

NORTH EAST PLANNING COMMISSION
North East Town Hall Meeting Room
106 South Main Street, North East, Maryland 21901
Monday, May 4, 2020
7:00 P.M.

Chairman Mark Dobbins called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m., via a virtual meeting with ZOOM, Present included Commissioner Raymond Mitchell and members, Michael Nair and Judy Duffy. Also present Chris Mink, Town Engineer, Melissa Cook-Mackenzie, Town Administrator, Betsy Vennell, Director of Planning and Zoning and Lisa Rhoades, Planning and Zoning Assistant.

-MINUTES-

March 2, 2020

Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to approve the March 2, 2020 Planning Commission minutes as presented. Mr. Nair seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

-OLD BUSINESS-

None.

-NEW BUSINESS-

Due to the COVID19 restrictions, Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie gave a brief statement on how this and future virtual Zoom Planning Commission meetings shall be conducted.

Ridgely Forest Preliminary Plat Sections 3B: 78 Duplex-Villas and Section 5B: 52 Duplex-Villas

Mr. Jim Wolf,, WORF LLC, 2301 Rutledge Road, Fallston, Maryland, and their Engineer, Mr. Jeff Mathai, P.E., Morris and Ritchie Associates, 3445A Box Hill Corporate Center Drive, Abington, Maryland, were present via the virtual Zoom. Mr. O’Laughlin had technical difficulties connecting with the meeting.

Mr. Mathai presented the preliminary plats for Ridgely Forest Section 3B and Section 5B.

Section 3B, 78 Duplex-Villas

Mr. Matthai, gave a brief description of the proposed Duplex-Villas and the extension of Magnolia Drive. Mr. Matthai reported that a portion of Sugarberry Drive, specifically the parking for the Clubhouse, will be constructed during the Clubhouse construction.

Mr. Matthai stated that he and his client have no objections to the comments as outlined on the comment letter, dated March 31, 2020 from the Town's Engineer, Mr. Chris Mink, CNA, which the Planning Commission also received a copy of. Mr. Matthai reported they would like to phase the utility plans and Mr. Mink had no objection. Mr. Matthai read through the comments on the Mr. Mink's letter and made comments on the following:

Final Plat: Mr. Mathai inquired if he could submit the Final plans at a 60 scale on a larger sheet and Mr. Mink responded that a sheet 36" by 48" or larger would be acceptable.

Duplex-Villas: Mr. Matthai clarified that the detail on the Preliminary Plat only addresses the Duplex Villas with two car garages as there will be no Duplex-Villas with single garages.

Water, Sewer and Storm drains: Mr. Matthai stated that the water, sewer and stormdrain would tie into Existing Phase 2. The stormdrain plans have been submitted to Cecil County Department of Public Works and have been approved.

Open Space Plan: Mr. Matthai reported that there are several open space areas where there are opportunities to install some amenities. The Open Space plan will be submitted with the Final Subdivision plat. Mr. Nair inquired what the difference was between the areas labeled as "Open Space" and those labeled as "Active Open Space". Mr. Matthai stated that the areas labeled as "Active Open Space" are areas where they plan to install some type of Open Space amenity, which has not yet been determined. Mr. Wolf added that they are considering benches, picnic tables etc. Mrs. Vennell inquired if the Open Space Plan would be submitted prior to the Final Plat submittal. Mr. Wolf replied yes they plan to submit the Open Space Plan separately. Mr. Nair inquired if the developers could provide a list of all of the other approved open space amenities throughout the development. Mr. Wolf concurred.

Dog Park: Mr. Wolf reported that they will be hiring a professional to design the dog park. The dog park shall be a fenced-in area located between Juniper Circle and Magnolia Drive.

Forest Conservation: Mr. Matthai reported the Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan has been approved, however, Cecil County would like the Final Forest Conservation Plan submitted after the final engineering. Mr. Mink requested a copy of the approved Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan. Mr. Matthai indicated that would be submitted to him.

Parking Spaces: Mr. Mink stated that the number of parking spaces per unit was incorrect and Mr. Matthai responded that this will be updated on the Final Plat from 2 spaces to 2.5 spaces.

Easement Lines: Mr. Matthai inquired if the updated easement lines can be shown on the Final Plat. Mr. Mink responded yes. In addition, it is preferred that the stormwater swales and easements are removed from all residential lots. Mr. Wolf concurred and stated he would like the HOA to be responsible for the maintenance of stormwater swales.

Water Allocation: Mr. Matthai inquired about water allocation for the remainder of the Ridgely Forest Development and Mrs. Vennell confirmed that water allocation has been secured for the

entire development. Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie confirmed that she has the executed Water Service Agreements for recordation.

Chairman Dobbins inquired if there were any further comments, and there was no further comment.

Mr. Nair made a motion to approve the Ridgely Forest Preliminary Plat for Section 3B subject to the following conditions:

1. Letter from Chris Mink, CNA dated March 31, 2020
2. Requirements as outlined above.

Ms. Duffy seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Section 5B: 52 Duplex-Villas

Mr. Matthai reported that Section 5B Preliminary Plat had been updated from the one provided to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission was forwarded a copy of the updated plat during this evening's meeting.

Section 5B Revision: Mr. Matthai, gave a brief description of Section 5B's revisions which showed that two Lots, 5089 and 5090, were removed due to the slope of the lots.. The same Duplex Villa product shall be used in 3B and 5B.

Mr. Matthai stated that he and his client have no objections to the comments on the comment letter, dated March 31, 2020 from the Town's Engineer, Mr. Chris Mink, CNA, which the Planning Commission also received a copy of. Mr. Matthew offered the following information:

Water, Sewer, Stormwater Drains: Section 5B's water, sewer and storm drains will be tied into Existing Phase 2. The stormdrain plans have been submitted to Cecil County Department of Public Works and have been approved.

Open Space Area: There are two "Active Open Space" areas in Section 5B. It has not yet been determined what the amenities will be provided for these areas. Mrs. Vennell inquired if either of the Active Open Space areas will have a similar design to the one located on Honeylocust Circle. Mr. Wolf replied yes, one of them will be similar to the Honeylocust Circle amenities.

Fence: Mr. Matthai stated that a fence shall extend from behind Lot 5112 (at the edge of the non-tidal wetland) along the railroad, behind Lot 5089, and then to the boundary of Existing Phase 2. Mr. Wolf reported there is a steep slope in this area and they want to make this area safe for residents. Mrs. Vennell inquired if Mr. Mink had an opportunity to review the new changes to the Preliminary Plan prior to this evenings meeting. Mr. Mink indicated he had not had an opportunity to review the revisions.

Parking Spaces: The number of parking spaces shall be updated from 2 spaces to 2.5 spaces.

Easements: Mr. Matthai stated the updated easement lines shall be shown on the Final Plat.

Retaining Wall: Mr. Matthai stated that the retaining wall is still being engineered and he will forward the information to Mr. Mink as soon as he has it completed. Mr. Mink stated that permits will be required for the retaining walls. In addition, if any of the mechanisms, of the retaining walls, cross over onto residential lots, easements will need to be obtained from the property owner(s). Mr. Nair inquired if there were two separate retaining walls and Mr. Matthai concurred. Mrs. Vennell inquired the height of the proposed retaining walls and Mr. Matthai replied 6 to 8 feet. Mr. Mink stated that anything over 30 inches in height must have a fence on top and a building permit. Mr. Matthai stated that after the final design, one or both of the retaining walls may not be necessary, however if one or both retaining walls are necessary all of the information pertaining the retaining walls shall be shown on the Final Plat.

Chairman Dobbins inquired if there were any further comments and there were no further comments.

Mr. Nair made a motion to approve the Ridgely Forest Preliminary Plat for Section 3B subject to the following condition:

1. Letter from Chris Mink, CNA dated March 31, 2020
2. Ridgely Forest Preliminary Subdivision Plat presented during this meeting, showing that 2 lots were removed from the original Ridgely Forest Preliminary Subdivision Plat Submittal, for Section 5B.
3. Requirements as outlined above.

Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion. Ms. Duffy abstained from the vote and reported she did not agree with way the Ridgely Forest property was being developed. The motion to approve the subdivision plat was approved by majority vote.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Chairman Dobbins welcomed Scout Trey Williams who joined this evening's virtual Zoom meeting for a merit badge project. Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie shared her email address, should Mr. Williams have any questions.

-REPORTS-

Route 272 Intersection

Mr. Nair inquired if there were any updates on the Route 272 crosswalk and sidewalk project. Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie stated she will inquire at an upcoming State Highway Administration meeting if there are any updates concerning the Route 272 crosswalk and sidewalk project. .

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Local Advisory Committee

APPROVED
June 2, 2020

Chairman Dobbins reported that the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Local Advisory Committee is developing Watershed 101 informational course materials for local government officials. The course material will include basic terminology and a wide range of materials and information on what impacts the bay including agriculture, forestation, etc.

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission

Mrs. Vennell reported that the Critical Area Commission will be conducting a meeting with updates to the Critical Area Maps. Mrs. Vennell stated that some properties have been removed from the Critical Area and some are now located within the Critical Area. The Town will not be adopting the new maps at this time. A virtual meeting will be scheduled by the Commission and the property owners and the Planning Commission will be invited sometime in June.

-COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC-

None.

-NEXT MEETING-

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for June 2, 2020.

-ADJOURNMENT-

With no further business, Ms. Duffy made a motion to adjourn at 8:26 P.M. Mr. Nair seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Respectfully submitted:

Attest:

Lisa Rhoades
Planning and Zoning Assistant

Mark Dobbins
Chairman