



MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2020 6:00 PM

**PLACE: COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7232 EAST MAIN STREET, REYNOLDSBURG, OH 43068**

A. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT: Cullinan (Remote), Zollars (Remote), Hicks (Remote), Furst (Remote), Benner (Remote)
ABSENT:

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda Stands Approved

4. SWEARING IN OF SPEAKERS

Speakers sworn in by Mr. Zollars

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

C. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Application #2020-5084; 700, 704, & 706 Waggoner Road; Applicant M/I Homes of Central Ohio, LLC; Preliminary Plat - Spring Hill Farm

Mr. Bowsher: Spring Hill Farm - Preliminary Plat #2020-5084 and Major Site Plan #2020-5085

Below is the staff review of the above referenced application.

1. Project Summary

a) The applicant, M/I Homes of Central Ohio, LLC, is requesting Planning Commission approval of a Preliminary Plat and Major Site Plan.

b) M/I Homes is in the process of annexing +/-130.91 acres from Truro Township into the City of Reynoldsburg. This application concerns 118+/- acres of the to-be annexed land. The applicant is proposing to construct 354 single-family homes on individual lots of varying sizes.

2. Zoning Review

a) Upon annexation, the land will be within the Suburban Residential Zoning District.

The proposed use (Dwelling - Detached Single- Family) is a permitted use in this district.

b) The proposed development complies with the SR District, including building height, minimum lot width and depth, and setback requirements.

3. Subdivision Review

a) The Preliminary Plat has been reviewed by the City Engineer and complies with Section 1111 Subdivision Regulations of the zoning ordinance.

b) The proposed subdivision complies with lighting, landscaping, and street standards detailed in Section 1111.

3. Staff Recommendation

a) The Commission shall consider whether the proposed subdivision and Major Site Plan is consistent with the standards contained in the City's zoning ordinance and Comprehensive Master Plan.

b) Staff recommends APPROVAL of the proposed Preliminary Plat and Major Site Plan.

Just to give you a back story the engineer for the project is EMH&T. Our city engineer is also EMH&T. Just to be clear it is from two different sides of EMH&T, their private sector and public sector. One thing that benefits us is that they already have all the data in house to view a lot of the infrastructure concerns. They will have a private entrance off Waggoner Road and they will tie into three existing stub offs of other neighborhoods, two to the south and one to the east. We waved the add on of a full blown traffic impact study as the city in 2022 will look to do major renovations and overhauls to Waggoner Road. We would like them to not do any kind of upgrades to their section and then have us go in and tear it up, it's a waste of money. Knowing that our engineer has already specked out the area to the highest standards we would like, at a later date with administration and the Mayor's office to come to terms with M/I and they will be donating capital in lieu of this improvements. When we go to do those improvements we will have those funds to do the improvements at that time. So, that is where we're currently at. With that being said, staff does recommend approval, we think very highly of M/I and value with work that we have done with them to get to this point. With that I will open it up to Planning Commission for thoughts, concerns and questions.

Mr. Zollars: Are you able to share the proposed improvements?

Mr. Bowsher: Josh, do you have an exhibit to show? I don't personally have it.

Mr. Barkan: Real quick before I dive into the road improvements I just wanted to say thank you for having us, we're very excited to be here. First off I want to commend everybody on their hard work on the zoning code changes. That's not easy work and I think you did an amazing job. I honestly think a lot of places are going to look to Reynoldsburg on a guide as to how initiate change in a smart thought out way. Second of all, on behalf of M/I, we're excited to be back in Reynoldsburg. I was talking to some of our team today and I think it's been about 15 years since we've been able to build in Reynoldsburg. When this opportunity with The Griffin and Spring Hill family became available, we were ecstatic about it and actually bought land from Rod Griffin's father many, many years ago. I say all that because

we're excited to be here and I think we have a tremendous opportunity to deliver a product that is desperately needed in this region. To answer the question on the roadway. I do not have an exhibit to share. I know that both sides of the house at EMH&T are collaborating and working on that. The public side in conjunction with Reynoldsburg had been further along that even us. We had started doing some preliminary studies and we're working on an access study right now to determine where that gets. From M/I's perspective we fully anticipate and expect that our engineers will come up with dollar amount that is fair for us to contribute to the improvements and we will do that. If they actually tell us to make the improvements we will certainly do that as well. To Andrew's point, it's not worth spending money to then get all ripped up. We intend on writing a check that would be for our fair share of improvements.

Mr. Zollars: Commissioners, any questions?

Mr. Hicks: I want to say, what was it 2 or 3 years ago, we started the comprehensive plan process with staff in order to help re-imagine how to help development in Reynoldsburg. We put a lot of time and effort into the new zoning code and it's exciting to see an application that takes advantage of the concepts and ideas that we wanted to implement in future development. Just listening to the neighbors and residents I wanted to bring up a few items. Understanding that this development is going to have smaller lots than some of the other subdivisions, but what I see you taking advantage of in the zoning code is improving the amount of open space. I appreciate that. There is a lot more open space than what we see in surrounding subdivisions. You can tell that there is an appreciation in working with the natural topography of the land and trying to preserve the ravine and some of the wooded and wetland areas. I think this is a project that fits with where single family housing is going now. We're seeing a trend and demand for smaller lots that are a little easier to take care of. People want more open space. I see in this development where a lot of the lots back up to open space where folks will have a nice view out the back of their lot. A few will have lots that back up to each other but you can tell just from that graphic that the houses are going to be of good quality. So, I'm very excited about this project and M/I is obviously a quality developer and builder based in Central Ohio. One of the biggest situations that we have been grappling with on other projects in this area is traffic on Waggoner Road. Probably the number one issue. Anybody that lives up and down Waggoner Road struggles with it. It's a country road in the middle of a city. It has a lot of bottlenecks, corners and challenges with it. I think there's a desire from the city to sort of maintain a country road feel to Waggoner Road when you're driving on it. I don't think any of the folks that live there want to see it bulldozed completely flat and widened to some extreme amount to where it feels like a freeway. But we have to make sure we are paying attention to the details to make sure that it remains safe. I've heard from a few of the commission members and the public regarding where your curb cut location is, so I would like if you could to go into a little more detail about how you chose where it's at and what our other options are.

Mr. Barkan: Thank you Steven, I appreciate the comments. Here we're at 32% open space and active community space. Really what we've seen people all over the community like. Before I dig into the access point. The product we're planning out here has been the number one selling housing product in Central Ohio. Darby Fields in Plain city, Preston Hollow in Columbus, Minerva Park in Westerville, Harrow Crossing in Violet Township, in

Pickerington. We're bringing it online in Liberty and Berkshire Township in Olentangy school districts. Those have been some of the top selling communities everywhere. We would expect nothing less than that from here and we think it is a perfect place for that. On the access point. A couple things; as you would imagine, we looked at the distance from Rodebaugh with the traffic signal there. Then also some of the distances from the existing curb cuts to the south. This got to this location that we thought was a fair distance to Rodebaugh and also allowed our seller to maintain his access point. We have started to explore other alternatives if for whatever reason an access study came back and said that we needed to be 100 feet south. Could we do that? What does that do to the turn lane? We've kind of been waiting to see what the city engineer develops as well to say the ultimate fix for this is a three lane section all through here, or it's a south bound left and a northbound right drop. We're still studying that and all of that is going into consideration. Where we are a little bit tight is, with as big of a project as this is, our frontage on Waggoner. Our seller, the land owner, is maintaining his home that he lives on. There's a private residents or two out front that he wants to keep. The good thing is that this job is setup to have the three other access points through the other communities. So there's a little relief depending on which direction you're going. We've also explored if you can connect to Rodebaugh and there is a double strip there owned by the HOA to the north. I also think it takes away from the community by having your main entrance off of this other point. That one was a tough one to accommodate, but we've been exploring these other options. The problem with Amelia, which is something we've also explored, is that with what our seller is also maintaining, the homes that are there, and the homeowner to the south that we don't have a relationship with..... We will certainly explore. But, this has put us in a position where we felt it was doable. We felt it was far enough away from Rodebaugh that we could get a southbound turn lane in and accommodate any right hand motion we needed. It is also being studied and explored by our engineer as well as the cities engineers.

Mr. Zollars: When would you break ground and how would the 2022 study impact your initial development?

Mr. Barkan: What we would look at now, if we we're able to get approval this evening. We would work through our engineering through the rest of the year and I would plan on breaking ground in the spring of next year of '21. Get the first phase and 50 or so lots paved by 2021. Try to be selling the first homes late '21 or early '22. Close your first homes in the summer of '22 and carry development on from there. I would anticipate the first closing in the first half of 2022.

Mr. Bowsher: That lines up prefect with what we are attempting to do. This year we are going after Ohio Public Works grant dollar for Waggoner Road. What makes this time different that some of the last times we have applied for funds. One, you have this beautiful development. That gives us points when we go for scoring. Two, the county engineer, Cornell Robertson, went on a site walk with our service director, street superintendent, Mayor, myself and we walked it. They saw the condition and understood it. They have pledged dollars to build pathways to encompass that. So that lowers some of the cost. We're actually going to do some unique financing through TIF dollars on this parcel as well. We have so meetings coming up about that to ensure we can expedite our timeline and do more

of the project much sooner. Just like Josh had mentioned it will be 2022. We're repaving Main Street next year and doing our streetscape project downtown and in 2022 we will start the Waggoner Road project. So this lines up really well to when he would start building more homes. Therefore, Waggoner Road project will be completed before all the homes would be built.

Mr. Barkan: Well in advance of all the homes. We'll be closing this many homes for 4-5 years for sure.

Mr. Benner: Josh, your project statement says that lots will generally comply with our zoning standards. Can you enlighten us as to what ways you're not complying with zoning?

Mr. Zollars: Mr. Benner, can you reference what you are looking at so we can follow along?

Mr. Benner: That's in the project statement.

Mr. Cullinan: I think it's the last sheet of the PDF.

Mr. Hodge: I think that document was generated out of my office. This is David Hodge with Underhill & Hodge, sometimes attorney for M/I Homes. Generally is probably a poor word choice. I think we are fully compliant with the SR zoning requirements.

Mr. Benner: There's also mention of a garage deviation.

Mr. Barkan: Yes, that's the one minor design deviation. I certainly understand why that language was included as you don't want to see a completely snout houses where the garage is completely in front of the house. We run into this all over the place. We ask for some leniency .. for instance the house that Andrew has up. I don't think that the intent that, that language was to deter something like that. So it give us a little flexibility, 354 houses, that's a lot of homes. So it will allows us to have more latitude in our diversity standards so when you're driving down the street is doesn't look like the same house over and over. In this community I would expect that we have about 10 different floor plans, maybe 11. There will be ranches and two stories from 1500-3000 square feet. Each plan has three separate elevations; a traditional, farmhouse and a craftsman element elevation. So we try to mix that in as much as we can. I'm very confident in the product. This is the same standards that we in Minerva Park and Darby Fields. It just gives us more latitude that some of them will project out more than what our porch does. We really only have one house that I consider a true snout and that doesn't comply with the language that I've asked for and we will not build that here.

Mr. Benner: Thank you. I wasn't questioning the quality or anything, I was just wondering what the deviation was and why. I'm a licensed real estate agent and I've sold your homes for many years so I have no questions about that. Originally we were told these would be around 300 homes ranging from 290- 400 thousand dollar. Is that still correct?

Mr. Barkan: Yes, that's an accurate statement. You may see a sign with base pricing from the

mid to high 200's, but the all in pricing of 290-400 is pretty good. I'd say 315-350 is the heart of it and you'll have someone that gets in a ranch at 290 and somebody does all the bells and whistles and gets up over 400. I'd say the meat of it is between that 320-350 range.

Mr. Benner: I understand. Base price means about as much as it does with a new car. Till you get to the design and lighting center nothing really matters. Cost wise I've looked at Heron Crossing and Preston Hollow over the past three of four years and you're averaging somewhere around \$333,000 a house. Heron Crossing. The average lot is 73x130. Are you confident in pricing here is Reynoldsburg with the 50-60 ft. wide lots?

Mr. Barkan: Yes I am. Actually, Heron Crossing, David and I just spent a couple of months working on a zoning process for an extension at Heron Crossing. In the new part, Violet Township allowed us to go down to 55 and 60 ft. lots. We're even confident there in the same community going to introduce it. I think Steven actually made a good point when you look at the surrounding communities by this project you see that yes they were bigger lots, but there is no green space. Really we actually believe that we can sell the houses for more on the smaller lots because we can create this great place to live. Have amenities and open space that this does. So I'm very confident. We have had several conversations with our sales team on this site and we're very excited about it. I don't have any issue with the lot sizes.

Mr. Bowsher: We have one question that came in. Irene Thompson says, "Crystal Lake is starting to have significant flooding coming from the tributary that runs through this plan. Is there any coordination with Truro Township to mitigate the water that will be diverted into it from the development of the site? I'm going to take this one. I think she means the city as we handle all the storm water within the city. This went through a very stringent process with our city engineer, EMH&T and myself when we reviewed this plan. Columbus actually has a very stringent code and because we have water and waste water from the City of Columbus, we have to abide by that. When we're doing these calculations and running these lines; storm water, waste water, and water down these snub noses on Waggoner. Actually, this development is going to help with a lot of the flooding concerns. It's a flooding field that get a lot of sheeting. When the homes are built out, the water that would typically sit and drain to the next property will actually be caught by the storm water retention ponds that are on the property as well as the underground storm system that will run it back out to Waggoner, just like the adjacent M/I development to the south. So Irene to answer your question, it's already built in with the plan and you'll see significantly less water issues because of this development.

Mr. Zollars: Any other questions?

Mr. Furst: Josh, if you could talk about some of the green spaces I would appreciate that. You mentioned some walking paths and such.

Mr. Barkan: Yes, that's correct. We tried to preserve as much of the natural feel of the area as we could with the ravine and the trees out there. We really focused, one, on the natural space behind the houses. A lot of that will remain natural and people will be able to enjoy that. We'll also have pads within the community that will be maintained through our HOA. Then

we focused on three central green areas. One in the front section, two in the back. The one in the south-east part will be your main active open space that will have a swing set, a playground, and a top lot. One of the other ones to the north-east will have a shelter house and tables. The one up front will just have a walking path. So I think all will play really nice together, they can walk their kids to the park, swing on the swing set, get out move around, and have a cook out with your neighbor. I think it will have a really good feel.

Mr. Furst: Thank you.

Mr. Zollars: Anything else Mr. Hick's or Mr. Cullinan?

Mr. Hicks: My final comment would be that I'm super excited about the project because there are so many great things you have done on the design of this community. Where you're tying into Waggoner is a huge issue and I've already heard from residents in the area. I'm just trying to figure out procedurally how we can go through this process of this development getting built, but also get this access figured out. It is going to be a public road with this entrance on Waggoner Road.

Mr. Bowsher: One thing that we are going to have to put a condition on is the annexation. It got approved by the county, we have said that we have the infrastructure to support it. It's got to come back to Council and sit through three readings. So, one condition that needs to go on this is that is this approved with the condition that the annexation is fully approved and ordained by City Council. I don't think that's going to be an issue, but I want to make sure that condition gets put in there for legal purposes. Two, another one we could do and I know both attorneys are on. As we continue down this process with the public side that we ensure that we leave it up to the subject matter experts of those traffic engineers when it's completed that we can comply, as a condition, that we can comply with the best route for that entrance and where that location will be.

Mr. Barkan: From M/I's standpoint we would certainly be ok with some type of condition on that. We have to get engineering and we figured that this would certainly be a part of it. Whatever the engineers for the city and for us deem is the right thing, we're committed to doing it. The safety and traffic concerns that are out here are as important to us as they are to the current residents. It doesn't do us any good to put 350 new families out here and have everybody mad at us because they can't get out and do anything. So we are committed to paying our fair share and cooperating with the city.

Mr. Zollars: Anyone care to make a motion?

Mr. Benner: I have one more question. As far as the garage deviation from our zoning, do we need to put a condition on that? Are we approving that zoning change if we approve this site plan?

Mr. Bowsher: It's an administrative change left up to our Planning and Zoning Administrator's discretion. I do want to make a note that Emily reminded me that we need to make two motions and two separate votes. One for the plat and a second one for the major

site plan.

Mr. Hicks: So as we review the preliminary plat here tonight and move towards a final plat. That final plat doesn't come back to Planning Commission, does it? That eventually has to meet all the design and engineering requirements and then signed off by the Mayor, City Engineer.

Mr. Bowsher: Correct it would get signed off by the City Engineer. Basically what you're doing is approving the look and the feel of the plat's and how it's been subdivided. The specifics of the lots we would get into during the PGU (Plot Grade Utility) process. That gets reviewed by the City Engineer and there is latitude if something were to come up and they had to move something. You are voting on the look and how it conforms on paper knowing there could be minor deviations simply because not everything is perfect on paper.

Mr. Hicks: So the conditions that we discussed. Would those go on the major site plan or on the preliminary plat plan?

Mr. Bowsher: Just to play it safe, I would do it for both of them. Even though they are on the same application and it's the same development, both of them would need the condition of the full annexation.

Mr. Furst: I would like to make a motion that we accept the plat as presented to us with the following conditions. The land on which the plat is placed is annexed into the city and that is fully approved by City Council. The second condition is that the entrance off Waggoner Road fully complies with the engineering recommendations from our City Engineer.

Mr. Benner: I'll second.

Mr. Zollars: Call the roll please.

Ms. Wheeler: Mr. Benner, Yes. Mr. Cullinan, Yes. Mr. Furst, Yes. Mr. Hicks, Yes. Mr. Zollars, Yes.

Mr. Zollars: That takes care of the plat. Do we have any questions or comments about the major site plan?

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Alex Furst, Vice Chairman
SECONDER:	Keith Benner, Commissioner
AYES:	Cullinan, Zollars, Hicks, Furst, Benner

2. Application #2020-5085; 700, 704, & 706 Waggoner Road; Applicant M/I Homes of Central Ohio, LLC; Major Site Plan - Spring Hill Farm

Mr. Zollars: That takes care of the plat. Do we have any questions or comments about the major site plan?

Mr. Hicks: Just one more comment about the entrance. It would be nice if at some point, even if it's the major site plan, to be able to see what the conclusion is of the traffic engineer as far as where that entrance is located on Waggoner Road. Just for the record my preference would be for it to be either it ties into Rodebaugh or squares up to Amelia. I think those are the two best options for the entrance. I understand I'm not an engineer and certainly not a traffic engineer, but understanding that it does take space to have left hand turn lanes. Where it's located now, it just doesn't appear that there's going to be enough space. I just hope there will be enough follow up from staff that if it's approved with these conditions here that it gets done that way.

Mr. Bowsher: That's a great point. What we'll do is I'll take your recommendation to EMH&T to make sure that is gets heard. Then, when that recommendation does come back from them, I will make sure that Emily puts it on as other business when we come to the conclusion of this. As David asked earlier, one, we will have a ... (Inaudible)... action tonight for the imminent approval. Once the annexation has been approved by City Council there will be a zoning approval letter that I'll also get sent out. AT that point we will have full understand of what that entrance is going to look like. We'll make sure that we back brief Planning Commission so their well aware of what's going on.

Mr. Zollars: If someone can make that motion followed by a second, that would be great.

Mr. Furst: I would like to move that we approve the major site plan with the following conditions. The site is annexed fully into the city with the approval of City Council. The second condition is that the entrance fully complies with the engineering recommendations from our City Engineer.

Mr. Cullinan: I'll second.

Ms. Wheeler: Mr. Benner, Yes. Mr. Cullinan, Yes. Mr. Furst, Yes. Mr. Hicks, Yes. Mr. Zollars, Yes.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Alex Furst, Vice Chairman
SECONDER:	Tyler Cullinan, Commissioner
AYES:	Cullinan, Zollars, Hicks, Furst, Benner

E. OTHER BUSINESS

F. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman

Planning and Zoning Administrator