

**MINUTES OF THE
PLAN COMMISSION STUDY SESSION
June 21, 2021**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Plan Commission Study Session was called to order at 6:03 P.M. 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, 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 Councilmen Tom Schmitt and Caleb Johnson. Absent were Town Manager Robert Volkmann and Mr. Tom Kouros.

C. Reschedule July 5, 2021 Plan Commission Public Meeting and Plan Commission Study Session to July 12, 2021 6:00 P.M.

Mr. Jarvis made a motion to reschedule the July 5 Plan Commission Public Meeting and the Plan Commission Study Session to July 12, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. This was seconded by Mr. Drew Thomas and carried 6-0.

II. Commission Business

A. **Canyon Creek Planned Unit Development**

General Location: 7095 Burr St.

Petitioner(s): Olthof Homes

Request: 200-Lot Residential Planned Unit Development

Mr. Ed Recktenwall represented the Petitioners, and Olthof's Project Manager Jeff Yatsko was also in attendance. Mr. Recktenwall stated that they received the Town Council's approval for the rezone, and also the Lake County Drainage Board's approval of outlot easements, and that they are now seeking primary plat on the project. Mr. Recktenwall explained that the project is the same as what was presented at prior meetings with the exception that it has been reduced by five lots due to the Lake County Drainage Board requiring a 50' maintenance easement north of Jaskula Ln. where the north drainage comes into the project.

Mr. Recktenwall pointed out that these are all single-family detached homes; that they have submitted their engineering and landscape plans to Staff for review; and that they are working on some comments they received back from that review. Mr. Recktenwall added that they would like permission to advertise for their Public Hearing at the July 12 meeting.

President Anderson stated that he felt July 12 might be a little premature, and that he knew there were some issues with the lift station. Mr. James Gorman said that they haven't got the engineers together to discuss the capacities of the lift stations. Mr. James Gorman said he has seen the numbers, and that there are concerns about the downstream force mains. Mr. James Gorman also stated that they don't know if those lines are big enough, and that they have had staff go out into the field to verify the size of those gravity force mains; and that once they have that information, they will know whether the capacity of the lift stations can handle the additional flow. Mr. Recktenwall said that the lift station issue was one of the comments they received in the engineer review, and that they do have quite a bit of information on both lift stations. Mr. Recktenwall explained that this project came to two lift stations: The southern part of the project will use the Foxwood lift station on Starling Dr., and that the western half will be from Prairie Rose. Mr. Recktenwall said that they do have numbers put together, and that his engineer

worked on it the better part of today. Mr. Recktenwall said that they are reviewing some of the flows and the capacities and are prepared to talk to the Town about it. Mr. Recktenwall added that it looks like the capacity is there for them already, but agreed that their engineers haven't met yet with the Town engineers. Mr. Recktenwall stated that he felt it could be resolved prior to July 12. President Anderson said that he requires that the engineering be totally signed off on prior to the Public Hearing, and that there are some other issues with the development. Engineer Mike Helmuth said that the other issues included the water main that needed to be looked into, but that the lift station is probably good. Mr. Helmuth added that the valve placements was another item.

President Anderson asked Mr. Recktenwall if he had provided Ms. Sulek with the documentation from the Lake County Drainage Board. Mr. Recktenwall replied that they haven't yet, but that they will. President Anderson pointed out that the lots that will have fill are not identified on the plan; and that they want those marked on the plan. President Anderson asked about Sky Drive and if there was going to be a bridge. Mr. Recktenwall asked if he was referring to the northern stub which President Anderson confirmed. Mr. Recktenwall replied that in the next edit it will no longer be there at the request of Staff. President Anderson said it should be done for Burr St. rather than Sky Dr. Mr. Jarvis asked if Sky Dr. would dead end there. Mr. Recktenwall replied that it will be a T-intersection, and that they will provide a stub north until they decide the water main and if the potential will be there just north of the creek. Mr. Recktenwall added that the stub street would go away and become a T-intersection.

Mr. Thomas asked about the color schemes of the houses and whether there would be more than five shades of blue or gray. Mr. Recktenwall replied that there is an anti-monotony clause in the covenants, and that they will report to the Plan Commission and Staff that they will tighten that up a little bit. Mr. Recktenwall added that they are going to discuss that and figure that out. Mr. Thomas said he would like to see the color schemes. Mr. Recktenwall said they can provide some color palettes for the Plan Commission to look at. President Anderson said that Page 10 of their Development Plan shows their different elevations and such. Mr. Thomas said he would still like to see the color schemes. President Anderson said that the colors basically depend on what customers want at that time. Mr. Recktenwall said that right now the colors are now brighter whites and darker tone colors. Mr. Thomas asked if they offer certain colors. Mr. Recktenwall replied that they do; and that certain shades may appear to be the same, but color wise they are different. Mr. Recktenwall added that is where the hang-up is taking place; and that currently the anti-monotony requires different schemes on either side, and maybe carrying that out to one more side to provide more variation. Mr. Recktenwall pointed out that they are moving more towards set color packages which scales back what home owners would get to choose from in those various colors; and that there will be more contrasting different styles because the packages are now geared more towards color differentiation; whereas now, they basically give them a color wheel and they are allowed to pick.

Mr. Jarvis gave the scenario where a homeowner has picked all of his colors and then the neighbor picks exactly the same color. Mr. Jarvis asked what their reaction would be. Mr. Recktenwall replied that there are lot restrictions throughout their company, and that once they get an approval on a project, lots are identified as what they can and can't have; and that once they go through the sale process, those lots are updated. Mr. Recktenwall said that if a homeowner came in and picked a blue color on Lot 1, and that gets sold and built and done, another homeowner comes in and tries to pick a similar color for Lot 2, the system will not let them as it is restricted in the system. Mr. James Gorman stated that it is also verified by Staff; and said that there is a form for the development going on right now that is submitted along with the permit application. Mr. James Gorman explained that the form lists all of the colors, stone, what the elevations are going to be, which side the garage will be, and that he personally verifies each one to make sure that the same color doesn't end up next to each other or across the street.

Mr. Jarvis asked if all of the garage doors would be 8' or less. Mr. Recktenwall replied yes, and added that they don't allow anything taller than that. Mr. Immig asked if the ponds would be dry. Mr. Recktenwall replied that they are dry. Mr. Jarvis asked if there are customers already looking at these lots. Mr. Recktenwall replied that they have had some significant interest in these lots, and that he feels it will be a very popular project. Mr. Jarvis asked if Mr. Recktenwall felt it would sell out very fast. Mr. Recktenwall replied that market conditions can change; but that at this current moment, he would say it is going to be very popular. President Anderson asked if they were going to phase this. Mr. Recktenwall replied that it will be phased; and that they intend Phase 1 to be the

portion that abuts Burr St., and will be seventy-some lots, and that Phase 2 would be the other half north of Foxwood.

Mr. Alex Gorman asked about the five lots they lost due to the situation with the Lake County Drainage Board. Mr. Recktenwall explained that they will become open space, and that it is programmed to be green space and that they will probably add some landscaping.

Mr. Immig revisited the pond situation again, and said that with the high water table there, looking at the elevations, 2' isn't much of a swale. Mr. Immig added that it is the area where they are doing all of the slabs. Mr. Recktenwall asked if he were referring to the high-water mark. Mr. Immig said yes. Mr. Recktenwall stated that the entire area with the high water mark would potentially be inundated in a storm. Mr. Immig said it is not much of a deep swale. Mr. Recktenwall agreed and added that it is a flat and naturalized basin and that there will be wetland plantings and things like that. Mr. Recktenwall stated that there will be a channel of water in the middle of the pond which serves as kind of a natural water line. Mr. Immig asked if it will be concrete. Mr. Recktenwall replied no, that it will be natural. Mr. Recktenwall added that typically concrete for erosion purposes is not really looked upon as favorable, so they try to keep it naturalized.

Mr. Hansen stated that he is still a little concerned especially on Plateau Ct. with the number of driveways on the cul-de-sac. Mr. Hansen said there is no place to put the snow; and added that Outlot B is only 20' wide. Mr. Thomas said that if someone has a party, there is no place for them to park. Mr. Hansen pointed out that there is a fire hydrant right there too which eliminated twelve spaces. Mr. Recktenwall said that they will leave as much open space as they can to resolve the snow-plowing issues; and that they will look into shifting the fire hydrant over to provide space if necessary. Mr. Hansen said that he doesn't see that working at all with driveways on either side; and that if anyone has a party, where will they park. Mr. Recktenwall said that the driveways are provided for parking spaces outside the garage, and that people can park in the public right-of-way unless they put restrictions on the cul-de-sac itself which they normally do, so there would be no parking in the cul-de-sac. Mr. Hansen said that seven driveways in a cul-de-sac is a lot to him; and that he lives in a cul-de-sac with five driveways and there is barely room on the street to park. Mr. Recktenwall said that he understood.

President Anderson asked if there was a walking path or just the sidewalks. Mr. Recktenwall said that they are proposing a walking path which is looped through the community and is best represented on the landscape plans. Mr. Recktenwall said that they are proposing a walking path at the extension of Burr St. which wraps through the project and the out lots, and that the main trail portion has exercise stations along the way and a couple of seating and rest areas.

Mr. Hansen asked if the trees in the parkway will be included in the maintenance, and added that the trees will need to be trimmed quite frequently. Mr. Recktenwall replied no, and said that they tried to follow the Schererville Ordinance for street trees, and that is what this project represents. Mr. Recktenwall said that every community has a different take on street trees and whose responsibility it is for them. Mr. Recktenwall added that he doesn't have a problem including that as a responsibility for the HOA as far as replacement goes; but that he doesn't know that they would necessarily trim them on a consistent basis. Mr. Recktenwall asked at what point the town sees these as needing to be trimmed. Mr. Hansen replied that he is in Public Works, and that the town spends a lot of time and a lot of money cutting down trees that are too big for the parkways, that interfere with the sidewalk and hang too low, and people don't maintain them. Mr. Hansen added this will be a problem in fifteen or twenty years.

Mr. James Gorman asked if there were a couple per house for an average and asked if they could put them on the other side of the sidewalk and not in the parkway. Mr. Recktenwall replied that in their landscape plan they included per the ordinance, one 2" canopy per 35' of street frontage and then front yard landscaping that requires one canopy per front yard. Mr. Recktenwall said that they are more than willing to stake the trees out more to reduce the number if it is really a concern on trimming. Mr. James Gorman said he knows the town has had issues with parkway trees especially in a 5' area, and that the sidewalks will blow up twenty-five years from now. Mr. James Gorman added that it is something to think about if we eliminated them and put them as the yard canopy tree is required. Mr. Hansen said that he believes when the new tree standards are adopted, they will reflect no parkway trees in an area less than 6' in width. Mr. James Gorman explained that we are working on revising our ordinances. Mr. James Gorman

asked if that were something that Olthof would entertain. Mr. Recktenwall replied that perhaps they could just add one more to the front yard requirement and eliminate the parkway trees altogether. Mr. James Gorman said that they can give them the option, and that they can talk more about that before the public hearing.

Mr. Alex Gorman stated that as far as the green spaces, that if there would be some sort of a landscape plan for those five lots that were removed similar to what they have for the lots and the open spaces it would be helpful. Mr. Alex Gorman added that it is right in the middle of the street so people next to and across from would probably feel better seeing that there is an effort being put in to maintain it and to make it look nice. Mr. Recktenwall replied that it is not a problem and that they absolutely would do so.

President Anderson addressed Mr. Helmuth, and stated that Mr. Helmuth had said that some of the engineering issues are not that big. President Anderson asked that if they go out Thursday and do the measurements on the lift stations, if that would give him enough time to sign off. President Anderson said that he believes they have to advertise next Monday for the 12th. Mr. Helmuth replied that it is his understanding that they are going to set the meters and monitor the flow and that he doesn't think we can do a proper analysis and that they will need more time than that. President Anderson said that because we are late in July, the August meeting would be reasonably met and would be a better time frame. Mr. Helmuth said that he would agree and that it would give them extra time to collect the data.

President Anderson advised Mr. Recktenwall to get with Staff regarding the trees and dial back on some of the parkway trees and more for peoples' yards to prevent the sidewalks from breaking. President Anderson said he felt it would be best to push for the first Monday in August for a Public Hearing because we can have all of the information laid out and ready to go.

Mr. Alex Gorman asked if there would be another Study Session prior to the August meeting. President Anderson said he wouldn't mind another Study Session, and asked Ms. Sulek if they could do this the week after or if there would be another Study Session in July. Ms. Sulek replied that there is a possibility that we would have one on the 19th as well. President Anderson said that he would like to see them back either the 12th or the 19th for one last Study Session to ensure they have everything covered; and that prior to going into the Public Hearing, he would have to have all of the engineering 100% done. Mr. Jarvis said that he agrees with Mr. Alex Gorman that one more Study Session was need and probably on the 19th. President Anderson said that way any last minute details can be included to make sure everything is covered. Ms. Sulek said that she would recommend the 12th because the 19th is getting too close to get everything reviewed for August 2nd. President Anderson reiterated that it would be the Study Session on July 12, and then we will go from there.

III. Adjournment

There being no further questions or comments, the meeting was adjourned at 6:32 P.M.