



Meeting Summary
December 7, 2016

Attendance

Panel Members: Hank Alinger, Chair (Recused)
Don Taylor, Vice Chair
Weiwei Jia
Fred Marino
Sujit Mishra
Julie Wilson

DPZ Staff: Valdis Lazdins, Kristin O'Connor, George Saliba, Karitsa Norman, Yvette Zhou

Plan #16-16: Hickory Ridge Village Center Redevelopment

Owner/Developer: Kimco Realty Corporation

Architect: Hord Coplan Macht, Inc.

Plan #16-17: Bethany Glen

Owner/Developer: Elm Street Development

Landscape Architect: Bohler Engineering

Engineering: Bohler Engineering

1. **Call to Order** – DAP Chair Hank Alinger opened the meeting at 7:30pm and explained that the focus of DAP meetings is on design quality and site planning. He stated that this meeting does not afford public comments and that it is a discussion between the panel and the applicant, focusing on matters of design. Mr. Alinger recused himself due to a conflict of interest and turned the meeting over to DAP Vice Chair Don Taylor.

Mr. Taylor called for introductions of the panel, staff, and project team.

2. Review of Hickory Ridge Village Center Redevelopment – DAP Plan #16-16

Background

The 14.65 acre Hickory Ridge Village Center is comprised of two parcels zoned NT - Parcel A-1 (14.16 acres) and Lot 113 (0.49 acres). The Village Center fronts on Cedar Lane (Minor Arterial), Freetown Road (Major Collector), and Quarterstaff Road (Local). The property has right-in only access from Cedar Lane, three full movement access points on Freetown Road, and a single access point on Quarterstaff Road. There are four properties adjacent to the Village Center, but they are not part of this redevelopment proposal. They include a Sunoco gas station, Sunrise Senior Living, Goddard School, and a Columbia Association parcel located at the western edge of the village center. The Hickory Ridge Village Center was built in 1992 as a grocery anchored retail center. Like most village centers in Columbia, it is inwardly oriented. The center's internal public open space is located along a pedestrian promenade known as the

“Avenue”. The Avenue is anchored at each end with a triangular open space with paved areas, landscaped areas, and a sunken plaza. Unlike most village centers, Hickory Ridge lacks a community building, such as a recreational facility or other civic building. The Village Center currently has +/- 97,321 square feet of retail and service businesses, including a Giant grocery store.

Applicant Presentation

The applicant made a multimedia presentation to the DAP.

Mr. Greg Reed, Vice President of Development for Kimco Realty, explained that the redevelopment process began a year ago. The plan retains the Giant Food store and redevelops the rest of the site with a residential and retail mix. The Hickory Ridge Village Board was notified about redevelopment plans and four to five community meetings and 19 small group community meetings have been held on the project. Kimco has revised the original plan multiple times to address community's concerns.

Mr. Miguel Iraola, Landscape Architect from Hord Coplan Macht, Inc., provided an overview of existing conditions and site access. He indicated that redevelopment excludes the Sunoco gas station, Sunrise Senior Living, and Goddard School and that the Center's architecture currently reflects the early 1990's. He stated that the Giant will remain, while the retail arcade will be demolished.

Mr. Matthew Fitzsimmons, Planner from Hord Coplan Macht, Inc., discussed site design. He described the existing site, roadway, and building configuration. Approximately 13 of the 20 smaller retailers currently have an inward orientation and are far from parking. The redevelopment objectives are to create a more walkable village center and allow more convenient parking. The proposed road system is similar to the current one. Roads A and B, as shown on the illustrative plan, will have more of a pedestrian orientation with angled on-street parking. The focus will be to create a streetscape with street trees, benches, and places for socialization, as well as visibility for stores. A village green space will be centrally located and designed to allow flexibility, accommodating different activities. A pedestrian promenade (paseo) will be between retail buildings A.1 and A.2 and lead into the village green.

Mr. Beret Dickson, Architect from Hord Coplan Macht, Inc., stated that the architecture will be cohesive and that the diverse mix of building types will be designed to create a singular identity. He then described the residential buildings, stating that their configuration around exterior courtyards creates a sense of smaller scale buildings. The mixed-use residential building steps back from adjacent streets in a number of places and large courtyards are located along the perimeter. The design of the façades will distinguish different building types, while maintaining continuity. The retail facades will have a buff colored brick, making them cohesive with the Giant. Brick will be the primary building material and wood will be used as an accent on retail buildings. Because the current green color is hard to match, the roof of the existing Giant will be replaced with a darker color to better fit with the new buildings.

Mr. Reed discussed parking, stating that it will be provided at 1.6 spaces per residential unit, which meets zoning regulations and industry standards. Retail parking will be four spaces per thousand square feet of building area, which meets current trends. Currently, the center is over parked at about five spaces per thousand. Residential parking will be in a private garage, which is wrapped by a building. In total, there will be 789 parking spaces.

Staff Presentation

Mr. George Saliba summarized Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) staff comments.

The DAP is reviewing this project because it is a Major Village Center Redevelopment. This first review by the DAP is one step in a multi-tiered process. Following DAP review the petitioner must submit a Preliminary Development Plan (PDP). The PDP would go before the Planning Board, as well as Zoning Board, for review. If approved, next would be the County's Land Development Review Process, where plans would be presented to the DAP at the Site Development Plan (SDP) phase.

Staff received many written comments from the public, which have been provided to the DAP.

Staff comments about the Hickory Ridge Village Center redevelopment were provided both to the DAP and the applicant.

DAP recommendations and motions will be provided to the DPZ Director for consideration. Endorsed recommendations will be forwarded to the Planning Board and Zoning Board.

A summary of tonight's meeting will be on the DAP website within 10 business days and anyone who signed in and left a legible email address will receive a copy.

DAP Questions and Comments

The DAP asked about the future plans for the vacant land at the end of Street B. The applicant stated that it is owned by the Columbia Association (CA) and they are waiting for the Village Center plan to be finalized before coordinating its future use with Kimco. The DAP stated that coordinating its future use with redevelopment is important.

The DAP encouraged further study of the terminus of Street B.

The DAP questioned the appropriateness of a wrapper style building for the Hickory Ridge Village Center.

The DAP was concerned about the scale and massing of the proposed residential building, particularly along Cedar Lane and Freetown Road.

The DAP did not believe the architecture and site design took into account the entire village center area.

The DAP did not believe that the design created an identity for the Village Center and noted that this was critical to the project.

The DAP expressed concerns about the proposed architectural style and color palette of the new buildings; in particular, the tie-in with the existing architecture and color palette of the Giant and the surrounding buildings that are to remain.

The DAP encouraged the applicant to rethink the design and replacement of the Giant roof.

The DAP complimented the applicant on the village green and pedestrian spaces, while encouraging sidewalk widths of at least 6-feet and special paving at pedestrian crossings.

The DAP expressed concerns about requiring cars to loop around the development, behind the Giant. They believed that it may not be the best way to connect the Cedar Lane and Freetown Road entrances to the large surface parking lot that primarily serves Giant.

The DAP encouraged using environmental site design techniques and green space to treat stormwater.

The DAP encouraged sustainable design to be incorporated into the architectural and site design.

DAP Motions for Recommendations

DAP member Fred Marino made the following motion:

1. That the applicant reconsider the scale, massing, and appropriateness of the residential wrapper building. Seconded by DAP member Julie Wilson.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

DAP member Sujit Mishra made the following motion:

2. That the applicant consider a more sustainable approach so that the Hickory Ridge Village Center sets an example for all other village centers. Seconded by DAP member Julie Wilson.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

DAP member Julie Wilson made the following motion:

3. That the applicant not just look at the residential wrapper building, but also at the architecture of the Giant and the retail buildings to create an identity that works with the neighborhood and results in a unified project – including the senior living center and Goddard and the greater site. Seconded by DAP member Sujit Mishra.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

DAP Vice Chair Don Taylor made the following motion:

4. That the applicant consider the layout of street B, its terminus, and how it loops around the project. Seconded by DAP member Julie Wilson.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

DAP member Julie Wilson made the following motion:

5. That the applicant return to the DAP once DAP recommendations have been considered and responses have been prepared to DAP comments and motions. Seconded by DAP Vice Chair Don Taylor.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

3. Review of Bethany Glen – DAP Plan #16-17

Background

The DAP is reviewing Bethany Glen because it is a Conditional Use for Age Restricted Adult Housing (ARAH). This DAP review is one step in the conditional use petition and the subsequent land development review process. Following the DAP, the Hearing Examiner will review the project and make a decision to approve, deny or approve it with conditions.

Located off Bethany Lane (and straddling both sides of I-70), the site is approximately 68 acres and is zoned R-20. Route 99 is to the north, Bethany Lane to the west, and single-family residential development to the south. An undeveloped wooded property lies to the east. The applicant is proposing 238 attached and detached units.

Applicant Presentation

The applicant gave a multimedia presentation to the DAP.

Mr. Jason Van Kirk, Vice President with Elm Street Development, stated the ARAH conditional use allows up to five units per net acre and therefore 330 units could be proposed. However, the developer is proposing fewer - 238 units. He then discussed age restricted housing and that it does not impact schools and generates less traffic, even though more ARAH units would be developed than for an R-20 development. Further, the aging of Howard County over the next 25 years will increase the 55 plus population and currently there is not enough of that housing to accommodate demand. He then described the property and its location, which is bisected by Interstate 70. The nearby Harbin house is part of the estate and will remain.

Mr. Dave Woessner, Project Engineer with Bohler Engineering, discussed two access points along Route 99, which will have to line up with Litter Drive on the west and Weatherstone Drive on the east. A sight distance study was done for Bethany Lane to make sure site access was a safe. Site access to the south

includes Longview Drive and Nollwick Road. Due to community concerns, access to Nollwick has been eliminated. Two culverts convey stormwater from Route 99 and I-70 under I-70. The site south of I-70 contains streams and stream buffers, wetlands, and steep slopes. As many specimen trees as possible will be retained.

Mr. Eric McWilliams, Project Manager with Bohler Engineering, stated that the land forms and topography result in a larger development that consists of interconnected, small neighborhoods. A community center with a pool is located near Bethany Lane and a total of 238 homes are proposed. They consist of single-family detached, 28-foot wide villas, and elevator townhomes. The layout of the northern property is constrained by site access and I-70. A large landscape buffer will extend along I-70. To the south, the site is accessed from Bethany Lane and Longview Drive. The layout of internal roads attempted to minimize stream crossings and environmental impacts, so only two are proposed. The layout locates single-family homes along the perimeter, near existing single-family neighborhoods. Higher densities are proposed to the interior of the site. Internal open space will contain trails that connect the neighborhoods on the south to the community center. Landscape buffers along I-70 will mitigate noise and create a visual buffer.

Mr. Woessner stated that community members expressed concerns about flooding. After the 2011 flood the 2012 Ellicott City/Valley Mede Flood study was done, which identified 8 homes along Longview Drive that were impacted by flooding on the Plum Tree. In some instances the houses are within feet of the stream. The developer is proposing more stormwater management (SWM) than is required due to flooding concerns and they are currently discussing innovative SWM and flood control techniques with Howard County and the State.

Mr. Van Kirk stated that sidewalks will be located along streets and will connect to nature trails. Many trails will include seating. A sidewalk will be along Route 99, connecting the two development areas. Residential units include 30 single-family homes on 60 ft. x120 ft. lots, 178 villas with first floor master bedrooms, and 30, 24-foot wide elevator townhomes with rear entry garages. All units will have two car garages, plus two driveway parking spaces. Universal design guidelines will be followed.

Mr. Van Kirk showed pictures of residential units that are similar to the ones being proposed; stating that a mix of architectural styles will provide interest and variety. The villas, which comprise the largest number of units, have historically seen robust demand and sales. Townhomes represent a smaller segment and are located away from existing neighborhoods. Due to topography, they are designed as three story elevator units, with a rear entry garage at the lower level and an entrance at the second level.

Mr. McWilliams showed examples of noise walls built in Howard County that could be used along I-70. He also discussed a combination berm and landscape buffer that exceeds requirements, planned along Route 99. Mr. McWilliams then showed examples of community centers.

Staff Presentation

Mr. George Saliba summarized staff comments and recommendations:

Following DAP review the Hearing Examiner will review and either approve, approve with conditions, or deny the conditional use. Should the Hearing Examiner approve the conditional use, the development will progress through the County's Land Development Review process. The DAP will again review plans at the Site Development Plan (SDP) phase.

Staff comments about the Bethany Glen project were provided both to the DAP and the applicant.

DAP recommendations and motions will be provided to the DPZ Director for consideration. Endorsed recommendations will be forwarded to the Planning Board and Zoning Board.

A summary of tonight's meeting will be on the DAP website within 10 business days and anyone who signed in and left a legible email address will receive a copy.

DAP Questions and Comments

The DAP stated that it is important to have an appropriate buffer between the proposed development and existing neighborhoods and homes.

The DAP recommended that as many mature trees as possible be saved.

The DAP was critical of the site layout along Route 99, which orients building sides onto Route 99. They questioned this stacked and dense configuration, which will be visible from Route 99 and did not believe it to be compatible with an area that has a more rural character.

The DAP asked the applicant to consider a different mix and grouping of housing types. They recommended more single-family detached homes, particularly along the perimeter of the southern parcel and Route 99. This would help provide a more compatible transition to existing neighborhoods.

The DAP stated that the two parcels along Route 99, comprising the northern portion of the site, appear isolated. A green space or other amenity located there would help create a better sense of place.

The DAP did not think the architecture had been sufficiently developed to allow a thorough review. As the design of the development evolves, the applicant in partnership with its builders should seek to create an identity and a better sense of place.

The DAP was concerned about the scale of the townhomes.

The DAP asked the applicant reconsider the location of the pool and community center.

The DAP asked the applicant to consider additional pedestrian paths that would connect to the surrounding community, including access points at Nollwick Road and other suitable locations.

The DAP asked the applicant to consider a pedestrian path that would interconnect the two development parcels along Route 99.

The DAP recommended that the landscape buffer along Bethany Lane should also consider sight distances for Postwick Road.

The DAP asked the applicant to explore site access at Michael's Way.

The DAP was concerned about limited space to adequately manage the quantity of stormwater runoff.

DAP Motions for Recommendations

DAP Vice Chair Don Taylor made the following motion:

1. That the applicant reconsider the site plan for the northern parcels along Route 99 to address building orientation, site design, and development character. Seconded by DAP member Julie Wilson.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

DAP member Julie Wilson made the following motion:

2. That the applicant maximize the preservation of existing trees and vegetation along buffers with existing neighborhoods, particularly for the parcel south of I-70. Seconded by DAP Vice Chair Don Taylor.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

DAP member Fred Marino made the following motion:

3. That the applicant assess the entrance to the development off Bethany Lane, paying particular attention to the proximity of the club house and pool to the road and the location, layout, and orientation of the model units. As part of that assessment, consider an alternate location for the club house and pool that

may be better located for the community to access. Also consider a street connection to Michael's Way. Seconded by DAP Vice Chair Don Taylor.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

DAP member Weiwei Jia made the following motion:

4. That the applicant assess the sufficiency of storm quantity management to mitigate flooding issues and to provide calculations or other documents in support. Seconded by DAP Vice Chair Don Taylor.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

DAP member Fred Marino made the following motion:

5. That the applicant consider the appropriateness of the proposed townhomes, given the concerns raised by the DAP, as a means of achieving residential densities. Seconded by DAP member Julie Wilson.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

4. Call to Adjourn

Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 9:32 pm.