

**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 19, 2019 WORK SESSION**

A work session meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, December 19, 2019, at 4:00 p.m. at the Ada Township Offices, 7330 Thornapple River Dr., Ada, MI.

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Present: Burton, Easter, Carter, Heglund, Jacobs, Leisman

Absent: Butterfield

Staff Present: Ferro, Bajdek

Public Present: 5 Members

II. Informal Pre-Application Conference, 96 Multifamily Residential Units On 9.64 Acre Site, 7590 East Fulton St., Parcel No. 41-15-34-127-003, Orion Real Estate Solutions

Mr. Tom Tooley of Ghafari Architecture apologized for Mike Lubbers' absence and presented on his behalf. Mr. Tooley stated his team took the feedback from previous meetings and incorporated them into the new plans.

Mr. Tooley stated a manager's office building has been added in front near the detached garages. They have also eliminated 2 units on one end of each of the 4-story buildings to give them a stepped architecture. This change results in a decrease in the total number of units from 96 to 92. Mr. Tooley stated additional windows and detailing have also been added to the elevator areas in the 3-story buildings. Mr. Tooley reviewed the renderings with the Commissioners.

Mike Maier of Wheeler Development Group (formerly Orion Real Estate Solutions) stated he is hoping that input from today's meeting can help finalize thoughts and get them ready for a formal application submittal in January.

Planning Director, Ferro, asked if the ground floor units in the 3-story buildings have doorways out to the courtyard. Mr. Tooley stated yes.

Mr. Maier stated they are offering a pathway along the eastside of the apartments to the Township to connect to the trail system.

Ferro asked if they would be willing to do a property line adjustment so the Township can have ownership of the entire pond which is currently split between them and the Township. Mr. Maier stated that would be possible.

Ferro inquired if building setbacks from Fulton Street were changed from the previous submittal. Mr. Tooley stated they increased the setbacks a little bit since the last iteration.

Jacobs noted that the Ada Township Fire Department does not have the capacity to reach a 4-story building. She would like to see liability insurance and recommended speaking to the Township attorney. Mr. Tooley stated there will be sprinkler systems installed.

Burton stated she does like the brick façade. Carter stated he thinks it fits well with the architecture of downtown Ada.

Carter stated he would like to see something different on the rear of the garages so people aren't looking at a solid wall of brick. Mr. Tooley stated they intend to carry some detailing from the front of the garages to the back. Mr. Maier stated landscaping will also be a part of the rear of the garages.

Burton inquired about garage spaces. Mr. Tooley stated there will be 42 spaces under the buildings, 40 detached garages and 81 open spaces. There will not be designated guest parking.

Leisman stated he feels the architecture is much improved. He likes the brick and how it matches the rest of the Village. He likes the step architecture of the 4-story buildings and wonders if they could do the same with the 3-story buildings.

Leisman stated his only hesitation is that this does not fit with the Envision Ada Master Plan.

Easter stated Ada Township does not have any residential rental units like this in the Village. This is a classy way of providing rental space and it encourages some diversity in the Village.

Jacobs stated that she really likes the architecture of the buildings but she agrees with Leisman; this plan deviates from the Envision Ada Master Plan.

Ferro stated the Envision Ada plan had a graphic concept layout for this property but it was not intended to be prescriptive. If this project were proposed under the PVM district regulations, the PVM regulations for this property allows all types of housing from apartment buildings to single-family homes.

John Wheeler, Wheeler Development Group, stated that since the last work session meeting, he consulted with Pete Lazdins, Urban Land Planner from Progressive AE. Mr. Lazdins was the author and guiding architect on the Envision Ada Master Plan. Mr. Wheeler stated that Mr. Lazdins felt this project fit in beautifully with the Envision Ada Master Plan.

Leisman suggested the Planning Department retain an external source of expertise to take an independent look at these drawings and get their opinion if this fits with the Envision Ada Master Plan.

Carter suggested adding the barn door motif to the back of the parking garages so they look similar to the Ada Fresh Market building.

Easter stated the rendering looking east makes the 3-story buildings look like institutional like dorms.

Leisman asked Ferro how close would this be if done under the form-based code with some departures. Ferro stated he will need to research that option.

Carter asked if they still think they will be charging rent in the \$1,200 - \$1,600 range. Mr. Maier stated yes.

Burton inquired about the insulation, concerned that neighbors will be hearing each other. Mr. Tooley stated they will be exceeding the required codes. Wheeler stated their design includes specific features to address sound barriers between units.

Leisman stated the narrative that comes with the application will be a part of the Public Hearing. It would be helpful if it explained how this project is consistent with the development in Ada.

III. Public Comment

Noelle DiVozzo, 7115 Bronson St., stated she thinks this design is better than what was submitted previously. She agrees with Easter's comment about the east rendering looking like dorm rooms. Ms. DiVozzo stated she thinks there will be a lot of public pushback about high-density apartments here. There is already traffic issues and she doesn't think Ada needs any higher density than what was already planned for in the Envision Ada Master Plan. Apartments are never a neighborhood. They tend to be

much more transient communities. Ms. DiVozzo stated Ada could still make that higher density with smaller houses. It would be wonderful to get something that is senior citizen-friendly.

IX. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Smith, Ada Township Clerk

rs: aw