



Village of River Hills
7650 N Pheasant Ln
River Hills, WI 53217

Village Hall: 352-8213
Public Works: 352-0080
Police: 247-2302

PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES

Wednesday, July 7, 2021 @ 5:00 pm

This meeting was a virtual meeting through Zoom – Meeting code 996-3198-9271

1. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call.

The following members were present: Chairman & Village President Steve Anderson, Peter Stanford, Jeffrey Costakos, Bernard Cohen (joined at 5:05pm), Michael Weiss, Alexander Hawley, Don Daugherty, Trustee Willard Walker, and Village Engineer Mustafa Emir. Also present: Village Attorney Bill Dineen (joined at 5:51pm), Alan Marcuvitz, Carolyn Esswein (CE Planning), Bre Plier (MMSD), Jason Cooper (ECT), Joe Murray (Ehlers), Peter Thornquist, Barry Snider, Victor Harding, Bob Boucher, Village Manager Tammy LaBorde, and Village Deputy Clerk Stephanie Waala.

3. Approval of minutes from April 27, 2021

Motion by Weiss and seconded by Costakos to approve the April 27, 2021 minutes; motion carried unanimously.

4. Continue consideration of planning for potential use of the former Eder property, five parcels located on the north side of Brown Deer Road running north to West Green Brook Road totaling 53.4 acres

Chairman Anderson stated that there are two presentations tonight. The first presentation will be made by Carolyn Esswein, Alan Marcuvitz and the team from MMSD, followed by a Q&A session. Then a presentation from the Committee on the Environment Chair Peter Thornquist and Victor Harding.

a. Hybrid development of approximately 60 single-family units on 25 acres and a green infrastructure water-based conservation program through Fresh Coast Protection Partnership on 28 acres

Mr. Marcuvitz started with a brief history of the project. Carolyn Esswein presented the information related to the proposed development. This could be a 55 and older development as well as a place for current residents to remain in the community yet downsize. 28.4 acres is preserved for open space and 25 acres is for development. The only access is from Brown Deer Road. Constructed wetlands to enhance the environmental quality through MMSD and the Fresh Coast Protection Partnership. Five different floor

plans for the homes ranging from 1,700 to 2,500 square feet. All are single-story buildings with two-car garage. Proposing significant berm and landscaping to provide buffer. The closest house along Greenbrook would be approximately 200 feet from Greenbrook. MMSD program will pay for green infrastructure and maintenance for 2 years to add constructed wetlands. Bre Plier from MMSD presented information related to the Fresh Coast Protection Partnership program. This program is an effort to install green stormwater infrastructure and is between MMSD and Corvias Infrastructure Solutions. This is a more natural way of managing water where it falls. Jason Cooper from ECT is the engineer landscape firm hired to do the detail design for the constructed wetland area. He stated that this mimics a natural wetland even though it isn't a natural wetland and is intercepting stormwater runoff from upland areas into it, detaining stormwater runoff and then releasing it at a much slower rate off the site. He showed several examples of other projects that have been completed. The entire site would be restored with native prairie plants with two constructed basins. He stated that they expect to capture 2 million gallons of stormwater storage. Joe Murray from Ehlers presented financial information related to the proposed development. A tax increment district was created to support development which would pay off the debt associated with the project. There would be approximately \$9.4 million in expenses for the project and would generate \$27 million of incremental value.

Weiss asked if the COE could present their information and then everyone could ask questions. The Plan Commission members preferred moving forward with the presentation.

b. Committee on the Environment proposed Nature Preserve with 4 to 5 homes

Peter Thornquist stated that he would propose that they put aside 100% of the land rather than 28 acres. He presented information regarding the origins of Fish Creek and the Laurentian Mixed Forest is still seen at Fairy Chasm State Natural Area and would like to see it recreated at the Eder farm. He has proposed four houses to be built with 3 acre lots along West Greenbrook Road. This would generate some tax revenue for the village. Pukaite Woods in Mequon has done what the COE is proposing. He reviewed several other sites that have been restored. There has been no poll of residents as to what they would like to see. Barry Snider from Save River Hills presented information related to a survey that was distributed. He stated they sent a survey to 668 homes and asked residents for their opinion. 400 residents responded to the survey with approx. 350 people who want no development – green space only, approx. 35 are open to development, and 14 asked for additional information. Victor Harding presented an alternative plan creating 6, 5 acre parcels for homes and the rest of the property left as green space. He stated his proposal would maintain the current character of River Hills as 5- acre parcels. He said there would be no expense outlay by the village for such a development. He also stated his proposal could bring in \$94,700 in tax revenue based on his estimates. Bob Boucher stated that this proposal could generate tax dollars and would remain as conservation. He said the residents are invested in the community in the larger sized lots. This would also avoid bringing in water from the outside. HE also stated that it avoids high-density and a 10% increase in population.

Chairman Anderson asked for questions.

Fred Vogel, 1805 W. Bradley Road – How will this all be paid for, has any market analysis or feasibility study been done and if so, what was the result of the study?

John Machulak, 1400 W. Good Hope Road – Wondering if the Village has ever pursued seeing what was available with MMSD with the plan from the COE or has all of the focus been placed on this development? Carolyn stated that the focus was on the development. It was not explored with the COE proposal. Would MMSD assistance be available for the type of project that Victor was talking about? Bre Plier stated that she didn't have a specific answer and would have to look at it.

Daniel Dennehy, 8955 N. Spruce Road – why was 60 picked at the appropriate number of condos?

Barbie Brennan-Nelson, 1901 W. Fairy Chasm Road – concerned with units built for village members to age out in the community. As one of the younger residents, why aren't you looking to attract younger families, why are you looking to attract senior citizens when there will be high turnover?

Jeri Robinson, 1141 W. Manor Lane – thinks development is uncharacteristic for River Hills.

Bernie Cohen – Enjoyed the MMSD presentation. Every presentation made they all preface discussion for residents to transition out of their homes and remain in the village – are these smaller homes going to be reserved for river hills prior owners? The survey pointed out that almost 10 to 1 that people don't want this, why are we bringing it up at the meeting? Anderson said the survey was sent out by Save River Hills. The decision to be made is, what is in the best interest for the long-term for River Hills. It is not going to be assigned only to River Hills residents and not sure if it will be 55 and over.

Victor Harding – why can't we have a meeting like we did when Mandel was presenting? The zoom meeting is not the way to do it.

Bill Walker – The meeting at USM was requested by Mandel, the developer, it wasn't requested by River Hills. There is a process to receive public input and that process is what is going to be followed in this case. He is wondering why no one has asked about keeping taxes under control.

Sara Manning, 9401 N. Range Line Road – What are the plans of the Commission to take action if there is continued opposition to the proposed development? There doesn't seem to be any pathway away from development. There is no alternative based on what the residents want.

Jeffrey Costakos – What is before the Plan Commission right now? Is it to move it to another stage? Chairman Anderson stated the Commission has the option to table and ask for more information or the Commission can move it on to the Board of Trustees and let them decide.

Michael Weiss stated that we could get a consensus regarding the two proposals, we could table, personally he likes the hybrid. There has been no market study done yet, but if the Village Board determines to move forward, the developer would move forward with their own market study. He also stated that there has been interest. He would be happy to make a motion that the Plan Commission conceptually approves the hybrid plan with a target of 60 units of density and working with MMSD through their Fresh Coast program. Bill Walker stated that he would second that motion. Weiss is not in favor of the lower density plan, there is more going on here than just land use. The State doesn't allow us to raise taxes.

Cohen asked about raising funding through the Foundation and using that to pay off the debt.

Anne Vogel, 1805 W. Bradley – stated this was discussed at a meeting for donations. It is an idea in front of the committee at the moment.

Bill Walker – stated that the foundation funding doesn't turn the land into a revenue generating parcel.

Don Daugherty – asked if there is one proposal from COE or are there several? He agrees that we need to have some revenue. How long would it take to find out if 5-acre parcels are viable?

Bob Boucher – stated that MMSD program could net the Village approximately \$3.9 million from MMSD. The Village Engineer Mustafa Emir stated that is not a correct statement. The Village would not be selling any water to MMSD. The benefit of working with MMSD is the conservation and water features and that would occur with no cost to the Village. Bre Plier from MMSD stated that Fresh Coast program funding does not go to the site owner. The \$1.95 rate is the green infrastructure program not the fresh coast program.

Marcuvitz – The Plan Commission has heard 3 plans this evening. The Plan Commission should consider which plan or some other plan that they wish to send to the Village Board.

Bill Walker – Mike Weiss previously stated that he would be willing to make a motion. He would be willing to second it. The ultimate decision rests with the Trustees.

Peter Stanford – 825 W. Dean Road, stated that the Plan Commission is advisory. He is in favor of going back to hear from the people if there is another way – see what the constituents want.

Lori Kahn – 1900 W. Green Brook Road – agrees with the COE.

5. Discussion and Possible Action to Make Recommendation of Conceptual Approval to the Village Board for Proposed Development on former Eder property

Motion by Weiss, that the Plan Commission make a recommendation to the Village Board to conceptually approve the hybrid plan as presented by the consultants with 28 acres of conservation and 25 acres of single-family condominiums with the density target of 60 and work with the MMSD Fresh Coast Partnership Program on the conservation area. Cohen stated that he wanted to make a motion to eliminate the Esswein proposal and focus on the other proposals that are more ecologically oriented, however the Village Clerk stated that Weiss has made the initial motion and had the floor, and then Walker seconded the Weiss motion. On roll call the motion carried with 4-aye (Weiss, Hawley, Walker, Anderson), 3-nay (Costakos, Cohen, Daugherty), 1-abstain (Stanford), and 1-recusal (Emir).

6. Schedule Next meeting date – No date was set.

7. Adjourn

Motion by Daugherty and seconded by Walker to adjourn meeting at 7:02 p.m.; motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by Tammy LaBorde, Clerk and Stephanie Waala, Deputy Clerk, on July 12, 2021.