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December 7, 2020

Preliminary PUD / Rezoning Review For Pittsfield Township, Michigan

File No.:	RZ 20-01
Applicant:	Ivanhoe Companies – Gary Shapiro
Location:	5174 Platt L-12-22-100-001 and L-12-22-100-002
Plan Date:	October 1, 2020
Current Zoning:	AG, Agriculture
Proposed Rezoning:	PUD, Planned Unit Development
Property Size:	80.0 acres
Action Requested:	Rezoning from AG, Agriculture to PUD, Planned Unit Development

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant has submitted a Planned Unit Development (PUD) rezoning application to develop 206 single-family site condominium lots on the 80-acre subject site. The development proposes two (2) lot types – The Cove and The Crossing. The Cove encompasses 54 single-family lots (70 feet by 143 feet or 10,000 square feet) in the southern portion of the development site. The 10,000 sq/ft lot size is consistent with the R-1B, Single Family Suburban Residential District. The R-1B district is the densest (i.e, smallest lot width and lot size) single-family district in the Township.

The Crossing encompasses 152 single-family lots (45 feet by 120 feet or 5,400 square feet) in the northern portion of the development site. There is no similar single-family district in the Zoning Ordinance. This lot size can only be achieved through the Planned Unit Development process.

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Combined the project totals 206 single-family units with a net density of 2.77 units per acre. The applicant reduced the number of units from 213 to 206, a reduction in 7 units from the previous Planning Commission review. The number of units proposed exceeds what can be granted without an amendment to the Master Plan. See density discussion below.

Currently, the site is primarily vacant, has been most recently farmed, and portions are encumbered by regulated wetlands and woodlands. The existing residence and agricultural structures on the site will be demolished to accommodate the proposed development.

The 10,000 sq/ft lots equate to the R1-B. The 5,400 sq/ft single-family lots do not have an equivalent in the Zoning Ordinance:

	R1-B Zoning District	“Cove”	“Crossing”
Lot Size	10,000 sq/ft	10,000 sq/ft	5,400 sq/ft
Lot Width	70 feet	70 feet	45 feet

Figure 1. Aerial Photograph



SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENTS

The Platt Road corridor within a 1 mile north and south of the Michigan/Textile intersection has seen tremendous growth and development in the past ten years. There are eight (8) residential developments that are either under construction, going through final approvals, or have expired and we are awaiting resubmittal. These development includes:

Name	Location	Number of Units by Type	Status
Pittsfield Glen	West of Platt, north of Textile	95-single family, 59-multiple family units	Under construction
Monarch Estates	West of Platt, north of Textile	19-single family units	Starting construction
Morgan Estates	Northeast corner of Platt and Morgan	250-multiple family units	Final Engineering
Fieldstone	South of Morgan, east of Platt	+200-single family units	Preliminary site plan expired, waiting on resubmittal
Arbor Farms Phase 1	East of Platt, south of Michigan Avenue	24-single family units	Under construction
Arbor Farms Phase 2	East of Platt, south of Michigan Avenue	59-single family units	Starting construction
Arbor Oaks	East of Platt, south of Michigan Avenue	90-single family units	Submitted for final site plan approval
Heritage Preserve	West of Platt, north of Bemis	92-single family units	Obtained preliminary site plan approval
Total		829 units	

There are up to 829 units that have yet to be absorbed by the market. The market absorption rate of these developments cannot be determined.

PREVIOUS PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW

The Planning Commission previously reviewed a concept plan for this site on February 6, 2020. Comments from the Planning Commission included:

- Lack of consistency with Master Plan
- Development of type are more appropriate for other areas of the Township
- Requirement to expand urban service boundary. Issues identified by expansion of urban service boundary increases sprawl and reduces overall capacity.
- Density
- Traffic

CHANGES SINCE LAST PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW

The applicant reduced the number of units from 213 to 206, a reduction in 7 units. The other amendments as noted by the applicant:

1. Increased open space to 26.83 acres, which is 36% of the net area (formerly 31%).
2. Redesigned the layout to identify and better protect the wetlands, the woodlot, and the Heritage trees.
3. Added detail on the eight pocket parks.
4. Created a continuous system of pedestrian ways including greenways along Platt and Morgan Roads, sidewalks along the internal streets, pedestrian walks through the internal open space pocket parks, a connection from Platt Road to the Pittsfield Township Park, and meandering nature trails through the preserved woodlot.
5. Provided more details on a 30-foot wide landscaped greenbelt, to provide attractive views along Platt and Morgan Roads, and help screen the road from residential backyards.
6. Added a rest station with a bench at the corner of Platt and Morgan Roads. This amenity could also be integrated as a bus stop for the Township's planned transit route along Platt Road.
7. Added details on a connection from Platt Road, through the site, to the Pittsfield Township Park.
8. Reduced density to 2.77 units per acre.
9. Shifted Platt Road entrances to avoid woodlands and improve traffic operations.
10. Eliminated entrance to Morgan Road.
11. Reduced the cul-de-sac length to 600 feet to meet Township standards.

POLICY QUESTIONS

There are four (4) policy questions the Planning Commission and Township Board need to consider:

1. Is the development consistent with the Master Plan. If not, how could this site be developed to be consistent with the Master Plan.
2. The density requested is twice what is permitted based on the Rural Residential designation of the Master Plan. To accommodate the proposed density, the Township would need to amend the Master Plan.
3. Does the proposed PUD meet the required standards? If not, how could this site be developed to meet the PUD standards.
4. Does the Township desire to expand the Public Utility Service area, and what is the potential precedent if they do?

These primary questions still apply. Each of these questions is outlined in greater detail in the following sections.

CURRENT ZONING / OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION DEVELOPMENT OPTION

The site is currently zoned AG, Agricultural Zoning. Under the existing AG, Agricultural zoning, the applicant could construct a maximum of 31 lots. However, this figure does not account for the loss of homesites due to roads, utilities, etc.

Another development option that the applicant should consider would be to develop this property under the Open Space Preservation Development Option (OSPDO), as set forth in Section 7.02 of the Zoning Ordinance. Though not approved by the Township Board, the Planning Commission held a public hearing and has recommended amendments to the OSPDO ordinance to eliminate barriers and incentivize the use of this development tool. We expect the Board to adopt these amendments shortly.

Developing the site as set forth in OSPDO option would allow for preservation of open space and natural features, not require extension of public utilities, not require a rezoning, and provide a density greater than what can be achieved under the underlying zoning but more consistent with the surrounding area.

MASTER PLAN

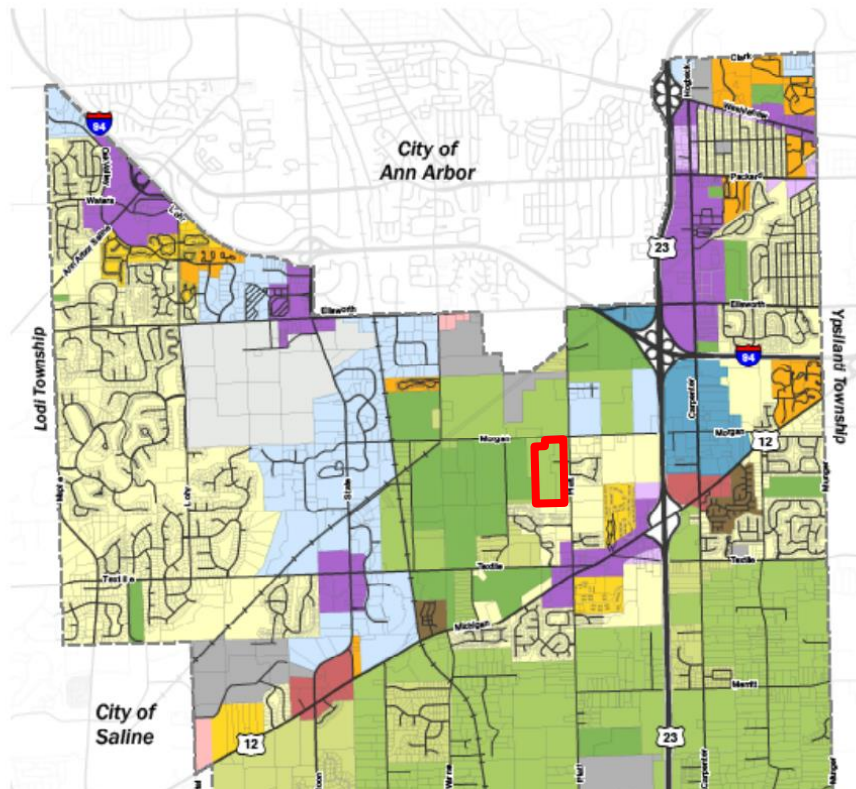
The Master Plan designates the subject site and properties to the north as Rural Residential. The Rural residential future land use classification is intended to accommodate low-density residential development on large lots. The uses planned for these area have limited infrastructure because the minimum lot sizes are large, public utilities are not planned for these areas. The equivalent zoning district in the Master Plan is AG, Agriculture with a minimum lot size of 2.5 acres, or R-1A with a minimum lot size of 1 acre. Additionally, the property is located within the Agricultural and Naturel Open Space Preservation area demonstrated on page 172 of the Master Plan and is not located within the Public Utility Service Area.

Rural residential neighborhoods are intended to accommodate low-density residential development. A maximum density of one unit per acre is appropriate in rural residential areas.

These uses are planned for areas that have limited infrastructure. Because minimum lot sizes are large, well and septic systems can provide for water and sanitary disposal needs and therefore these areas need not have public utilities. Because densities are very low, these areas are located along low volume rural roads that may or may not be paved. These areas are surrounded by agricultural uses, natural features, and open space.

The proposed development demonstrates 2.5 to over 6.0 times the allowable density contemplated in the Master Plan. In addition, the development will require extension of public water and sewer facilities that are not currently available to the subject site (see Public Utility Service Area narrative below).

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN



Future Land Use Plan



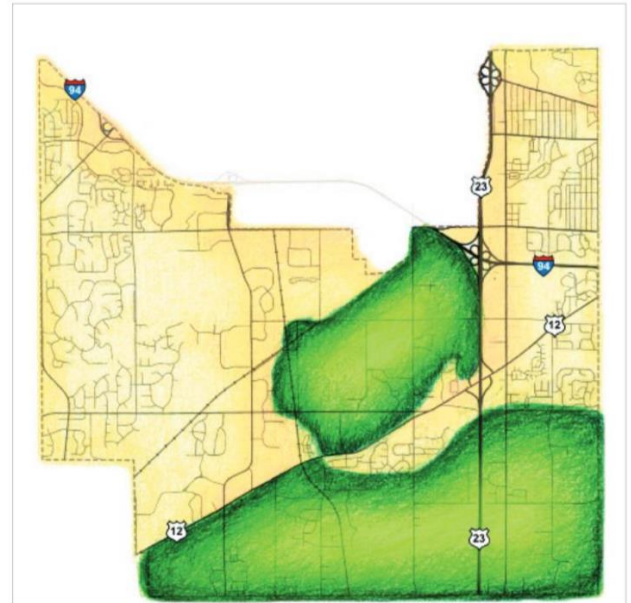
Pittsfield Charter Township
Washtenaw County, Michigan

- Agricultural Preservation
 - Rural Residential
 - Suburban Residential
 - Multi-Unit I
 - Multi-Unit II
 - Manufactured Housing
 - Neighborhood Commercial
 - Regional Commercial
 - Business District
 - Industrial
 - Mixed-Use I
 - Mixed-Use II
 - Park & Open Space
 - Public
 - Airport
- N

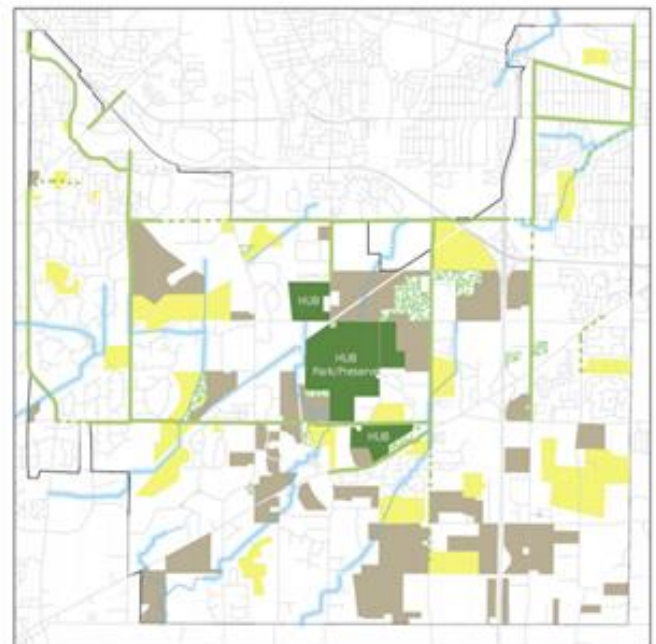
Furthermore, the recently adopted Township Preservation Plan outlines the vision, guidelines and recommendations outlined to Pittsfield Township to, proactively, begin working more aggressively toward preservation and expansion of its green and open spaces. The policy guidelines outlined in the document are intended to coordinate with the goals/objectives of related documents also committed to furthering sustainability in Pittsfield, including the Stormwater Management Plan, Invasive Species Plan and Energy Management Plan.

We find that the proposed development is not consistent with the intended future use outlined in the Master Plan. Therefore, in order to rezone the property to accommodate for the proposed development, the Township would have to consider amending the Master Plan. As you are aware, the Master Plan is the primary policy document which guides development in the Township, and all land use decisions that come before the Planning Commission and Township Board should be in general compliance with the Master Plan. As noted above, the proposed development is not consistent with the intended future use outlined in the Master Plan and is contrary to the ongoing township effort to preserve agriculture and open space.

AGRICULTURAL & NATURAL OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION MAP



Natural Open Space Preservation Map
Master Plan: Page 172

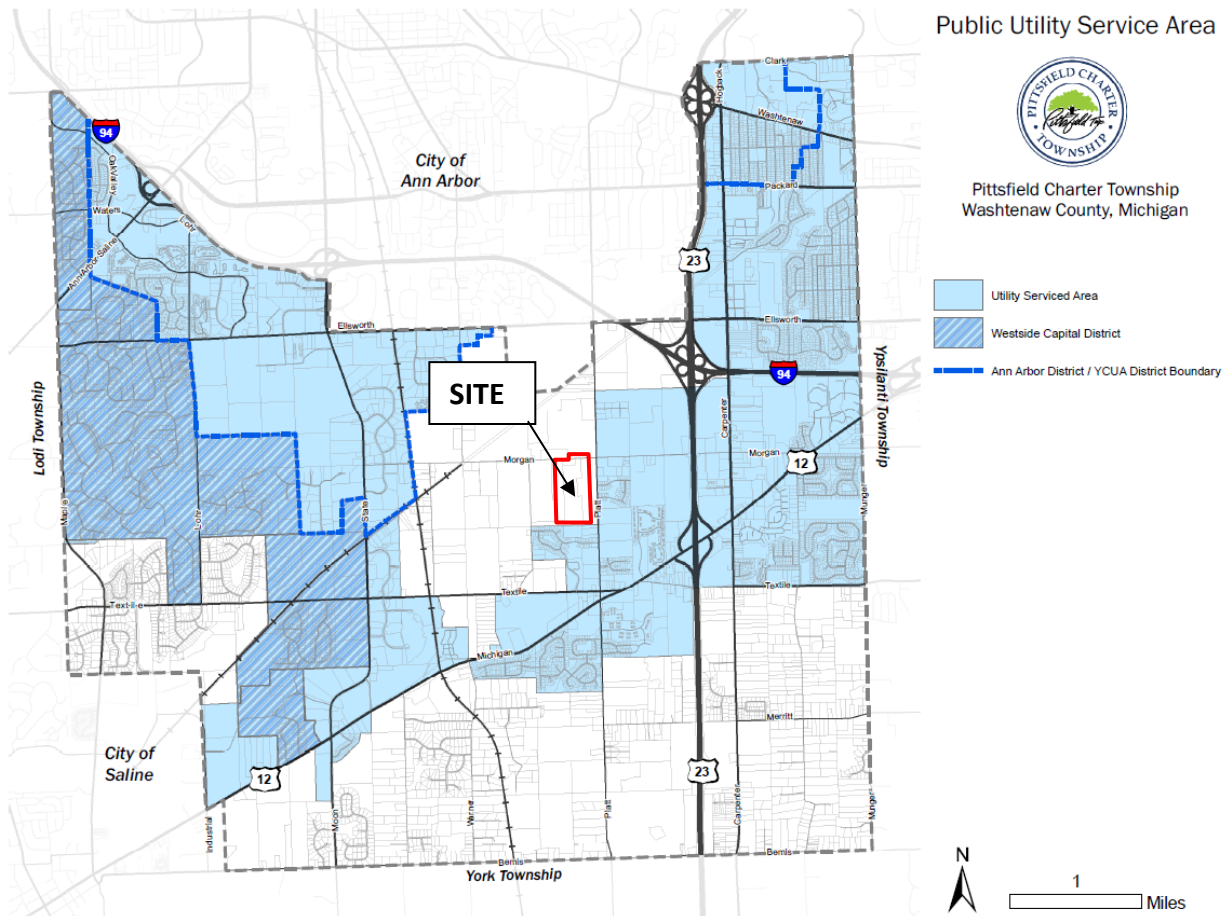


Map: 8/29/2019
Pittsfield Charter
Township
Preservation Plan
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
Community Development

Network
Link (Bike Lane, Greenway, Sidewalk)
Site (Existing Canopy, Park)
Agriculture (Active, Zoned)
Conservation Districts
Proposed Link — Drains

PUBLIC UTILITY SERVICE AREA

The Public Utility Service Area (see map below) borders the site along Platt Road (eastern property line). However, the site is not located within the Utility Service Area. Section 36-42.H. of the Water and Sewer System Ordinance states the following regarding the Utility Service Area:



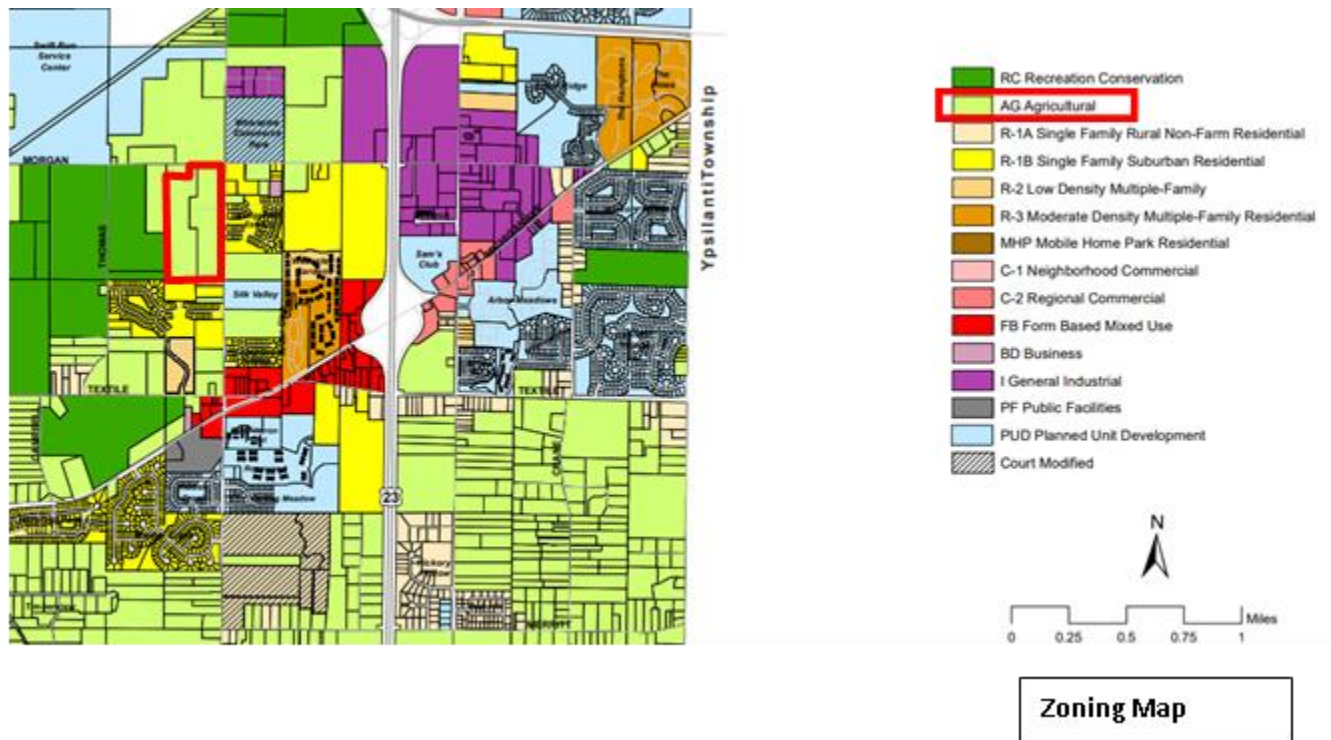
Notwithstanding any other ordinance or other provision of the Pittsfield Charter Township Code, no person shall connect a sewer or water line to any property that is not within the utility service area established by resolution of the Township Board. But the Township Board may approve a connection to property outside the utility service area if the property owner can demonstrate, at a public hearing, a hardship caused by the unavailability of private water or sewage disposal systems.

In addition to the consideration of a potential Master Plan amendment, and PUD rezoning, the Township Board will have to consider an expansion of the Public Service Area. The applicant shall prove to the satisfaction of the Board, that a hardship has been caused by the unavailability of private water or sewage disposal systems.

PUD REZONING

The Zoning Ordinance provides for PUDs to allow flexibility in land development resulting in a higher quality of land development than what would otherwise be developed; allow for a mix of compatible land uses; encourage innovation in planning and design, provide a variety of housing types; and encourage useful open space and long-term protection and conservation of natural features and resources.

As part of the review of a Planned Unit Development, the Planning Commission will need to consider whether the overall site development offered by the developer with respect to the preservation of wetland/natural features preservation, parkland dedication, and proposed housing projects is consistent with the Master Plan, offsets the loss of agricultural land/open spaces, meets the PUD standards, and is commensurate with the requested increased density, and requested dimensional deviations being sought.



We find that many of the benefits offered by the developer including preservation of open space, high quality development, unique housing products, and pedestrian amenities may be achieved through the Open Space Preservation Development Option.

With regards to density, there are established density allowance in the PUD Ordinance. As set forth in Section 6.06. B:

The maximum permitted residential density for a Planned Unit Development shall not exceed the average residential density for the area included in the Planned Unit Development as shown on the Township's adopted Master Plan. The Planning Commission may grant an increase in

average lot density up to twenty-five (25%) percent. Such increase in density shall be commensurate with public benefit provided. Such public benefit may include, but is not limited to, preservation, restoration and enhancement of natural resources; increased open space; public dedication of land; or sustainable building and site design.

The Master Plan for this area calls for rural residential, with a maximum density of one unit per acre. Based on the 80 acres, the maximum density would be 80 units but would permit up to a total of 100 units if such increase in density is commensurate with public benefit provided. The applicant is seeking a density over twice what is permitted through the Planned Unit process.

The only way to achieve the density requested by the applicant would be amend the Master Plan to change the future land use designation of this property to Suburban Residential, which calls for 2.5 units per acre.

PUD STANDARDS OF REVIEW

Standards for review of a PUD are set forth in Section 6.02.B. The Planning Commission shall determine, and shall provide evidence of its determinations in its report to the Township Board, that the application meets the following standards. Failure to meet any standard may be a ground for recommendation of denial.

1. The proposed development shall conform to the adopted Master Plan, or represents land use policy which, in the Planning Commission's opinion, is a logical and acceptable change in the adopted Master Plan.
2. The proposed development shall conform to the intent and all regulations and standards of a Planned Unit Development district.
3. The proposed development shall be adequately served by public facilities and services such as but not limited to streets, police and fire protection, drainage courses, water and sanitary sewer facilities, refuse disposal, and sidewalks; or that the persons or agencies responsible for the proposed development shall be able to properly provide such facilities and services.
4. Common open space, other common properties and facilities, individual properties, and all other elements of a Planned Unit Development are so planned that they will achieve a unified open space and recreation area system, with open space and all other elements in appropriate locations, suitably related to each other, the site, and surrounding lands.
5. Public and common areas will be or have been irrevocably committed. Provisions shall be made for financing of improvements shown on the plan for open space and other common areas, and that proper maintenance of such improvements is assured.
6. The proposed development shall be located and designed in a manner which will minimize the impact of traffic, taking into consideration: pedestrian access and safety; vehicle trip generation (i.e. volumes); types of traffic, access location, and design, circulation, and parking design; street and bridge capacity; and traffic operations at nearby intersections and access points. Efforts shall be made to ensure that multiple transportation modes are safely and effectively accommodated in an effort to provide alternate modes of access and alleviate vehicular traffic congestion.

7. The mix of housing unit types and densities, and the mix of residential and non-residential uses, shall be acceptable in terms of convenience, privacy, compatibility and similar measures.
8. Where applicable, that noise, odor, light, or other external effects which are connected with the proposed uses, will not adversely affect adjacent and neighboring lands and uses.
9. The proposed development shall create a minimum disturbance to natural features and land forms.
10. Streets shall follow topography, be properly spaced, and be located and aligned in accordance with the intended function of each street. The property shall have adequate access to public streets. The plan shall provide for logical extensions of public streets and shall provide suitable street connections to adjacent parcels, where applicable.
11. Pedestrian circulation shall be provided within the site, and shall interconnect all use areas, where applicable. The pedestrian system shall provide for a logical extension of pedestrian ways outside the site and to the edges of the site, where applicable.

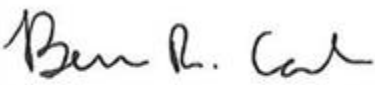
Overall we find that the development does not meet the required PUD Standards:

1. The development is not consistent with the Master Plan.
2. The proposed number of units is not consistent with the surrounding land use.
3. The number of units is not permitted in the ordinance, and the requested density would require a significant amendment to the Master Plan
4. There are other development means to that would allow for preservation of open space and natural features, not require extension of public utilities, not require a rezoning, and provide a density greater than what can be achieved under the underlying zoning but more consistent with the surrounding area.
5. There are over 800 units within a small area that have yet to be absorbed by the market.

SUMMARY

For the reasons aforementioned, we do not support the proposed development. We recommend that the Planning Commission direct staff to prepare the necessary Resolutions of Denial.

Furthermore, we recommended that the Planning Commission encourage the applicant to explore an Open Space Preservation Development Option for this site.



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