

**MINUTES
PLANNING BOARD
TOWNSHIP OF CHATHAM
JULY 1, 2019**

Mr. Don Travisano called the regular meeting of the Planning Board to order at 7:33 P.M.

Adequate notice of the meetings of the Planning Board of the Township of Chatham was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice in the form of a Resolution setting forth the schedule of meetings for the year 2019, and January, 2020 was published in the *Chatham Courier* and the *Morris County Daily Record*, a copy filed with the Municipal Clerk and a copy placed on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building.

Answering present to the roll call were Mr. Travisano, Mr. Franko, Mrs. Swartz, Ms. Hagner, Mr. Hoffmann, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Nelson and Mr. Coviello.

Also present were Board Engineer John Ruschke, Township Planner Frank Banisch and Attorney Jolanta Maziarz covering for Board Attorney Steve Warner.

Mrs. Ozdemir, Mr. Sheth and Mr. Tarasca were absent.

Mr. Franko asked why the members were absent. Mr. Travisano said that Mrs. Ozdemir and Mr. Sheth are both out of town, and Mr. Tarasca is coaching baseball.

Mr. Travisano moved to excuse Mrs. Ozdemir, Mr. Sheth and Mr. Tarasca's absence from the meeting. Mr. Franko seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Deferral of Minutes

Mr. LaConte said that additional revisions to the June 3rd minutes were received late in the day, and approval of the minutes will be placed on the July 15th agenda. The minutes of the June 17th meeting have been completed, and will be distributed for review and approval at the July 15th meeting.

Hearings

Mr. Travisano provided a recap of where the pending applications stand in the process. Mr. Kasuba said that there will not be any testimony about the Arbor Green application at this meeting, and asked that the application be carried until the July 15th meeting without any further notice.

Ms. Hagner asked if the applicant has looked into submitting an application to the DEP to allow for a sewer connection in the sewer main. She also noted that comments were sent by the fire departments regarding the Arbor Green application. Mr. Hoffmann said that the comments from the fire departments will be distributed to the applicant and the Board members once they have been put on letterhead. Ms. Hagner noted that the Green Village Fire Department and the

Chatham Township Fire Department worked together on the review. Mr. Kasuba noted that he has not yet seen the comments from the fire departments. Mr. Travisano asked for an update on the Police Chief's review. Mr. Hoffmann said that Chief Miller will be drafting a response. He also said that there have been several clogs in the sewer line at the Police Department. Mr. Kasuba said that the applicant's engineer will address the sanitary sewer connection at the next meeting. Mr. Travisano asked that comments from police and fire also be addressed, as well as any comments from this meeting.

Mr. Travisano said that some Board members have requested a site visit at both the Arbor Green location and the Dixiedale location. Mrs. Swartz noted that the Board has dates for which the OPMA notice has already been published.

Mr. Hoffmann noted that the Police Chief would have had the comment memorandum ready for this meeting, but the Chief is also a Deputy OEM Coordinator and was busy responding to the weekend's storms.

Mrs. Swartz moved to carry the Arbor Green application to the July 15th meeting. Mr. Franko seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

PB 19-66-1 (February 7, 2019) STERLING/SUN AT CHATHAM, LLC, (Dixiedale) 351 Hillside Avenue, BLOCK: 66, LOT: 1.

Mr. Kasuba said that there are still some stormwater issues to be worked out by the applicant's engineer, and those issues will be discussed at the July 15th meeting. Mr. Travisano asked if testimony will be presented regarding construction truck traffic routes. Mr. Kasuba said that the traffic engineer will address that matter.

Michelle Strassheim, an architect representing the applicant, was sworn in to give testimony. Mrs. Strassheim provided her qualifications, and was accepted as an expert witness in the field of architecture.

Mrs. Strassheim said that the application is for 50 townhouse units arranged into 22 two-story duplex and triplex units. 37 of the units will have walk-out basements, with the remainder having below-grade basements. Mrs. Strassheim noted that the basements do not meet the Township's definition of a storey for this zone. She also addressed the building heights of the units, and said that the units will consistently be 32 feet high measured from the first floor elevation to the ridge. Mrs. Strassheim said that unit specific height information is available from a report prepared by the applicant's engineer. She also addressed how height is measured in the zone.

Exhibit A-5 was submitted into the record, which is a rendering of the proposed exterior. Mrs. Strassheim said that the original architectural aesthetic submitted was a more traditional masonry veneer, and an alternative modern design aesthetic is now proposed. She specified that the change in proposed exterior style will not change the floor plans and interior dimensions. Mrs. Strassheim said that end units will have side-entry to allow additional privacy.

Mr. Travisano asked if there will be sump pumps in the units that have below-grade garages. Mrs. Strassheim confirmed that they will. Mr. Travisano asked what kind of stone will be used for the exterior siding. Mrs. Strassheim said it will be a manufactured stone. Mr. Travisano asked Mr. Kasuba if the applicant will call off the material or equal in the resolution. Mr. Kasuba said that the applicant consents to inclusion of the materials or equal in the resolution of approval, should the application be approved.

Mrs. Swartz asked how many buildings are duplex and how many are triplex. Mrs. Strassheim said that six will be triplex with the remainder as duplex. She also said that all the units will have three bedrooms.

Mr. Coviello asked about the post-grade measurement. Mrs. Strassheim said that there is no more than a 10-foot grade drop. Mr. Coviello said that could result in an approximately 45-foot high rear wall. Mrs. Swartz said that one of the stipulations was mitigating landscaping. Mrs. Strassheim said that further mitigation could be from glass exterior of the rear-exit basements rather than a full masonry wall.

Ms. Hagner asked if architectural styles will be mixed. Mrs. Strassheim said that they would stick with one style, because a mix of styles would be overwhelming. Mrs. Swartz asked how it will be decided which style will be used. Mrs. Strassheim said that the applicant's request is to use the farm-style for all units.

Mrs. Swartz asked if the building layout will be such that someone leaving their unit will be looking up at the rear of someone else's unit. Mrs. Strassheim said that rear decks are proposed. She also said that based on how the internal development road will run, the units will face in. She showed on the site plan the direction in which the different units will be positioned.

Mrs. Swartz asked if the units on Benjamin Way near the mansion will be at the same setback as the mansion. Mrs. Strassheim said they would be.

Mr. Banisch asked about the quality of the proposed siding materials. Mrs. Strassheim said that the two styles are of equal quality. Mr. Banisch also asked about recording the historic buildings for posterity.

Exhibit A-6 was entered into the record, which was a view of the architectural styles from above.

Exhibit A-7 was entered into the record, which is a rendering of the existing mansion. Mrs. Strassheim noted a row of trees that allow a better view of the mansion from Hillside Avenue.

Exhibit A-8 was presented, which is a closer view of the mansion. Mrs. Strassheim noted that the townhouses are visible in the background.

Mr. Kelly asked if the clubhouse would just be on the first floor, with the residential units all on the second floor. Mrs. Strassheim said that there would be two dwelling units on the second floor, and one dwelling on the first floor. She also provided the proposed square footage of the

units. The first floor unit will have two bedrooms, and the second floor units will have three bedrooms.

Exhibit A-9 was entered into the record, which is the proposed floor plans for the mansion. Mrs. Strassheim said this plan is still a concept plan because the mansion is still occupied, and extensive surveying and engineering still needs to be conducted. Mrs. Strassheim also noted that a lot will need to be done to bring the mansion up to code.

Ms. Hagner asked about relocating the pool. Mrs. Strassheim said she does not believe the pool will remain.

Mrs. Strassheim also said that the clubhouse will be a common area, and described the type of amenities usually found in clubhouses.

Mr. Travisano asked if any consideration had been given to using the mansion's basement to develop additional dwelling units. Mrs. Strassheim said she was unaware of any such consideration.

Mrs. Strassheim addressed a three-bay garage to serve the residents of the proposed units for the mansion. Mrs. Swartz asked if there will be apron parking. Mrs. Strassheim did not know if there will be apron parking, but said the bays will be two-car garages.

Mrs. Swartz asked if there will be a community mail room. Mrs. Strassheim said it will be in the clubhouse.

Mr. Travisano asked if there will be an on-site property manager with office hours. Mr. Kasuba said that the homeowner's association will have responsibility for managing the common elements. Mr. Travisano asked if the separate garage will match the aesthetics of the rest of the dwelling units. Mrs. Strassheim said that it would be the same aesthetics and materials as previously presented.

Mr. Travisano opened the floor for the public to ask questions.

1. Bailey Brower, 16 Driftway, said that when the mansion was built, the concept was to mimic the style used at Mt. Vernon. He also addressed how the proposed development will appear from River Road. Mr. Brower further said that Mr. Averett had regretted the appearance of the Chatham Glen development. Mrs. Strassheim said that the side entrances create two fronts to the buildings, and she addressed the architectural aesthetic that creates. Mr. Brower noted that the sale of the Red Brick Schoolhouse and the open space tract were part of the Averett concept of having the property remain a credit to the Township. He also suggested retaining the Colonial aesthetic.
2. Richard Matlaga, 36 Dale Drive, spoke about the tiered landscape, and said that it will detract from the appearance of the mansion. Mr. Travisano suggested the applicant consider submitting a rendering of the rear elevation of the mansion. Mr. Matlaga asked

if the dwelling units will be mirror images of another. Mrs. Strassheim said they will not be.

3. Susan Ligertwood, 26-D Heritage Drive, about the elevations. Mrs. Strassheim addressed the elevations. Mrs. Ligertwood addressed how the mansion will appear from River Road. She also asked which units will have decks and which will have patios. Mrs. Strassheim said that the units with walk-out basements will have patios, and she was able to identify on the plans the units that will have decks and/or patios. Mrs. Ligertwood also asked about the proposed metal roof. Mrs. Strassheim said that on the front elevation there is a proposed accent-metal roof. On the side elevation, there is a proposed front-covered porch with a metal roof.
4. Stacey Ewald, 54 Nicholson Drive, asked about the basement in the mansion, and if it will be used for the dwelling units. Mrs. Strassheim said it will likely be used for storage.
5. Mrs. Ligertwood asked about the exits from the mansion and the safety implications thereof. Mr. Kasuba said that the traffic engineer will address that question.
6. Mr. Brower asked if the rear elevation planning can be presented by the applicant. Mr. Travisano said that the architect has been asked to provide that information, and he hopes they will have it available at the next meeting. Mr. Brower commented that the openness of the plan is a positive feature.
7. Mr. Matlaga asked what type of metal will be used for the roof. Mrs. Strassheim said it will be aluminum, but it comes in a variety of colors. Mr. Matlaga asked if the public has access to information of the developer. Mr. Travisano said that the application is considered a public record. Mr. LaConte said that the application is available for review during business hours.
8. Mrs. Ewald asked if the application could be posted on the Township website. Mr. LaConte said that the Township does not have the ability to scan engineering drawings. Mr. Travisano said that the applicant is also not required to submit paperwork in PDF.
9. Jennifer McNally, 19 Ferndale Road, asked about the location of the parking for the clubhouse. Mrs. Strassheim said that it is along the north side of the mansion, and it is not covered. She also pointed out where the garages for the dwelling units in the mansion are located. Mrs. McNally also asked about the height of the units with rear exit basements, and if variances are needed for the building height. Mrs. Strassheim said that variances are not needed due to the method used for calculating height in the zone. She explained that height is measured from the grade at the front of the building, and that the rear can be no more than 10 feet higher.
10. Mr. Matlaga asked if the slope will be measured after the imported fill has been brought in, which Mrs. Strassheim confirmed. Mr. Matlaga asked if the homeowner's association will be a legal entity, and if that entity would fall under the Planning Board's jurisdiction.

Mr. Travisano said that it is his understanding that it will be a legal entity, and would not fall under the Board's jurisdiction.

Ms. Hagner noted that height is measured differently in the subject zone, as per an ordinance adopted by the Township Committee. She asked why this method was chosen, and if alternatives were considered. Mrs. Strassheim said that the topography of the site is such that alternatives were not available. She said that the proposal is to have the grading such that the basement walls are minimally exposed so as to conform to the zoning ordinance.

Mr. Corey Chase, the traffic engineer for the applicant, was sworn in to give testimony. Mr. Chase gave his qualifications and was accepted as an expert witness.

Mr. Chase discussed the traffic impact study that was conducted for this application, and the study was dated February 5, 2019. He said that site access and circulation were evaluated, as well as the overall traffic impact on the adjacent roadways. Peak hour traffic counts were taken at the intersections of Hillside Avenue with both River Road and Watchung Avenue. Pre- and post-development conditions were evaluated as part of the study. Peak hours were defined as 7:30 AM to 8:30 AM and 4:45 PM to 5:45 PM. Data published by the Institute of Transit Engineers was also consulted. Traffic counts were also conducted at Rose Valle so as to have a comparison with an actual local development. Mr. Chase said that there was a correlation between the national data and the local data. He also said that the national standard for a significant impact on traffic is an additional 100 trips during peak hours. The projected impact of the proposed development is 26 trips during the weekday morning peak hours and 34 trips during the weekday evening peak hours. A pre- and post-development analysis of intersections of Hillside Ave with River Road and Watchung Ave was performed, and there is not any projected degradation of level of service. Mr. Chase commented on access to the development, noting that there will be one main access point with two gated emergency access points. The internal circulation roadway was evaluated, and a 24-foot wide cartway is proposed which exceeds the RSIS standard of a 21-foot wide cartway. Mr. Chase also commented on the availability of guest parking. He said that half a space per unit is required by RSIS, and the proposed 43 spaces exceed the 27 required spaces.

Mrs. Swartz noted that Rose Halle has two access points, and asked if both were reviewed during the traffic study. Mr. Chase said that traffic counts were taken at both driveways. Mrs. Swartz noted that Rose Valle offers options for ingress/egress, while the proposal for Dixiedale only offers one way in and out. Mrs. Swartz also noted the Mt. Vernon Ave leads into Summit, which offers a larger retail center than Chatham Borough or New Providence, and asked why it was not taken into account during the traffic study. Mr. Chase said that off-site intersections would not be impacted by so few trips coming from the development. Mr. Travisano added for clarity that there would not be any impact of the level of service at those intersections.

Mr. Coviello asked how many cars per unit are anticipated. Mr. Chase said that the traffic study is based on the number of units rather than the number of automobiles per unit. Mr. Coviello addressed the potential for there to be as many drivers living in the development as there are bedrooms.

Mr. Banisch asked about a reference to there being no level of change in service. Mr. Chase said that it refers to there being no seconds of delay. He also addressed the gaps in traffic that will be created by the traffic light at Southern Boulevard.

Mrs. Swartz asked if there has been any influx of children at Rose Valle since the development was built, and if there are any anticipated school trips from the proposed Dixiedale development.

Ms. Hagner asked if any improvements are needed for Hillside Avenue. Mr. Chase said that there are not.

Mr. Kelly asked about having access to the walking trail across from Eden Place, and if a crosswalk would be installed. Mr. Chase said that he would need to defer to Mr. Kasuba if there is any such intention, and the need for crosswalks would need to be evaluated. Mr. Kelly asked if any sidewalks are planned to be installed along Hillside Ave or River Road. Mr. Chase said that there are no plans to construct a sidewalk, and those streets are not suitable places for sidewalks. The Board discussed where sidewalks in this area might lead.

Mr. Kelly noted that there are existing trails on the open space tract across the street from the proposed development, and he asked if the endpoints of the proposed walking trail could be placed at a point where they would link with the existing trails. Mr. Chase said that the idea would be taken under advisement.

Mr. Travisano opened the floor for the public to ask questions.

1. Stacey Ewald, 54 Nicholson Drive, asked what time of day the traffic counts were taken. Mr. Chase reiterated that the peak times were from 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM and 4:45 PM to 5:45 PM. Mrs. Ewald also asked about the width of Hillside Ave, and Mr. Chase said that it is 21 feet wide. Mrs. Ewald also asked if there will be a cut-through for kids to walk to the Red Brick Schoolhouse, noting that River Road is not a safe place for children to walk.
2. Bailey Brower, 16 Driftway, said that a suggestion had been made by former Mayor Kevin Sullivan that Hillside Avenue be converted into a dead end street with a cul-de-sac, which would address some of the traffic issues. Mr. Travisano said that Township Committee would need to address that idea, and Mr. Hoffmann said that the fire departments would want to comment on that idea. Mrs. Swartz noted that closing off Hillside Ave would add to the enclave-like feel of the proposed development. She also said that Borough residents on Hillside Ave were concerned about through-traffic from the proposed development. Mr. Travisano asked Mr. Chase what impact this idea would have. Mr. Chase said it would make the results in the traffic study very conservative, as traffic on Hillside would be greatly reduced. Mr. Travisano asked what affect it would have on pedestrian traffic. Mr. Chase said that vehicular traffic would be reduced, but the amount of pedestrian traffic might not be changed. Mr. Travisano asked that the Police Department and fire departments be consulted on this idea. Mr. Kasuba said that this idea is beyond the applicant's control.

3. Susan Ligertwood, 26 Heritage Drive, said there are bus stops at Woods Lane and on Eden Road, and the lack of a crossing guard adds an element of danger. She also commented on the number of car accidents on River Road between Hillside Ave and Mt. Vernon Ave in the past year.
4. Richard Matlaga, 36 Dale Drive, said that the intersection of Hillside Ave and River Road is a failed intersection, and he said that it is difficult to see oncoming traffic when turning form Hillside Ave onto River Road. Mr. Matlaga asked if there is any consideration to curbing Hillside Ave at a 24-foot width. Mr. Chase said that the developer is not planning to widen Hillside Ave. Mr. Coviello noted that the road within the development is proposed to be wider than the feeder road. Mr. Chase said that the proposed road will need enough width for cars to back out of driveways safely.

Mr. Travisano asked how Mr. Kasuba wants to handle discussion on construction traffic. Mr. Chase said that construction traffic is usually handled at a preconstruction meeting. Mr. Travisano said that there should be an exhibit presented to the Planning Board about construction traffic. Mr. Chase said that options can be presented, and the Board can decide on the final option. Mr. Travisano said he wants to see the least impact on Township residents.

5. Mr. Brower asked if the Board would consider having the Township Planner and Township Engineer look into traffic-calming measures for this project. Mr. Travisano said that the Township's professionals would need to comment on proposed traffic control, but he wants the applicant to have the opportunity to comment on traffic plans first. Mrs. Swartz said that Chief Miller should also be consulted.

Mr. Hoffmann asked if comments on the construction traffic will be at the next meeting or in August.

Mr. Kasuba said asked that the hearing be carried to the July 15th meeting without further notice.

Mr. Hoffmann moved to carry the hearing to July 15th. Mr. Nelson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Hoffmann asked who would be coordinating the site visit. Mrs. Maziarz said that Mr. Warner would coordinate the site visit. Mr. Travisano noted that the Board can have site visits at both locations on the same day. Mr. LaConte noted that a site visit on August 3rd was included in the annual OPMA notice.

Mr. Kelly moved to adjourn at 10:04 PM. Mrs. Swartz seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Gregory J. LaConte
Planning Board Recording Secretary