

**CHESTERTON ADVISORY PLAN COMMISSION  
(SPECIAL MEETING)  
AUGUST 11, 2016  
6:30 P.M.**

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES- None**

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC- None**

**PRELIMINARY HEARINGS- None**

**CONCEPT REVIEW- None**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**Lake Erie Land Company, Coffee Creek Center Phase A & B, Lot 8, P.U.D. (Replat of Lot 8, 9, 10, 11 and Part of Lot 38) To be known as "Residents At Coffee Creek" (Continued from July 21, 2106)** Attorney T. Hiestand was present as legal representation for the petitioner. He was accompanied by Lori McLaughlin of Westshore Senior Housing Consultants, LLC, also architects Philip and Tom Panzica of Panzica Building Corporation.

Ms. Lori McLaughlin of Westshore Senior Housing Consultants, LLC was in attendance to present an overview of the project. This project would be modeled after Residents at Deer Creek in Schererville, IN. During the 15 to 18 month construction phase of the project they would employ about 250 workers. Once the community is operational they would employ approximately 100 employees. This is a 20 million dollar investment that would have very little drain on existing Chesterton infrastructure. There would be no impact on the Duneland Schools. She told the board the uniqueness of the site does create a hardship with respect to signage. She cited a situation at the Schererville location which would be very similar to the proposed project. Sometimes people come to The Residents looking to secure a hotel room for the night in doing so there has been occasion where staff and residents become upset. Once the second phase of the construction was complete at the location in Schererville, a larger more readable 28 foot sign was installed so there would be no confusion.

Mr. T. Panzica distributed to the board a packet depicting key illustrations of the variance request for signage as well as sidewalks. He gestured to a power point presentation which provided illustrations of the signage at the speed at which a car would travel along SR49. The presentation offered a visual of the proposed signage along SR49 at a height of 12 feet maximum. He felt that the proposed sign was under stated when compared to the size of the

**ADVISORY PLAN COMMISSION**  
**AUGUST 11, 2016**  
**PAGE 2**

property. In order to have visible signage from SR49 by a car passing at a speed of 50 miles per hour the text needs to be at least 9 inches high. Along Coffee Creek there is a split rail type fence standing 4 feet tall which also impedes visibility. Large façade signs found in Coffee Creek currently are not desirable because they don't make the building look residential. He suggested that the more visible signage would be less likely to cause an accident. He respectfully requested the board to consider granting the variance request.

The second issue Mr. Panzica talked about was sidewalks. He reminded the board that they had already committed to include sidewalks along several areas near the facility. The sidewalk that had been suggested along Sidewalk Rd. represents about 660 feet of sidewalk leading to SR49. Although it is well intentioned it will create an attractive nuisance which could draw children and senior residents to wander towards the dangers of the heavily traveled SR49. The sidewalk would additionally create more storm water runoff. He noted that any development to the north of their site would be taking place on what are designated wetlands and property is unlikely to be developed.

President G. Stone noted when the July meeting concluded the petitioners had suggested they would install the sidewalk along Sidewalk Rd. if granted the variance for the larger 12 foot sign and concede to their request for temporary construction signage. At this point in time, they would no longer install the sidewalk on Sidewalk Rd. but still pursue the variance for the 12 foot sign.

Member F. Owens suggested that the original PUD included spots for parking along Sidewalk Rd. It would be very convenient for people to have a sidewalk to use in that location. He indicated that he was still not in favor of the proposed 12 foot sign on SR49.

Mr. Panzica noted that in the original PUD this location was envisioned as a commercial site. He said it would be easy for residents to become confused and not realize they are headed on a sidewalk leading them to SR49. If passersby are unable to see the sign from SR49 the facility potentially loses a resident and the town also loses a resident. The town also loses potential family members spending time visiting loved ones that might also patronize the town's business establishments. We're talking 4 feet 6 inches from the standard for a 20 million dollar project.

President G. Stone suggested placing the signage on the façade of the building for maximum visibility with no variance being required.

Mr. Panzica said this is not something commonly done in senior living facilities. Building signage also creates structural issues. Snow drift load and internal illumination create hardships. They felt the signage off the highway make it look more pastoral and visually pleasing.

Member J. Kowalski said they had been out to the property today to measure a line of sight from the road. The smaller sign would virtually look like a gravestone from the highway. He said he

**ADVISORY PLAN COMMISSION**  
**AUGUST 11, 2016**  
**PAGE 3**

sincerely couldn't envision any future development on the property north of their facility and especially wouldn't want to see a sidewalk installed along a wetland. He suggested installing the sidewalk along Sidewalk Rd. and ending the sidewalk at the service road near the residents.

Ms. Lori McLaughlin said the sign is what is most important to the petitioners. Installing the sidewalk to the service road is something they could live with.

Member J. Trout said there is nothing he finds offensive about the size of the sign. It looks to be to scale. Installing the sidewalk along Sidewalk Rd. to the service road and the petitioner's concession with regard to the construction sign seems like a conscience compromise.

Town Engineer M. O'Dell said that in Exhibit F of the PUD when they submitted it the sidewalk went to the second driveway. He clarified that the sidewalk should go to the second driveway.

Attorney C. Parkinson requested a revised copy of Exhibit F with the changes discussed this evening.

Member J. Trout moved to send a favorable recommendation to the town council subject to accepting the variance for the 12 foot sign. The petitioner's would install the sidewalk on the south side along Sidewalk Rd. and a temporary construction sign would not be used. The motion was seconded by member R. Poparad and passed by a roll call vote of 4 to 2 with members F. Owens and T. Kopko voting no.

Attorney C. Parkinson requested a revised Exhibit C and Exhibit F.

**ADVISORY PLAN COMMISSION**  
**AUGUST 11, 2016**  
**PAGE 4**

**OLD BUSINESS- None**

**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 7:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail A. Murawski, Secretary

Approved:

G. Stone, President