

PLAN COMMISSION

September 13, 2021

REGULAR MEETING

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:00p.m. and the assemblage was invited to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. President John Marshall asked for the roll call to be conducted. Members in attendance and absent are listed below:

Members Present:

President John Marshall, Vice President Daniel Rohaley, Michael Conquest, Laura Sauerman, Chad Jeffries, Richard Day, Scott Evorik

Members Absent: None

Staff Present:

Commission Attorney Joe Irak, Executive Secretary Anthony Schlueter, Engineering Superintendent Doug Brite, Assistant Planner Grace Roman, Recording Secretary Jenni Pause

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

President John Marshall asked the Commission to approve the August 9, 2021 meeting notes. Richard Day motioned to approve the August 9th meeting minutes as presented. Laura Sauerman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, by a vote of 7 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions, the motion unanimously passed, and the meeting notes are now official record of the body.

OLD BUSINESS

21-24 Golden Meadows, LLC, Petitioner/Owner

Request: Primary Plat Approval

Purpose: The Cottages at Golden Meadow Subdivision

Location: West and South of the Corner of Burrell Drive and Court Street

Ryan Fleming, Fleming Real Estate, 219 N. Main St., came before the Board and provided an overview of the petition. Fleming stated they have met with staff and have met all the requirements that were made by staff and consulting engineers. Fleming stated they have made the right of way correction.

Executive Secretary Anthony Schlueter reported they did meet with Fleming and all Engineers. Schlueter reported that Fleming submitted Engineered drawings that have been approved by Doug Brite and himself. Schlueter on the location, history of approvals and proposed subdivision. Schlueter reported the primary plat does meet the minimum standards of the Zoning and Subdivision code and is consistent with the conditions of the BZA variance. Schlueter reported if the Plan Commission would approve it

would require a waiver of the berm requirement along Burrell Dr., payment in lieu of the park requirement and Tree Board approval of the landscaping plan.

Marshall asked Schlueter for verification that the Engineering was completed after they got notice about deferring and Staff is ok with Engineering except for the berm. Schlueter confirmed.

Chad Jeffries asked Schlueter to verify that everything they had from Christopher Burke prior has been satisfied. Schlueter confirmed. Jeffries asked Schlueter what the 3 requirements were again. Schlueter reported Tree Board approval, payment in lieu of the park and waiver for 5' berm. Schlueter stated it is completely at the discretion of the Board to grant the waiver of the berm or not. Fleming stated they can install a 2' berm. Fleming explained the reasons a 5' berm cannot be installed. Fleming detailed the extensive landscaping they plan to install along Burrell.

Marshall stated he understands that the berm is tough to get in because of the swell and stated he would be ok with a 2' berm and heavy vegetation. Marshall asked who would maintain the swell. Fleming stated the swell would be part of the right of way that would belong to the property owners that would abut to Burrell and would be their responsibility to maintain. Marshall asked if the city would be ok with that. Schlueter reported the individual lot owner would be responsible and would be notified by the city if it is not maintained properly. Marshall voiced his concern with building a nice subdivision and then having a mess out front because no one maintains that swell.

Mike Conquest asked about the black arrows on page 5 delineating flood routing. Conquest asked what they consider flood routing compared to general drainage, what kind of rainfall. Conquest asked if the storm drains will be able to handle that flood routing in a flood. Conquest stated the overflow appears to go out towards Outlot A and asked if that all is designed to handle flooding. Fleming confirmed it is. Conquest asked for clarification of what the difference from general drainage and flood routing. Fleming stated he cannot answer that question, he pays the Engineer to do that work. Schlueter reported the Engineering will meet all the city standards for overflow and/or flooding.

Daniel Rohaley asked for clarification that the berm along Burrell Dr. will be 2'. Fleming confirmed it will be 2'. Rohaley asked if there will be planting along the berm to screen the backyards. Fleming confirmed there will be 60+ plus trees. Rohaley asked Schlueter to verify that the Engineering is all set to the city standards. Schlueter confirmed it is. Rohaley asked Schlueter to verify that the dedication of the cockeyed Burrell Dr. was cleaned up. Schlueter confirmed. Rohaley asked if that would be deeded. Fleming stated it will be dedicated as a right of way. Rohaley asked Fleming to verify that it will not be an outlot. Fleming confirmed it will not be an outlot. Rohaley stated something need to be done to Outlot A & B to make sure they do not end up in tax sale. Schlueter reported that if the HOA should be dysfunctional or cease to exist then the ownership and maintenance would fall equally on each individual lot owner. Rohaley asked if the city would then lien those owners if they did not pay. Schlueter confirmed.

Sauerman asked if the vegetation along the berm will be subject to the Tree Board. Schlueter confirmed and recommended making it a condition to any approval.

Marshall opened the public portion of the meeting. With no public coming forward, Marshall closed the public portion of the meeting.

Marshall entertained a motion for Petition #21-24. Daniel Rohaley motioned to approve Petition # 21-24 subject to all Engineering, 2' berm with Burrell Dr. screening, Tree Board approval, payment in lieu of park and. Evorik seconded the motion. With no further discussion. Marshall called for roll call. With a roll call vote of 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, and 0 Abstentions, Petition #21-24 was approved.

Fleming and Marshall thanked the Staff for all their hard work on this petition.

NEW BUSINESS

21-28 DVG, Inc., Petitioner/Living Stones Fellowship Church, Inc., Owner

Request: Site Development (Phase 1)

Purpose: Living Stones Church Building Addition

Location: 909 Pratt Street

Ryan Marovich, DVG 1155 Troutwine, came before the Board as a representative for the petitioner and provided an overview of the petition. Marovich explained the parking lot will allow for parking once the Phase 2 addition starts. Marovich stated overall after both phases this will add 40-50 parking spaces.

Schlueter reported on the location, zoning, history of approvals and proposed use. Schlueter reported there will be two phases to this overall project. Schlueter detailed the two proposed phases. Schlueter reported on the proposed parking and screening. Schlueter reported the parking lot does meet the minimum standards for the Crown Point zoning and subdivision code Schlueter recommended approval of Phase 1.

Evorik asked if the soccer fields will be staying. Marovich stated this addition will eliminate ½ of the fields.

Jeffries asked Schlueter to verify that there will be 200+ parking spaces with this phase. Schlueter confirmed. Jeffries asked if the proposed pond would be part of phase 1. Schlueter reported it will be part of Phase 2. Marovich stated the stormwater capacity will be increasing slightly.

Rohaley asked if the evergreen trees along the east side will be tall enough to screen the cars and deaden the sound from the residential subdivision. Rohaley stated they want to make sure with the additional traffic and noise they have the proper screening in place. Rohaley asked if there is a landscaping plan that he has not seen. Marovich stated right now they are showing the line of plantings and when they come back for the permanent phase 2 the remainder will be landscaped. Marovich stated the landscaping will meet city ordinance. Rohaley recommended making any approval subject to

significant screening. Schlueter stated it will need to go before the Tree Board, but they can make any approval subject to that as well.

Marshall stated he does not think the church has a record of hooping it up. Rohaley and Sauerma stated there have been noise issues in the past at this location.

Marshall entertained a motion for Petition #21-28. Sauerma motioned to approve Petition # 21-28 subject to Tree Board approval of the screening and plantings as well as Engineering approval. Day seconded the motion. With no further discussion. Marshall called for roll call. With a roll call vote of 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, and 0 Abstentions, Petition #21-28 was approved.

21-26 DVG, Inc., Petitioner/Mississippi Parkway Partners, LLC, Owner

Request: Workshop

Purpose: E-Commerce Industrial Development

Location: 1103 E. 129th Avenue

Jeff Ban, DVG 1155 Troutwine, came before the Board as a representative for the petitioner and provided an overview of the petition. Ban detailed the location and surrounding properties. Ban detailed on the utilities, watermain, sewers and pump station. Ban stated they have worked with Schlueter's office on what the land use for this property should be. Ban stated due to the proximity to I65, the interchange, proposed future development and the current market they feel this is a perfect location for this type of business park. Ban spoke about the Comp Plan and conceptual future land use. Ban stated because of everything he has read and look at they believe a business park is an appropriate zoning at this location and follows the intent of the zoning ordinance. Ban read the permitted uses for that zoning.

Schlueter reported when Ban brought this project to his attention, they realized the city does not have a zoning classification in the current zoning ordinance that met the needs for this type of growing e-commerce development that they are proposing. Schlueter explained what would be required this type of development. Schlueter reported he brought this proposal to the consultant that was helping rewrite the zoning code and she came up with the business park zoning classification and it was taken to the review committee. Schlueter reported he feels this is a perfect location. Schlueter recommended approval for the zone change when it comes before the Board.

Conquest stated he feels this is a good idea and knows there are communities in the area that have taken advantage of projects like this they have done well. Conquest stated when Ban mentions light manufacturing and warehousing distribution you are talking a lot of semi-trucks which he does not have a problem with but thinks they need to really think about the intersection and how they will be able to handle that type of traffic. Conquest stated it would be so nice if a bridge is installed across I65 at 129th to help with traffic. Ban stated the infrastructure is key to a development like this and that will come. Ban stated this is a land use workshop and knows they will need to come back for another workshop once the best land use is determined. Ban stated he feels it is a perception that a project like this creates a lot of truck traffic.

Marshall stated he feels this type of project fits on this piece of property.

Sauerman asked Ban if they will honor the 100' I65 buffer. Ban stated those are the types of things they will discuss if this land use is approved. Ban stated he feels 100' is a lot and they may be asking for some variances regarding the buffer. Sauerman stated she would not be thrilled with a development that looked like a concrete jungle. Sauerman stated there are business parks out there that are stunning with green spaces that are done well and she would like to see that type of development as you are entering the city. Ban stated they will work with that to get the balance they are looking for.

Evorik agreed with Sauerman and stated he would like to see a nice entry way with trees and landscaping.

Rohaley asked Ban if he envisions any of the large industrial buildings that are being constructed in the Ameriplex complex Merrillville. Ban stated that is what the market is saying wants to be there. Rohaley asked if the truck traffic will come off Mississippi Pkwy. Ban stated that certainly would be one of the main ones, but they have not gotten into the land planning of the project itself. Rohaley stated he does not think there should be anything that large back there, he likes the business park with corporate campus and banks, but he is not all in favor of the huge concrete mass buildings.

Conquest stated he knows that close to the highway is where these types of businesses want to be.

Ban stated he feels this will bring large employment centers.

Day stated he feels this property is a good spot for this type of development. Day stated he does not think the truck traffic will cause an issue.

MISC. AND PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment

Schlueter reported on the INDOT US 231 Corridor Comprehensive Plan Summary. Schlueter reported that INDOT reached out to the city to create a planning document outlining desired traffic improvements along 231 between 113th and Iowa St. Schlueter reported the documents how both the city and INDOT can work together through recommended traffic improvements to ensure safe and reliable transportation corridor for the public. Schlueter reported they are asking the Plan Commission to recognize the partnership between the city and INDOT by approving the document as a future vision for that corridor. Schlueter introduced Adam Parkhouse and Alan Holderread from INDOT. Marshall asked if this should be in the for of a motion. Schlueter confirmed.

Sauerman stated she has some pretty strong feelings regarding this since it will affect her driveway. Sauerman stated she is speaking as a private citizen. Sauerman stated they have not received any information and they do not whether to remonstrate or support the plans. Sauerman stated they are very worried about their safety and the intersection is very accident prone. Sauerman detailed the

history of that intersection. Sauerman stated they were misled in the past. Sauerman stated the land has been in the family for 6 generations. Sauerman stated she is concerned with the lack of detail. Sauerman stated she has very little confidence because of past experiences and will need to be convinced it will be different.

Parkhouse stated he cannot speak to previous conversations. Parkhouse asked Schlueter to verify that there is a roundabout planned for that intersection. Schlueter confirmed. Parkhouse stated he feels the agreement between the city and INDOT is important to keep the safety and mobility in mind.

Marshall agreed that the Sauerman family should have concerns because the intersection is a safety issue, and he has picked up many wrecked cars there.

Day asked for verification that a roundabout is meant to slow traffic down. Parkhouse confirmed. Parkhouse stated crashes are drastically reduced with roundabouts. Holderread agreed with Parkhouse and stated the roundabout will hopefully alleviate several issues at that intersection.

Evorik stated he is excited to see something like this happen. Evorik asked if the roundabout at 113th & 231 will affect the future Veterans Parkway. Schlueter stated the bike trail will be accommodated.

Day stated he feels everyone is interested in how that intersection will look and feel with the improvements.

Schlueter stated roundabouts have been proven to be much safer than a traffic light. Schlueter stated he believes when the plans are further along the neighbors will be notified. Sauerman stated they need to be apprised of the plans. Sauerman stated she is not sure that the same concern will be given to a single residence driveway as the sports complex. Sauerman doesn't want the plans made and the approvals done before the neighbors are notified. Schlueter stated he understands. Parkhouse stated he can speak to the partnership they are trying to strengthen between NDOT and the city. Parkhouse stated it is a priority of the leadership to really strengthen relationships between the agency and locals. Parkhouse stated he understands the frustration with things that have happened in the past, but they are working on better relationships and communication.

Holderread stated he believes the city has gone through several avenues including securing state funds to install a roundabout at this intersection. Holderread stated INDOT is working with the city on the plans for this intersection. Holderread stated any type a project to this scale is done with public funds, a public hearing is necessary.

Rohaley stated he feels this partnership is a breath of fresh air. Rohaley thanked Parkhouse, Holderread and INDOT for working with the city. Rohaley stated he feels this is a good first step. Rohaley stated he would like the city to come up with a Comprehensive thoroughfare plan.

Parkhouse stated they have started to focus on corridor planning more throughout the state.

Conquest questioned Holderread on the types of vehicles they design the roundabouts for. Holderread detailed some of the roundabouts they are working on and stated there are several designs. Holderread detailed how they test the roundabouts to keep the cars slow but also leave room for the trucks.

Jeffries agreed that this is a great partnership. Jeffries thanked Schlueter and Grace Roman on their hard work on this plan.

Linda Sons, 11918 Delaware Street, came before the Board and stated it is great that INDOT and the city are working together but feels the people along the route should be better notified of the plans. Sons stated she would like to see some better communication to the individuals along the route that will be affected by the changes. Sons asked who is doing the work and who is paying for it.

Schlueter thanked Parkhouse and Holderread for bringing up the fact that there will be public involvement in the roundabout before it moves on to completion.

Dick Sauerman, 1155 Joliet St., came before the Board and stated he is not fundamentally against roundabouts, he just feels they are short on details. Sauerman stated they need more information on the size and the design. Sauerman stated likely the 6th generation ends and they will most likely develop their property at some point and wants to know if the roundabout will help/hurt them. Sauerman stated they just need more information. Sauerman stated hopefully they do work with them on the plan, and they have a say.

Marshall entertained a motion for Petition. Jeffries motioned to support the US Route 231 Corridor Comprehensive Plan. Conquest seconded the motion. Day seconded the motion. With no further discussion. Marshall called for roll call. With a roll call vote of 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, and 0 Abstentions, the US Route 231 Corridor Comp Plan was approved

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:38p.m. Jeffries motioned to adjourn, seconded by Sauerman.

ATTESTMENTS OF MEETING MINUTES

The above minutes were approved and adopted by majority on the _____ day of _____, 2021.

John Marshall, President

Anthony Schlueter, Executive Secretary