

## **NORTH EAST PLANNING COMMISSION-WORKSHOP**

North East Town Hall Meeting Room  
106 South Main Street, North East, Maryland 21901  
Tuesday, February 20, 2018  
7:00 PM

Chairman Mark Dobbins called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. Present included Valerie Combs, and Judy Duffy. Also present were Chris Mink, CNA Engineering, Betsy Vennell, Director of Planning, and Lisa Rhoades, Planning and Zoning Assistant.

### **-MINUTES-**

None.

### **-NEW BUSINESS-**

#### 1. Master Planned Community Zoning Regulations.

Zoning District R-4 with Master Planned Community Overlay District, Tax Map 31; Parcels 1355, 235; Applicant: WORF, LLC, 2301 Rutledge Road, Fallston, Maryland; Owner: 1PH PROPERTIES, LLC; 9616 Belair Road, Baltimore, Maryland

Ms. Vennell briefly reviewed the North East Zoning Ordinance Article 5, Section 5-17. "MPC" Master Planned Community Floating Zone District Regulations and Article 6. Supplementary District Regulations, Section 6-31 Master Planned Community (MPC). Per the regulations, the Planning Commission is able to guide the design, the housing unit types and open space amenities within this community. Ms. Vennell reported that the proposed MPC Design Guidelines Book, Page 22, refers to the Ridgely Forest becoming "a jewel in the Town's crown and a premiere community in which to live." The Planning Commission should keep this in mind when deciding on the design guidelines.

Ms. Vennell stated that Mr. Mink will be reviewing the technical components of the Concept MPC Plan such as street layouts, open space percentages, lots sizes, etc. Ms. Duffy inquired about the loss of 5 acres of wetlands as shown by comparing the original and proposed MPC Design Guidelines books. Mr. Mink explained that when roads are installed hydrology often is stopped and some wetlands will dry up, some isolated wetlands will be filled in and some wetlands may no longer exist with the new delineation. Maryland Department of Environment will be reviewing the isolated wetlands associated with the non-tidal wetland permit application the developer submitted the end of January. Mr. Mink stated that the time of year, soils and hydrology will all be factors in their determination of the permit approval.

Mr. Nair inquired about why there is a decrease in the number of townhomes. Ms. Vennell reported the townhomes are not selling as well in the current housing market but the developer has a minimum and maximum number of townhomes to build per Section 6-31. Paragraph 5.b. of the North East Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Nair confirmed our regulations then require the developer to build a product that may not sell. Ms. Combs stated that since there are only a few townhomes being offered she does not foresee it being a problem.

Approved  
March 6, 2018

Chairman Dobbins inquired about the development process. Mr. Mink explained that WORF will purchase a Section of property from the bank, Ryan Homes will then buy one lot at a time from the developers and build a housing unit on that lot, as the lots are sold.

Ms. Duffy inquired about the townhomes being constructed on Blackgum. Specifically, who owns them and how are they being sold. Ms. Vennell stated they are owned by 1 PH Properties and will be sold individually by that property owner.

2. Review of the proposed amendments to the Ridgely Forest Master Planned Community. Comparison of the Ridgely Forest MPC Design Guidelines dated July 7, 2008 vs. the proposed Ridgely Forest MPC Design Guidelines and Concept MPC Plan distributed February 6, 2018.

Ms. Vennell reported that she and Mrs. Melissa Cook-Mackenzie, Town Administrator had visited Charlestown Crossing, another development nearby. Throughout the development, statues and other amenities can be found giving the development a unique feel. Mrs. Vennell provided photos to the Planning Commission of a fenced in dog park, a car vacuum and wash station, landscape areas, pocket parks with gazebos and sitting areas including benches and picnic tables. Ridgely Forest proposed MPC Design Guidelines book has removed the proposed statues from the development. Although statues may be a maintenance issue they do add a visual enhancement to the development. Mr. Nair stated it is a tradeoff, amenities vs. maintenance and the Home Owner Associations (HOA) responsibilities should be taken into consideration.

Mrs. Vennell reported that the amendments to the proposed MPC Design Guidelines has deletions from the original approved July 7, 2008 MPC Design Guidelines. Some of the housing amenities have been deleted including the option “multiple floor plan option possibilities, including morning room, bay windows, decks, fireplaces, patios, and front porches” and “More than 50% of the units with front-loaded, 2-car garages will have carriage-style, or approved style, garage doors.” Also the clubhouse architecture and size have changed, some of the lot sizes have changed. The term “build to” line has been removed. A duplex-villa is now shown which has architectural designs different than the duplex in the MPC Guidelines approved July 7, 2008. Terminating Vistas, all statues and pergolas have been removed from the proposed MPC Design Guidelines book as well.

### Section 3B

#### Basketball Courts

Chairman Dobbins and Mr. Nair both agreed that a regulation basketball court would be a great amenity for teens and adults. Ms. Duffy suggested the regulation size basketball courts to be placed in Section 3B adjacent to the Clubhouse. The Planning Commission concurred.

#### Playground

Ms. Duffy and Ms. Combs suggested installation of a playground for older children i

including swings. Chairman Dobbins suggested also placing this larger playground adjacent to the Clubhouse in Section 3B. Mr. Nair added that having one central location with the Clubhouse, pool, basketball courts and playground will make this area easier to monitor for residents and the HOA.

#### Dog Park

Ms. Duffy suggested installing a dog park close to where the townhomes are located as there is a higher density of people with smaller yards. Chairman Dobbins suggested an area located behind the Townhomes on Mahogany in Section 3B.

#### Walking Trail

Mr. Nair suggested removing the walking trail as they are a lot to maintain for the HOA. Ms. Vennell added that the trail would also be a steep grade going from 96 to 130 feet. The Planning Commission concurred that the resources would be better spent on other amenities such as the dog park.

#### Clubhouse

Chairman Dobbins inquired if 50% of the homes need to be built prior to the opening of the Clubhouse. Ms. Vennell replied yes, that this is what had been decided during the prior development of Ridgely Forest however, if the Planning Commission wishes to change this going forward they could. Mr. Nair stated that it seems reasonable to wait until there is 50% occupancy prior to opening the Clubhouse as they will need HOA funding to operate and maintain the Clubhouse and pool. The Planning Commission concurred but stated the wording on page 11 should state that the Clubhouse is required to be open at 50% occupancy or 272 units.

Mr. Nair also suggested listing the square footage of the Club House.

#### Section 5A: Tot Lot

The Planning Commission would like a larger Tot Lot placed in Section 5A adjacent to the Non-Tidal Wetland which could be accessed from Sequoia Place or Goldspire Drive.

#### Section 3A: Tot Lot

The Tot Lot in Section 3A is to be removed. The Planning Commission stated this Tot Lot is in too close a proximity to the rear of the homes and it is somewhat secluded, therefore, this is not the best option. They did not believe this is an optimum location for a pocket park for the same reasons.

#### Section 1: Park/Pergola

The Planning Commission would like a pocket park with a pergola and either picnic tables or benches installed in the open space area near Lot 1000.

### Mid-Block 4 Way Crosswalk

Ms. Duffy suggested removing the term Mid-Block Crosswalk. The Planning Commission and Mr. Mink did not believe the stamped concrete crosswalks were the best choice for the intersections, as approved in the July 7, 2008 MPC Design Guidelines. Chairman Dobbins added that after the roads are deed to the Town, the Town Maintenance would be responsible for them, therefore, the Planning Commission concurred to remove the term Mid-Block Crosswalk from the proposed MPC Design Guidelines and to not require stamped crosswalks.

### Bayberry Drive

Ms. Duffy stated the HOA should maintain the right of ways along the edge of Bayberry Drive. Chairman Dobbins inquired what could be done to stabilize the banks on either side of Bayberry Drive since retaining walls will not be used. Mr. Mink stated they use a stabilizing plantings such as some native trees and shrubs and once planted they should just be left alone. The root systems of specific plants chosen will stabilize the bank. Chairman Dobbins stated that the Town should maintain ownership of the right of way while the HOA maintains any landscaping, mulching etc.

### Parking

Mr. Nair was concerned that there will not be adequate parking along the roadway. The width of the street is 30 feet wide. Mr. Mink agreed. The developer has provided the minimum road width for the off street parking. There is no overflow parking provided in the development. Mr. Nair commented that on-street parking was proposed in the July 7, 2008 MPC Design Guidelines.

### Paved Walking Paths

The Planning Commission agreed that all walking paths to open space pocket parks, tot lots, and playgrounds etc. be paved.

### Fencing

The Planning Commission and Planning Office discussed some of the Fencing statements in the existing and proposed MPC Design Guidelines book and noted discrepancies between the North East Zoning Ordinance and statements in the approved July 7, 2008 MPC Design Guidelines book. In an effort for consistency, the Planning Office will suggest language pertaining to the fencing types which is in compliance with the North East Zoning Ordinance; Fence Regulations.

### Amtrak Railroad Fencing Requirement

Mrs. Vennell stated that there are lots proposed in 5A, Existing Phase II and Section 5B which abutted Amtrak rail lines and suggested that a 6 or 8 foot chain link fences with green privacy slates be installed for safety and privacy. The Planning Commission concurred.

### Utility Buildings

The Planning Office discussed discrepancies in the existing and proposed MPC Design Guidelines with regards to utility buildings.

Mr. Mink suggested adding the wording that Utility Buildings may not be placed within the drainage or utility/access or forest conservation easements. Mrs. Vennell reported the Planning Office will review and suggest language which is in compliance with the North East Zoning Ordinance.

### Boat Storage

Chairman Dobbins stated North East is a boating community and residents should be allowed to store their boats in their garage and driveway per the Code of Ordinances of the Town of North East. The Planning Commission concurred and would like to strike the 4<sup>th</sup> bullet "boat storage shall not be allowed within the neighborhood."

### Homeowner Association Responsibilities

Open Space Areas, Tot Lots, pocket parks, stormwater management areas, Panhandle Lots, bus stops, club house: The Planning Commission discussed open space areas between and behind lots which will be the responsibility of the Home Owners Association to maintain. Ms. Combs inquired about why there were so many open space areas between lots. Mrs. Vennell replied some of them are due to water utility and drainage easements.

### Roofs over Front Doors

Mrs. Duffy stated roofs over the front doors were desired for consistency throughout the entire development. Mrs. Combs added, however, they had only actually decided for this for Existing Phase 1 so far.

### Page by Page Summary of the Planning Commission Discussion

Mrs. Vennell went through each page of the February 6, 2018 proposed MPC Design Guidelines with the Planning Commission and pointed out items for discussion, items of discrepancy and items which have been changed or need to be changed. The following represents the conclusion of the Planning Commissions discussion:

#### Page 11. Development Phasing:

Paragraph 3: Revise the entire paragraph to state: The planned amenities in each phase or section shall be completed prior to the approval of the final two construction authorizations/building permits for the final two dwelling units within that specific phase or section. The clubhouse and pool at The Club at Ridgely Forest shall be opened by the occupancy of the 272<sup>nd</sup> home (1/2 of the total number of units), at the latest.

Page 12. Total Number of Lots per Section

Revise all references of “Villa” to “Duplex-Villa”

Page 13. Traffic Calming Devices

Paragraph 2: Remove “with mid-block crosswalks” from the paragraph.

Page 14. Street Hierarchy Plan

Town Engineer will be reviewing the street hierarchy plan, pavement and right of way widths.

Page 15. 60' Public Right of Way Road section (22' pavement section)

If a retaining wall is no longer proposed in this area, Developer shall propose methods for stabilization of the bank and appropriate long lasting drought resistant landscape to assist with the stabilization. The maintenance of the landscaped stabilization area within the right of way shall be the responsibility of the Ridgely Forest Homeowners Association. The proposal shown in the MPC Design Guidelines book is still under review by CNA and the Town.

Page 16, 17, 18: Right of Way- Road Sections-Pavement Sections

The street trees shall be relocated within the planting strip.

Page 19. 46' Public Right of Way Road (32' Pavement)

Town Engineer will be reviewing this new right of way and road section.

Page 20. 24' Public Right of Way road section

The Town Engineer will be reviewing this right of way and road section. It shall be noted that the tree planting and HOA maintenance easement is only four feet wide on the left side of the page, where all other planting strips on the other pages are 7 feet wide. Please revise plan to a 7 foot wide planting strip.

Pages 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. Planting Easement

Write the tree planting and maintenance easement language on all pages to be consistent.

Page 21: Residential Lot Standards

Non-Garage Townhome: Please explain why the front yard setback has been decreased by three feet (13' down to 10'). There was concern expressed about the ten foot front yard.

Villa Home: Change name to Duplex-Villa Home

Minimum Setbacks: Villa: Change name to Duplex-Villa Home. The Rear Yard setback has been decreased by five feet (25' down to 20'). Please explain why the reduction of the rear yard is necessary.

Illustrations of lot standards:

- a. The illustrations provided on one page showing the lot standards for many building types and parking areas is difficult to read/follow due to the size of the illustration and the amount of information needed. Enlarge or revise the illustrations to be similar to the illustrations provided on the MPC Concept Plan for the Single Family Homes. Taking an additional page or two to do this is acceptable.
- b. Add another page to the proposed MPC Design Guidelines Book which includes the 'Typical Layout' shown on the MPC Concept Plan for Single Family Homes. The illustrations provided on the MPC Concept Plan may be removed.

Panhandle: The panhandle lot standards and illustrations are not shown in the proposed MPC Design Guidelines book. Outline the minimum setbacks and provide illustration.

#### Page 22. Conformance to MPC Guidelines

Sentence 6: Reference of Villas: Revise to Duplex-Villa

Sentence 7. Remove "and site specific treatments" from this sentence.

#### Page 25. Architecture

Add a page of illustrations which show the decorative amenities which may be utilized on the homes in Ridgely Forest. Eg. Decorative medallions, decorative gable vents or louvered "fypon".

#### Page 26. Architecture

Villa homes: Revise to state Duplex-Villa Homes

Paragraphs 2 and 3 contradict each other. Please revise.

Carriage Garage Doors: Add the paragraph back in from the 7/2008 approval, which stated: "More than 50% of the units with front loaded, 2 car garages will have carriage style garage doors"

#### Page 28: Recreation, Park and Pedestrian Trail Network

Remove the word "trail" from the heading at the top of the page and bottom of the page.

Paragraph 1: Remove woodland walking trails from this paragraph.

Paragraph 1: Revise “and other kinds of footpaths” to “Paved footpaths”

Paragraph 3: Remove “and a network of trails through the open space” from the text.

Paragraph 4: Add in the following amenities: a regulation basketball court, dog park, pergolas, playgrounds, and picnic tables. Add a statement to this paragraph: Directional signs and paved footpaths shall be installed to provide access to tot lots, playgrounds and other passive or active open space areas.

Paragraph 5: In reference to “The Club”, replace the term “tot lot” with “playground” in this paragraph. Also, add into paragraph 5, first sentence: “and a regulation basketball court”.

Open space areas shown in three circle illustration:

- a. Remove the trails.
- b. Remove the pocket park located in the left circle surrounded by the rear of lots
- c. Place a tot lot pocket park with benches, picnic tables within the left circle farther north, behind the area of lots 5034 and 5035 or 5005 and 5006. Provide a paved footpath and directional signs leading to the pocket parks or playgrounds or tot lots.
- d. Show the Community Park closer to The Club at Ridgely
- e. Provide a playground for older children in the open space area adjacent to The Club at Ridgely, which will also be the area identified as the Community Park.
- f. Provide a full regulation basketball court in the open space area of what is identified as The Club at Ridgely Forest / Community Park
- g. Provide a fenced Dog Park with benches and directional signs and regulations in the open space area behind lots 1-18, 225, 226, 2207 with a paved footpath between lots 18 and 3056 leading to the dog park.

Developer’s Engineer shall verify that the open space areas including pocket parks, playgrounds, etc., as changed, remains in conformance with the North East Zoning Regulations.

#### Page 30. The Club at Ridgely Forest

Revise the wording in the paragraph to: “These illustrations depict possible front façade, side and rear elevations for the proposed clubhouse and do not contain the approved façade or architecture. The façade and architecture shall be approved by the North East Planning Commission at the time of site plan submittal.”

State the proposed usable square footage of the clubhouse.

#### Page 33 and 34. Possible Landscape Site Features

Remove the drawing of the people riding bicycles through the forest.

Remove the photo of the couple walking by the lake

Remove the picture of the berm with landscaping along the double yellow line roadway

Add a picture of the proposed landscape or proposed amenities within the cul de sacs: Over Cup Court, Goldspire Drive, Sequoia Place

Add a picture of the proposed landscape or proposed amenities of the common open space on Corktree Lane.



Page 35. Fencing:

Revise the verbiage about fencing. Planning Office shall advise suggested language.

Page 36: Supplemental Design Standards:

Bullet number 1: Villa: revise term to Duplex-Villa

Your proposed definition is noted. CNA and the Planning Office are still reviewing this proposed MPC definition and may amend it slightly. Meanwhile, for consistency, please change all references on the MPC Concept Plan and in the proposed MPC Design Guidelines book to Duplex-Villa.

Bullet number 4: Boat Storage Area: Remove this statement from the proposed MPC Design Guidelines book. The Code of Ordinances for the Town of North East provides for locations where residents may park their boats on their privately owned property

Bullet number 5 referencing parking: revise wording: Remove “in the front yards” and replace with “Parking shall be allowed within the driveways, as shown.....”

Bullet number 6: Revise note: Utility buildings may not be placed within drainage, utility, access and/or forest conservation easements. Utility buildings may be permitted per the North East Zoning Regulations and shall be subject to approval of the Town’s Planning Office as well as the approval of the Ridgely Forest Homeowners Association.

Add bullet item for Panhandle: The North East Zoning Ordinance does not have a definition for panhandle lots, therefore, a definition will need to be added into the supplemental design standard page or into the North East Zoning Ordinance.

Additional items and language which needs to be added into the Master Planned Community Guidelines Book:

Open Space areas between lots:

The open space areas between lots, at the rear of lots, adjacent to lots shall be owned and maintained by the Ridgely Forest Homeowner’s Association.

Stormwater Management Areas:

The stormwater Management areas are owned by and maintained by the Ridgely Forest Homeowners Association.

Pocket parks and tot lots and Footpaths:

The pocket parks, tot lots, playgrounds, footpaths, etc. shall be owned and maintained by the Ridgely Forest Homeowners Association.

Bus stops:

Show all bus stop locations either on the MPC Concept Plan or within the proposed MPC Design Guidelines Book. The proposed MPC Design Guidelines book shall state: Bus Stops shall be owned and maintained by the Ridgely Forest Homeowner's Association, including snow and ice removal.

Landscape:

Landscape located within any of the open space areas shall be owned and maintained by the Ridgely Forest Homeowner's Association.

The utilities of a panhandle lot are still under review by the Town's Engineer and the Town's Water-plant superintendent. A final decision regarding the panhandle lots has not yet been rendered to the Planning Office.

Amtrak Railroad:

An eight foot tall fence with green privacy slats shall be installed by the Developer, on the property line between the Amtrak Rail Road and lands of Ridgely Forest, prior to the approval of a Town construction authorization/building permit for any of the dwelling units located within the remaining Lands of Phase 2, Section 5A or Section 5B. The Fence shall be owned and maintained by the Ridgely Forest Homeowner's Association.

Carriage Garage Doors:

Add back into the proposed MPC Design Guidelines book the carriage garage doors page which was in the approved July 2008 MPC Design Guidelines book. State on this page: More than 50% of the units with front loaded, 2 car garages will have carriage style garage door.

Typical Layouts as shown on MPC plan:

Add the single family detached typical lot layouts into the proposed MPC Design Guidelines book: (The typical layouts as shown on the MPC large plan).

The Townhome and Duplex Villas shown on Page 21 of the proposed MPC Design Guidelines should be clear and readable, as the ones provided on the large MPC plan. Add the typical lot layout for a panhandle lot.

Minimum Lot Area, Minimum Depth, Minimum Length:

Include a table in the proposed MPC Design Guidelines book which outlines each housing unit type and the minimum area, minimum width and minimum length. This table can be combined with the data found on page 21 which outlines the minimum setbacks. This table also needs to include the panhandle lot.

Phases and Sections Pages:

As per the existing approved July 2008 MPC Design Guidelines book Pages 11-16, provide individual pages for each phase and each section.

Provide the parking requirements per housing unit type in the proposed MPC Design Guidelines Book:

Due to the limited parking in the Development and the short driveways on the lots the Town does not want to see conversions of garages into living space or additions placed in driveway areas. Therefore, state in the proposed MPC Design Guidelines book: "All garages and parking pads shall be permanently reserved, by deed restriction, for the temporary storage of motor vehicles"

Detached single family: 2 spaces per dwelling unit shall be located on the same lot as the dwelling unit.

Duplex-villas: 2 1/2 spaces per dwelling unit shall be located on the same lot as the dwelling unit.

Townhomes with garages: 3 ½ parking spaces are required per townhome.

Townhomes with no garages: 3 ½ parking spaces are required per townhome. See Townhome parking lots.

Townhome parking lots: Private Parking lots provided for townhome units shall be owned and maintained by the Ridgely Forest Homeowner's Association. Snow removal and/or removal of ice from the private parking lots shall be the responsibility of the Ridgely Forest Homeowner's Association.

FYI for design of lots: Article 4-5. Paragraph 3. No off-street parking shall be located in any setback, buffer, easement, right of way or any other setback requirement as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations.

**-OLD BUSINESS-**

None.

**-REPORTS-**

None.

**-MISCELLANEOUS-**

None.

**-COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC-**

None.

**-NEXT MEETING-**

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2018, with an Inclement Weather date of March 12, 2018.

**-ADJOURNMENT-**

With no further business, Mr. Nair made a motion to adjourn at 9:42 p.m. Ms. Duffy seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Respectfully submitted:

Attest:

Lisa Rhoades  
Planning and Zoning Assistant

Mark Dobbins  
Chairman