CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LYON
ERWIN PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
February 25, 2003

Approved as submitted April 9, 2003

DATE: February 25, 2003
TIME: 3:30 PM
PLACE: 58000 Grand River

Call to Order: Megan Masson-Minock called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

Roll Call: Present: Mike Barber
Laura James
Ted Soper

Chris Doozan, Planner
Megan Masson-Minock, Planner
Chris Olson, Township Superintendent

Present Representing
Erwin Property: Bill Erwin
Larry Wilkinson, Beztak Company
Greg Primeau, Beztak Company
Bob Leighton, Robert Leighton & Associates

AGENDA:

Ms. Masson-Minock explained that the purpose for today's meeting is to see if the developer and the Township are on the same page and if this process would be worthwhile.

1. Township's expectations for the process and for the development

Ms. Masson-Minock asked the Sub-committee members and the developers what their expectations are for the process and the development.

Mr. Barber stated that they would expect something that is a credit to the community of Lyon Township. He stated that they don't want too much density. They don't want to use up all of the Township's sewage treatment capacity on one development.

Ms. James stated that in terms of the process, she felt that they need a lot more input than what they received during the Elkow process. She felt that they should hold public hearings throughout the process so that they can have public input from the very beginning. She felt that this is very important. She stated that in terms of the substance, it is their understanding that plan could vary from the Master Plan. She stated that they expect to have lengthy discussion as to what the Master Plan says, what the goals of the Master Plan are and how this development could be justified in the face of this.

Mr. Soper stated that they don't want to deviate too much from the Master Plan with regard to density. Anything that they do now will set precedence for any future developments coming into the Township. He stated that anything they do with regard to density has to be justified one way or another.

2. Economics for Beztak

Mr. Wilkinson stated that their economics are somewhat intertwined with the Erwin's. This land has a certain perceived value which somewhat drives part of the use but not all of the use. He

stated that they have had several meetings with Bob Leighton and Bill Erwin. Their vision for this property is to have some kind of a spectacular window coming south off Kent Lake Road. He stated that it will be something that is exciting and fits in with the character of the orchards and the history. He stated that they do understand that this is a predominately single family community. He stated that they are hoping to mix this development with some retail that would tie in architecturally. He stated that they would also like to put some cluster type higher density multi-family in this development.

Mr. Wilkinson stated that he has known Mr. Leighton for over 25 years. He noted that Mr. Leighton has been educating him on the process and how they could work together with the Township to do something that is mutually acceptable. He stated that he encouraged Mr. Erwin to come back from Florida early so that he could be involved in these meetings.

Mr. Doozan stated that they have seen plans that Mr. Leighton has already drawn up which provides for a substantially higher density, a more intensive development than what is intended in the Master Plan. He stated that the fear is that the developer has already settled on this particular plan and the expectation is that they would go through this process just so they could solidify this and come out of this process with this plan in mind. He stated that this is not what the intent of the process is and it really will not work well, if this is what they developer's goal is.

Mr. Barber stated that they all know that if the developer was going to build this according to what it is zoned for, they would not even be here right now. Mr. Wilkinson stated that this is not feasible with the way that the road is. Mr. Barber stated that they will keep an open mind.

Mr. Wilkinson stated that they do have a concept with what they feel works well on the property in terms of transitional uses. He stated that coming off of I-96 and entering this property, they have created some transitional uses in tying this with the single family in the back. He stated that they think that it does make sense in terms of transition. He stated that whether it is too much density or not, is what they are hoping to get out of this process.

Ms. James questioned whether or not the developer is really wedded to the preliminary plan that they have seen. Mr. Wilkinson responded that he did not believe that anybody has seen the preliminary plan. He noted that there was a plan about a year ago, but that plan is not the one that they are using today. He stated that the plan they have today does have some of the same components, but it is not the same plan.

Mr. Soper stated that it was indicated that one acre would not be feasible. He questioned what is not feasible about one acre lots. Mr. Wilkinson responded that when the Committee see the plan that Mr. Leighton has drawn, they will see that the road has been re-routed.

Mr. Barber stated that this is area is one of the entrances into the Township and felt that it could be a presentation and set up very nicely. Mr. Wilkinson stated that they have considered this and have treated it as such. He stated that Mr. Leighton does have with him a concept plan that they could display. Mr. Doozan stated that they needed to continue with the process.

3. Zoning & Future Land Use

Mr. Masson-Minock reviewed the zoning and future land use are for this property. She stated that in terms of the Master Plan and the Future Land Use they are looking at one acre lot minimum for this area. She noted that if sanitary sewer is extended to this property, then smaller lot sizes could be used. She stated that there is no future land use plan for additional retail in the area or smaller lots. If the Planning Commission is willing to look at these things through the process, she noted that there are some expectations about where sensitivity is in terms of density.

Mr. Doozan stated that in terms of economics, if the re-routed road was taken out, he questioned if it would be feasible to do the development with one acre lots. Mr. Wilkinson responded that the road configuration with the way that it is currently causes a whole host of problems. He stated that he does not see how they could take the re-routed road out of context.

Mr. Wilkinson stated that he did not feel that the economics work with a one acre density. He stated that he did not feel that they could market single family lots with septic and wells, they would not be competitive in the marketplace.

Mr. Soper questioned how many homes in this area will the water and sewer handle without affecting the surrounding properties. Mr. Primeau responded that he believed that they have 122 residential units from the north end. Mr. Wilkinson stated that Kamran Qadeer looked at the capacity and felt that it could be handled. He noted that Mr. Qadeer could not be here today. Mr. Soper felt that this is something that he would like to have an answer to. He stated that this would be a concern for him if the surrounding properties were not able to develop, if the ability to tap into the water and sewer is no longer there.

Mr. Erwin stated that when the sewer was put in taps were assigned. He noted that there are all sorts of parcels to the north of his parcel that already have taps assigned to them. Mr. Doozan stated that this is correct.

There was further discussion with regard to the sewer taps. Mr. Olson stated that there are different ways of dealing this, but the ultimate build out of the sewer facility for the Township is predicated on the Master Plan.

Mr. Wilkinson stated that they are not all planners but they do read articles about suburban sprawl. He stated that the Township is almost mandating sprawl by saying that they are going to spread the sewer capacity everywhere. He stated that from a planning perspective there may be some benefit to having some higher density and creating more open spaces as a result of that. Mr. Soper stated that he would agree with this, but the people who own the property in other locations, would then be told that they cannot develop. Mr. Wilkinson stated that this is something that they would have to examine. Ms. Masson-Minock stated that this is something that would be discussed during the next phase, "Opportunities and Constraints".

4. Previous & Current Proposals

Mr. Wilkinson stated that there was a predecessor in his company that had drawn a plan, which he felt really needed some work. He stated that he joined Beztak Companies last year. He noted that they had let their agreement with the Erwin's lapse and then re-negotiated a new agreement. He stated that he then brought in Bob Leighton in to help draw up a new plan. He stated that neither he or Mr. Leighton has any authorship to the old plan and would like that plan discarded.

Mr. Leighton displayed a plan for the Sub-committee to view. He briefly discussed the existing conditions of the land and the plan that they would like to propose. He described the plan and how they have re-configured the road.

Mr. Barber asked if there is any historical value to any of the barns on the property. Mr. Erwin responded that there is not.

Ms. James stated that they have been told that all the orchards would have to be removed. Mr. Erwin stated that they don't have a choice with this, it is a State Law that the trees would have to be removed.

Mr. Soper questioned how this type of plan would affect the flow of traffic especially for the school on Kent Lake Road. Mr. Wilkinson responded that they would have to leave the existing road in place while the new road is under construction. Mr. Leighton stated that the new road is really independent from any of the other roads.

Mr. Barber suggest that the view in this area is so good, that a restaurant with an outside deck would be nice.

Mr. Soper questioned what type of density are the developers looking for. Mr. Leighton responded that the low density would be single family detached. He noted that these would not be on one acre lots. He stated that most of the builders today like to use 70' to 90' wide lots.

Mr. Wilkinson stated that they probably would not want to do 70' lots. They would probably like to do side entry garages, therefore, they would need approximately an 85' wide lot. Mr. Soper questioned if the developer has a ballpark idea of what the overall density is that they are looking at. Mr. Wilkinson responded that he has this in his car, but it is pretty conceptual. He stated that he cannot remember the numbers that were on it. He stated that he believed that the commercial that they are looking at is approximately 120,000 square feet. He noted that the do have some potential users for this, one of which is a grocery store.

Ms. James questioned how much the re-configured road would alleviate versus the increased traffic caused by the concentrated density. She questioned if it is an even exchange. Mr. Leighton responded that he would not consider it an even exchange. He stated that the traffic generated by this development, if put on the existing road system, would have very little affect at all. He stated that this road system is going to fail is going to fail at some point in the future regardless whether or not they do one acre lots or what they are proposing. There was further discussion with regard to the traffic and the re-configured road.

Ms. Masson-Minock stated that the real question regarding the process is with what everybody has heard and seen today, is this something that they feel that there is enough information to proceed with the process. She stated that from what she is hearing from the Planning Commissioners is that they are on the same page in the fact that they don't have any real numbers in terms of density and costs. Mr. Leighton stated that he is not sure that they even have these numbers at this point yet.

Mr. Doozan asked what other alternatives were looked at. Mr. Wilkinson responded that he did not think that they did look at other alternatives because they are trying to do something that is really spectacular and is interesting and creates a sense of entry to the Township. He stated that his company has done very upscale communities in the past. He stated that they are not here to present an in-between scenario, they are trying to show something that they think is the best.

Ms. James stated that the issue, besides the density, that is going to be thorny is the placement of the multi-family units. She stated that they will abut R-1.0 land and felt that this may be a problem.

Mr. Doozan stated that from what he is hearing, some adjustments to the process should be made.

Mr. Leighton discussed different options. He stated that they could show the Committee all sorts of different options, if they want. He stated that most of them deal with how the roads work and the placement of the commercial. He stated that after going through a whole series of different options, they came up with this choice as being the one that works the best. Mr. Wilkinson stated that some of the alternatives they looked at they did not feel were real desirable.

Mr. Soper stated that the developer not only has to convince the Committee, they need to convince the residents as well. Mr. Leighton stated that he felt that it would be a good idea to back up and go through some other alternatives. Ms. James noted that the residents on the adjacent properties have already been to some of the Planning Commission expressing concern with regard to density on this property.

5. Adjustments to the Process

Mr. Doozan discussed steps 2 and 3 of the process, Opportunities and Constraints.

Mr. Soper stated that he would like to see a conventional layout done to the existing zoning. Mr. Leighton stated that they would definitely do this.

Ms. James stated that maybe they could reserve the third meeting for an absolute concrete discussion as to what type of density they would agree upon as being acceptable. She felt that they could crunch number and dollars and come to a decision regarding the density.

There was discussion with regard to the B-2 property at the corner of Pontiac Trail Road and Silver Lake Road. Mr. Soper questioned if there is anyway of incorporating this into the development. Mr. Erwin stated that the corner property is independent of this development.

Ms. Masson-Minock stated that in terms of the process, she has not heard from Ms. James or Mr. Barber as to what their feelings are about moving forward or if adjustments need to be made to the process.

Ms. James stated that she felt that at the next meeting they will probably be discussing utilities. This will determine if they can move forward or not. She felt that the public should be involved in this.

Mr. Barber stated that they never talked about economics for the applicant, which he felt is something that they should discuss. He stated that he could see why the developer did what they did with the road. He stated that he doesn't know what else could be done. He stated that they do need to have more information on this plan before they can make any type of a decision.

Mr. Soper questioned how many acres are involved in this development. Mr. Erwin responded that there are 192 acres.

Ms. Masson-Minock stated that it seems that everybody is comfortable with moving forward with the process. She questioned if they should combine steps two and three. Mr. Soper responded that he felt this would be good. Ms. James stated that she felt that during step four is when the developer should provide the density numbers. She stated that they still have a lot to discuss and did not feel that steps two and three should be combined.

6. Schedule Future Meetings

After further discussion, the committee determined that they would schedule more meetings and that they would include the public at these meetings.

The following meetings were scheduled:
- Wednesday, March 19, 2003
- Wednesday, April 9, 2003
- Wednesday, April 30, 2003

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deby Cothery

Deby Cothery
Recording Secretary