

CHESTERTON ADVISORY PLAN COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 29, 2016
6:30 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. Present were members F. Owens, J. Ton, T. Kopko, J. Kowalski, R. Poparad and President G. Stone. Town Engineer M. O'Dell was in attendance. Attorneys C. Parkinson and C. Nolan were present as legal advisors. Member J. Trout was absent. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member T. Kopko moved approval of the minutes from January 21, 2016 seconded by member J. Ton and passed by unanimous voice vote.

President G. Stone publicly apologized for being unable to hold its regularly scheduled meeting on February 18, 2016 as the board was one member short of a quorum.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC- None

PRELIMINARY HEARINGS

Brassie Development LLC, Petition for Brassie Estates, Planned Unit Development District

Attorney G. Babcock was present as legal advisor for the petitioner. He was accompanied by Jack Huls of DVG. Attorney G. Babcock said Brassie Estates Unit 1 is fortunate enough to have houses sold and houses going up in the 16 lot first phase of development. The Developer is interested in getting started on the second and third phases of the property. The 37 acre parcel would be broken up into three separate groups. The first group lots 17-77 Unit 2 and 3 would contain single family dwelling on a total of 61 lots. Unit 4 Brassie Woods would contain 14 paired patio style homes having two living units each. Each multi unit building would have its own two car garage. The developer is asking for some increased lot coverage as the configuration of the parcels begins to narrow and Gustafson ditch easement lines are considered. The developers and their engineering firm DVG Inc. had approached the County Drainage Board/Storm Water Board of Porter County in December about getting permission to increase the lot coverage. This request would allow 35 feet of easement rather than 50 feet of easement. Homeowners would have more room to put up sheds and swimming pools without being in the easement. Attorney Babcock said they would be looking to have an answer from Storm Water Board just before the March meeting. As part of the development process the developers would be responsible for the clean-up of the ditch area later being taken over by a property owners association which would also take care of the wet bottom ponds. The west end of the parcel would contain an asphalt trail from the bike path down into the parcel for emergency access. There would be sidewalks connecting to Dogwood Estates and Dogwood Park with future connectivity past the high school. He respectfully requested the board to consider setting this item for public hearing at the March 17, 2016 meeting.

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Mr. Jack Hals of DVG, Inc. said if the Storm Water Board did not allow the easement reduction it would not impact the developer's ability to build the lots. It would decrease the homeowner's yard size.

Town Engineer M. O'Dell requested a few changes from the developer. He called attention to Sections 14B, 14G and Exhibit C would include 2 signs additionally he asked that the lots have numbers. He asked if the developer would be interested in including a 6 foot fence variance as a part of the PUD along Pearson Road. There was some additional discussion about fencing not being in the front yard plain of a neighbor. He advised the developer to include a list of lot numbers along Pearson Road which would be allowed a 6 foot fence.

Member F. Owens moved to set this item for public hearing at the March 17, 2016 meeting seconded by member T. Kopko and passed by unanimous voice vote.

Sign Ordinance revisions

Members of the board received a copy of the revised Sign Ordinance. Member J. Kowalski said for many years the maximum height for a freestanding sign was 18 feet. A few years back the Chesterton Chamber recommended increasing that height to 24 feet. The current Ordinance allows a 24 foot freestanding signs but most of the BZA members find that to be excessive. Member Kowalski commented that a 24 feet sign is too high. He understood that in certain instances an 18 feet freestanding sign might be a consideration but, the BZA is encouraging a monument style sign.

Town Engineer M. O'Dell said the 24 foot height for a freestanding sign has been in effect since January of 2014.

Attorney C. Parkinson said the placement of a freestanding sign does have certain restrictive requirements. But there is no legal reason the sign height designation couldn't be changed from 24 feet to 18 feet.

It was the general consensus of the board that the maximum height for a freestanding sign would drop down to 18 feet.

Member T. Kopko moved to set the Sign Ordinance revisions for public hearing at the March meeting seconded by member F. Owens and passed by unanimous voice vote.

CONCEPT REVIEW- None

PUBLIC HEARINGS- None

OLD BUSINESS- None

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NEW BUSINESS- None

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS- None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the board member T. Kopko moved adjournment seconded by member F. Owens and passed by unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail A. Murawski, Secretary

Approved;

G. Stone, President