concerned that the parking lot is marked for future development.

Zoning Officer Hines explained that density is defined. There is criteria for how to develop a cluster development in an R-1 (Single Family Residential) Zoned District. The developer is revising their plans to meet this density requirement. In regards to the traffic study, the developer has submitted a plan to our traffic engineer. It was determined that this development will not change the level of service. Our engineer met with developer and they walked the entire area. It was determined that no improvement were needed to the road. In regards to the open area, it is a requirement of a cluster development. It is dedicated for the life of the plan and not for future development.

Mr. Ed McKissick of 255 North Boundary Street was in attendance and agrees with Mr. Schultz. He does not want the plan built. He feels it would be devastating to the community. He is concerned with the amount of traffic that will be on Highfield Road. He also agreed that the monument needs to stay where it is located.

Mr. Tim Holt of 252 North Boundary Street was in attendance. He is concerned with the loss of their privacy. All of the car lights coming out of the plan will shine into his house. He is not opposed to development, he just wants to maintain privacy. He also questioned the median home value. He questioned how the parking lot could be included in the density calculations.

Zoning Officer Hines explained that the municipality does not have the authority to tell the developer where to put the road.

Mr. Butch Master of Preston Drive was in attendance. He also questioned the plans for the monument.

Motion by Collins to table the Highfield Trails Subdivision, seconded by Maihle, Jr. and carried unanimously.

The Villas at Forest Oaks – Land Development

Mercer Road

Mr. Brett Schultz with Weaver Homes was in attendance to represent The Villas at Forest Oaks Land Development.

The referenced Land Development Plan is located off Mercer Road within both Center and Butler Township in the R-2 (Multifamily Residential) Zoned District. The plan proposes to construct 84 multi-family residential units, a community building, and a pool in the form of a condominium development with associated utilities, road, and a stormwater management system.

Mr. Schultz gave an overview of the plan. He explained that he met with Zoning Officer Hines and Center Township Officials to go over the project. There will be 20 four-unit buildings and two duplexes. The stormwater will be located in Center Township. Eight buildings and the clubhouse will be located in Butler Township. They are working to finalize revised plans for consideration at next month's Planning Commission meeting.

Discussion was held regarding street lighting. The road will be adopted by Center Township. Zoning Officer Hines suggested that they resubmit plans and the township will comment on the revised plans.

Discussion was held regarding agreements and bonding for the development. It was agreed that there will be agreements and bonding for both townships.

Discussion was held regarding stormwater. The pond will be entirely in Center Township.

Engineer Garczewski referenced Gateway Engineers' letter dated January 25, 2021, C-25046-0002. There are still outstanding comments. He would like to discuss the street lights with the developer before they resubmit drawings. He would like the location of the landscape buffer confirmed and a cross section.

Zoning Officer Hines stated that they have submitted a traffic study.

Motion by Vice Chair Zurzolo to table The Villas at Forest Oaks Land Development, seconded by Collins and carried unanimously.

Questions from the Media

The media had questions regarding Highfield Trails. He questioned what right-of-ways were being subtracted, why parking can't be subtracted from the density calculations, if there was language that mandates that there will not be future development, and how much land the Highfield Community will still own.

Adjournment

Motion by Collins to adjourn at 7:30 p.m., seconded by Maihle, Jr. and carried unanimously.


Ernie Oesterling, Secretary