

**PLAN COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION NOTES
February 15, 2021**

I Call To Order

The Plan Commission Study Session was called to order by President Thomas Anderson at the Schererville Town Hall 10 E. Joliet St.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. Roll Call

Roll Call was taken with the following members present: President Thomas Anderson, Vice-President William Jarvis, Secretary Gary Immig, Mr. Alex Gorman, Mr. Drew Thomas, Mr. Tom Kouros, and Mr. Andrew Hansen. Staff present: Director of Operations James Gorman, Planning Coordinator/Office Manager Denise Sulek, Recording Secretary Norma Hollingsworth Rico, Engineer Mike Helmuth, and Councilman Tom Schmitt. Absent was Town Manager Robert Volkmann.

II. Commission Business

A. Apple Tree Estates, Phase 2

General Location: South side of 77th Avenue, near June Dr.
(Venzke Subdivision, Block 1, Lots 16, 19, 21-27, Venzke
Subdivision, Block 2, Lots 16-27 and Vacated Venzke Road)

Petitioner(s): Applewood L.L.C., Richard Kortenhoven

Request: 13-Lot (R-1) Residential Subdivision

Mr. Doug Rettig with D.V.G. represented the Petitioner. Mr. Rettig explained that this project is called Apple Tree Estates Phase 2 which is just west of Apple Tree Estates and is separated by Schilling Ditch. Mr. Rettig explained that they will have to work around the flood way and flood zone associated with that ditch; and that this was previously platted as the Old Venzke Addition where only one or two houses were ever built. Mr. Rettig pointed out that Mr. Kortenhoven has acquired multiple lots over the past fifteen or twenty years.

Mr. Rettig stated that there will be a little cul-de-sac just opposite June Dr. on the south side of 77th Ave. and that the cul-de-sac is near the top of the hill. Mr. Rettig said that they have already stubbed the water main in from Apple Tree which will be brought in between Lots 12 and 13; and that their access for the sanitary sewer is from Saratoga. Mr. Rettig further stated that they are in need of an easement and that the landowner is willing to grant it and that they are working on acquiring that. Mr. Rettig pointed out that the storm water detention will be at the rear of Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4 which will drain into the utility easement.

President Anderson said that he has some notes on engineering in a February 15 e-mail that was sent to Mr. Rettig. President Anderson said that the sanitary connection will be from Lots 67 and 68 and that an easement will be required. Mr. Rettig said that they are working on that with their attorney. President Anderson said they need to consider pressure clasp equivalent sanitary at this location to eliminate water main relocation dip. Mr. Rettig responded that there is a water main near where they are connecting to the sanitary sewer, and they suspect that their sewer and the water main are pretty much at the same elevation. Mr. Rettig explained that they may have to shut down the water main and lower for that connection, but that they won't know until they get into it. President Anderson said that the cul-de-sac's 90 degree bend is labeled as a 45 degree bend. Mr. Rettig said that is very minor. President Anderson said that there are three branch tee valves located between Lots 12 and 13. Mr. Rettig said he needs to question Mr. Simstad on that and isn't sure what he is requesting. President Anderson said he needed to confirm that for the water main connection to Apple Tree an 8" main line valve and 8" x 6" tee will be installed to relocate the hydrant, and they discussed 400' maximum valve spacing and 350' maximum hydrant spacing that Mr. Rettig said they will confirm if they need that. There were other comments in that e-mail from Nies Engineering to Mr. Rettig that will be also addressed. Mr. Rettig said he needs to talk to Staff about the requirement for a 30' maintenance easement all the way around the

detention area. Mr. Rettig added that it is not going to be on an out lot, but will be in the rear yards of the lot owners and will be maintained by them and didn't think that it applies in this instance. Ms. Sulek responded that Mr. Rettig is correct and that it will be maintained by the landowners.

President Anderson asked for questions from the Board. Mr. Jarvis asked about the conservation easement to protect the trees from Saratoga. Mr. Rettig replied that they will do what they can, and added that the detention pond takes up the backs of Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4, so it will be hard to have a conservation easement there. Mr. Rettig added south of there they won't have a problem with that, but they also have a buffer that will stay in between the two properties, but the properties don't line up with each other as they are supposed to. Mr. Rettig said that there is a natural 15' buffer already there that is no-man's land that they won't be touching and that it is all trees and will stay and will benefit both properties. Mr. Rettig said if they need to they can still plat an additional 15' of conservation along the south half of their property. Mr. Jarvis said he will make sure it is in the Findings of Fact when they get to the Primary Approval because we need to protect those trees. Mr. Rettig stated that Lots 5 and 6 which are over half of the property, they could easily put a 15' or 20' easement there; but that he doesn't want to commit to that because of the detention pond. Mr. Rettig explained that he didn't know how much grading work will have to be close to that line, but that they may be able to leave some trees there too.

Mr. Hansen said that Apple Tree Phase 1 had some code violations; so when they start building again, they need to make sure there is ample silt fencing. Mr. Rettig stated that they have already prepared the plan which will be reviewed by the Town before they get the final approval.

President Anderson opened the matter to the floor. Mr. Bernie Chiluski from 2445 Bennington in Saratoga Subdivision asked if all of the utilities will be in the front of the lots or if they would be on the backside. Mr. Rettig replied they would be in the front. Mr. Chiluski thanked Mr. Rettig for addressing the tree issue, and asked if all of these will be single-family homes. Mr. Rettig replied yes.

Mr. Chiluski said that he wanted to thank Councilman Tom Schmitt and the Town of Schererville for the snow removal in their subdivision. Mr. Chiluski said that it has been a crazy snow storm, but that the guys are doing a great job in keeping up with it. Mr. Chiluski acknowledged that it is a thankless job and that the snow has to go somewhere, but that they are doing a really very good job.

Mr. Chiluski asked if there would be a four-way stop or a stop light at the intersection of June and 77th. President Anderson replied that it would be a four-way stop for the foreseeable future. Mr. Chiluski asked if 77th would be widened. President Anderson replied that he didn't think that it was possible. Mr. Hansen said they are talking about widening it at 41, but that it is quite a few years down the road.

There being no further comments from the floor, the matter was returned to the Board. President Anderson asked Mr. Rettig if he saw the other notes from the engineer regarding a few housekeeping issues. Mr. Rettig said yes and that there wasn't anything too surprising. President Anderson said he sees they will be able to keep the 13th lot. Mr. Rettig replied that it will probably take a custom home that will have to be a little L-shaped house, but that they think they can make it work.

Mr. Immig expressed safety concerns about the steep drop coming out of the subdivision, but that he didn't know what other options they would have. Mr. Rettig explained that the Ordinance calls for no more than 8% and that they are under that 8% with the slope, and that it flattens out at the bottom and has a little dip to it which helps out as well when you get to the bottom of the hill. Mr. Rettig said that they did the best that they could.

President Anderson said that he believes they have advertised for March 1 which Mr. Rettig confirmed and said they will be back.

III. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:14 P.M.