

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
VILLAGE OF NEW LENOX PLAN COMMISSION

Held in the New Lenox Village Hall, 1 Veterans Parkway

Tuesday, December 17, 2013 7:00 p.m.

#13-12-B

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Village of New Lenox Plan Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Commissioner Gary Berner, with a quorum present.

Commissioner Gary Berner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call, the following were present: Commissioners Rob Moss, Annette Boyd, Joan Byerley, Gary Berner, Terry Schultz and John Kuchler.

Chairman Mark Muehlnickel arrived at 7:10 p.m.

Also present were: Assistant Village Administrator / Director of Community Development Robin Ellis and Senior Planner Jeff Smith.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF A REGULAR PLAN COMMISSION MEETING OF NOVEMBER 19, 2013

Commissioner Berner entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2013, Plan Commission meeting. Commissioner Boyd made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kuchler. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried.

REQUEST FOR SPECIAL USE FOR PRELIMINARY P.U.D. PLAT (Public Hearing)
New Lenox Horizon Senior Living
2.54-acre parcel located at northwest corner of Cedar Road and W. Otto Drive
Beth Demes / Alden Foundation – Petitioner

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to open the public hearing at 7:18 p.m. Motion was made by Commissioner Kuchler and seconded by Commissioner Boyd. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried.

Beth Demes of Alden Foundation was available to request a Special Use for a preliminary P.U.D. plat for New Lenox Horizon Senior Living.

Ms. Demes provided Plan Commission members with photographs of similar senior-living projects that have been developed by the Alden Foundation, and provided a brief description of the operations of the Alden Foundation. She noted that the proposed independent-living senior apartment building, to be known as New Lenox Horizon, was appropriate for the subject location at the northwest corner of Cedar Road and Otto Drive, particularly since the site was located adjacent to the Encore assisted living development as well as across the street from the New Lenox Township senior apartment building.

Ms. Demes discussed recent proposed modifications to the submitted preliminary site plan. In particular, the one-story west wing was being eliminated, which resulted in the reduction from 55 units to 53 units. There will now be more 2-bedroom units, while there will still be only one unit reserved for the building manager.

The proposed site and building changes allow for additional land banked parking so that the project will provide for up to 2 parking stalls per dwelling unit, if deemed necessary by the Village Board.

The attractively designed building, which will consist predominantly of masonry and stone with some fiber cement board siding on the upper elevations, will be compatible for the area. The building will also be designed to meet Enterprise Green certification requirements, which is similar to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

Although there will be an age restriction of 62 and up, Ms. Demes noted that the typical resident is in their upper 70's, while the majority of residents are single woman.

In order to qualify for IHDA tax credits, there will be income restrictions for the residents, which are based on those with incomes ranging from 30% (\$15,500 for a single household) to 60% (\$31,500 for a single household) of the Chicago area median income. The income qualification requirements do not take into account prospective resident assets. The apartment units will range from \$316 to \$855 a month, which will include a full service kitchen.

Ms. Demes stated that 10% of the units will be handicapped accessible, while all units will be handicapped adaptable. The building will offer many services for residents since there will be a community room and other common areas.

Senior Planner Jeff Smith noted that the submitted market study, as well as previous market studies for other proposed senior apartment projects, did support the proposal for senior housing at the subject location. The Comprehensive Plan does recommend providing for senior housing opportunities in the Village, particularly near existing and planned commercial and medical service areas, as well as in close proximity to public transportation. The subject property is located close to Laraway Road and U.S. Route 30, which will provide for a number of services

for residents of Horizon.

With the proposed 62 and up age restriction, the proposed development will not have any impact on the local schools. Also, a senior housing project generates significantly less traffic than a typical apartment complex as well as various commercial uses that can otherwise be developed on the subject property that is currently zoned for commercial use.

Jeff Smith explained that the applicant has been working very close with the Village over the past many months to address any compatibility issues. For instance, the building will be attractively designed on all four sides, and the structure will be situated closer to Cedar Road so as to be sensitive to the adjacent Liberty Square single-family subdivision. Will County, which has jurisdiction of Cedar Road, is mandating 10 feet of right-of-way dedication, which will only result in the building shifting 5 feet westerly.

Additionally, the submitted landscape plan, as well as some recent revisions, proposes perimeter fencing and landscaping so as to adequately screen and buffer the site from vehicles and vehicle headlights.

Furthermore, a photometric plan was submitted, which showed that there will not be any light poles located along the perimeter areas adjacent to Liberty Square. Mr. Smith did mention that the illumination level cannot exceed 0.5 foot-candle along the property lines abutting Liberty Square, and the Village can impose a lighting shut-off or dimmer requirement during the evening hours through the planned unit development ordinance.

Jeff Smith stated that the recent site plan modifications provide for adequate land banked parking, which will provide up to 2 spaces per dwelling unit if deemed necessary by the Village Board.

Overall, Mr. Smith stated that the proposal substantially abided to the required Findings of Fact.

Accordingly, Staff is recommending approval of the Special Use for a preliminary P.U.D. plat, subject to preliminary engineering approval, preliminary landscape approval, and resolution of the Staff comments previously provided to the petitioner.

Chairman Muehlnickel invited public comment.

Raymond Garza of 161 W. Otto Drive stated that he has been communicating with Alden to address concerns. Mr. Garza did visit the Alden independent-living and assisted-living facility in Shorewood, and was very impressed.

Mr. Garza stated that his major concern with the Horizon project was the proposed curb cut on W. Otto Drive, which can result in more traffic cutting through Liberty Square. He would prefer that the curb cut be located on Cedar Road.

Overall, Mr. Garza felt that the building design was attractive and supported the development.

Jeff Smith did note that the recent revised site plan did eliminate some parking stalls along the perimeter area abutting 161 W. Otto Drive, and the landscape plan was modified to provide for taller evergreen trees and more overall landscaping in this particular area near the Otto Drive curb cut.

Assistant Village Administrator / Community Development Director Robin Ellis mentioned that Will County has jurisdictional authority over Cedar Road, and would not allow for a curb cut but rather only an emergency access since the County does not want to impede traffic flow on this busier arterial roadway.

Rich Orłowski of 258 W. Otto Drive questioned if there will be a stop sign or traffic light located at the Cedar Road and W. Otto Drive intersection, especially since the development can result in additional traffic on W. Otto Drive cutting through Liberty Square subdivision so as to avoid the busier Cedar Road.

Ms. Ellis responded that Will County has final determination over a potential traffic signal at the subject intersection, which is likely not warranted at this time with the proposed development as well as taking into account nearby existing land uses.

Commissioner Boyd mentioned that the proposed senior apartment project fit well into the area that now has an adjacent assisted-living development and another nearby senior apartment building. Horizon Senior Living will be more preferable at the subject location than a permitted commercial use.

Chairman Muehlnickel questioned the proposed surface of the emergency access drive from Cedar Road.

Mr. Smith stated that the applicant was seeking a stained asphalt surface for the proposed emergency access to the site from Cedar Road.

Chairman Muehlnickel was concerned that the proposed emergency access surface would too closely resemble the parking lot area, which could result in motorists utilizing this Cedar Road emergency entrance to routinely access the senior apartment site.

Ms. Ellis stated that Will County will have final control over the proposed emergency access drive, which may require a grass-crete surface and / or locked gate so as to restrict access from Cedar Road to only emergency vehicles.

Chairman Muehlnickel did prefer the site plan that proposed fewer parking spaces and more common green space.

If mandated by the Village Board, Commissioner Boyd clarified with Ms. Ellis that the P.U.D. ordinance for Horizon will include the stipulations on when the depicted land banked parking spaces would need to be installed.

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to close the public hearing at 7:35 p.m. Commissioner Moss made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Schultz. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried.

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to adopt the Finding of Fact. Commissioner Byerley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kuchler. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion recommending approval of the Special Use for a preliminary P.U.D. plat for the modified 53-unit independent-living senior housing development, New Lenox Horizon Senior Living, to be located on the subject 2.54-acre property at the northwest corner of Cedar Road and Otto Drive, subject to preliminary engineering approval, preliminary landscape plan approval, and the other issues noted above in the Staff Report, which includes Village Board acceptance of the proposed parking and potential land banked parking that would result in 2 spaces per dwelling unit. The petitioner must also successfully negotiate a Development Agreement for Horizon that addresses impact fees to applicable taxing districts and other development details. Commissioner Moss made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Berner. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Robin Ellis stated that the Special Use for the proposed Drop-In indoor skate park and youth center was reviewed and substantially endorsed by the Village Board. The existing Montessori school, which is not permitted within the I-1 Limited Industrial District, will need to vacate the adjacent tenant space when its lease expires in 2014. The Village will assist the school in finding a more appropriate location.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m. Motion was made by Commissioner Boyd, seconded by Commissioner Kuchler. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

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Jeffrey P. Smith, Senior Planner