



MEETING MINUTES

Special Planning Commission

April 19, 2021 – Virtual Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 1:47 p.m.

Chair Oyster asked for a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was taken, and the following members were present: Mr. David Frea, Chair Julie Oyster, and Mr. Larry Titus. Other staff members present: Kyle Rauch, Development Director; Kim Shields, Community Development Manager; Dash Logan, Development Planner; Hannah White, Development Assistant; Jennifer Readler, Frost Brown Todd; Cindi Fitzpatrick, Service Director; Kevin Koesters, Service Deputy Director; Roby Schottke, City Council Member; Tami Kelly, City Council Clerk; and Nick Mill, EMH&T.

Item for Discussion:

ITEM #1 – Huggett/Pulte PUD-R – Preliminary Development Plan

PID #202101270008

Mr. Logan presented the Development Department's findings. He stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss Pulte's Preliminary Development Plan for a new residential subdivision on a 145-acre site, north of London-Groveport Road and east of Jackson Pike.

Mr. Logan explained that a subdivision was previously proposed and approved for the site in 2004, illustrating 376 units, however, the plan was not built and has since expired. He stated that the proposed Pulte project includes 399 units and the Preliminary Development Plan is the first step in an approval process, as a Rezoning and Final Development Plan would still be required.

Mr. Logan informed Planning Commission that the plan was initially submitted in January 2021, with 307 single-family units and 92 Condominiums. He stated that Administrative review comments were issued to Pulte in March 2021, and that major concerns focused on the importance of safe access and infrastructure improvements to State Route 665 and 104, and that the proposed development would be compatible with existing area developments (Scioto Meadows and Farmstead), including lot sizes and open-space configuration that would provide safe trail connection to Scioto Grove Metro Park through the subdivision site.

Mr. Logan explained that Pulte responded to the Review Letter with four potential site options, with no specific details on the number of lots and open space configuration, but assured Staff that those details would be addressed in the Special Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Matthew Callahan, Pulte Homes of Ohio LLC, and Mr. Tom Hart, Issac Wiles Law Firm, were present to speak to the item.

Mr. Callahan presented a series of slides prepared by Pulte Homes to illustrate the project to Planning Commission.

Mr. Callahan started by introducing strategic insights of Central Ohio's housing structure, illustrating the need for housing development as the region grows. He explained that the Huggett/Pulte development would help fill that void.

Mr. Callahan explained that developers have considered the comprehensive plan for the City (GroveCity2050) in aligning subdivision features with the goals of the City; pedestrian access, mix of housing style and size, preservation of natural features (the stream corridor) and green space, and increased property values. He emphasized that the plan offers 43 acres of open space, which is about the 30% of the site and more than the recommended ratio of open space per household.

Mr. Callahan went on to point out some comparisons between the proposed Pulte development and the development that was previously approved in 2004. He stated that the neighborhoods were similar in that there is a mix of single-family and condominium homes. He pointed out that the Pulte plans have included more than the previously approved plan's 28 acres of open space and that the Pulte condominiums are detached, whereas the previously approved plan included attached condominium homes.

Mr. Callahan then began to draw comparisons between the proposed Pulte development and nearby developments with similar qualities. He pointed out that the lot width of 70 feet and dwelling units per acre ratio of 2.74 are both in line with comparable developments in the area and City zoning requirements.

Mr. Callahan went on to illustrate dwelling elevations in the next slide, explaining that more samples and details would come through the process, but that Pulte wanted to give an idea of character for the site. He stated that the home designs go through a rigorous process to meet the modern family's needs of flexible workspaces, storage solutions, and features to meet today's style of living. He explained that the two-story single-family homes would start at 1,800 square feet and the condominiums (patio homes) would start at 1,600 square feet. He then touched on the value of the homes, explaining that the market will ultimately set the value of the homes, but that the developers were expecting both home styles to begin around \$330,000.

Mr. Callahan moved on to present plan options, the first of which was initially submitted to Staff in January. He pointed out that the Southwest portion of the site would contain the patio homes, naturally dissected from the rest of the site by the stream. He drew attention to the North and Northeast sections of the site that would contain the single-family homes. With a slide illustrating more landscape details, he explained that there was a focus on open space and green areas throughout the development, all within a short walking distance from each dwelling.

In the following slide, Mr. Callahan presented the first of two concepts to be considered, with a focus on a larger Northeast park/open space. He explained that this space could be a mix of active and passive recreational opportunities. He stated that the tradeoff was that the other open spaces become a little smaller in size.

Mr. Callahan presented the second of the two concepts and explained that environmental sensitivity in relation to the stream crossing the site was a driving focus in plan design. He stated that trail connectivity through the stream corridor was added in the second concept to integrate pedestrian interaction with the natural feature. He then pointed out a more "linear" park in the Southeast portion of the site that would bring the open space configuration of the plan outward and more interactive with the community as a whole. He added that as the plan is developed different amenities would be included in that area; benches, covered seating, gazebos, etc. He noted that the tradeoff for this open space would be less open space dispersed throughout the site and longer runs of streets and longer blocks.

Mr. Callahan finished his presentation by explaining that Pulte is engaged with Staff and wants to consider alternatives that may work, starting the dialogue with Planning Commission by inviting feedback and discussion from the group.

Chair Oyster thanked Mr. Callahan for his explanation of the proposed development and opened discussion from Planning Commission.

Mr. Frea expressed that he felt the proposed plan looked similar to other approved housing developments in the City that have been developed in the last couple of decades. He characterized the homes as starter/entry-level-homes and felt the City needed more second-homes and forever-homes instead. He felt the empty-nester condominiums were an interesting concept but was unsure of their cohesiveness within this development. He then pointed out that the number of proposed dwellings was now almost 400.

Mr. Frea then asked what happened to the proposed school site in the initial approved plan in 2004.

Mrs. Shields answered by explaining that the 10 acres identified for a school have essentially been shifted to the Farmstead development, located across State Route 104. She stated that 11 acres have been set aside by Fisher homes within the community for an elementary school.

Mr. Frea then asked if the City had identified anything further being needed at the proposed site location, specifically a fire station or more Metro Park land.

Mrs. Shields stated that the main concern was to gain safe connectivity from the site to the Scioto Grove Metro Park, and that the best way to achieve that was through spaces the residents could safely traverse and utilize. She said that the proposed plan did not necessarily need to include the community facilities Mr. Frea mentioned.

Mr. Frea observed that Subarea B would be an ideal place for a Metro Park, adding that he was unsure of how the City facilitates the conversation to obtain that. He added that he felt the City could use more park space. He then wanted to ensure connectivity to Scioto Grove Metro Park.

Mr. Frea went on to address the bend of 665 at the Southeast corner of the proposed site. He added that he did not know if there was anything the City could do but wondered if the developers were setting aside a corner of the site for future rerouting of the road to make it safer.

Mrs. Shields explained that the original plan in 2004 did have a reserved space that could be utilized for realignment of the SR 665 bend. She stated that a comment in relation to the roadway evaluation was included in the Review Letter sent to Pulte.

Mr. Frea questioned whether there would be anything else developed in the area to cause the roadway to become a "T" or crossroads, as he felt this was the City's last shot at fixing the problem.

Mrs. Shields stated that she had spoken to ODOT (Ohio Department of Transportation) about the bend and that they have essentially deemed it not a safety issue because vehicles would just come off the road and veer back on again, as there is no ditch. She said that the bend is a point of future discussion in terms of creating a safer intersection but also keeping in mind the community's desire to not facilitate truck traffic cutting through the City to the Rickenbacker area to the east.

Mr. Frea had a final comment concerning the lateral road connecting to SR 104. He questioned its necessity as the housing development to the north could provide access and perhaps cut down on accidents and difficulties getting in and out.

Chair Oyster spoke to the concern of density, adding that she too felt the site plan to be highly populated. She added that the open space configuration in the second concept was focused mostly on the stream corridor and took away from available open space opportunities.

Chair Oyster also voiced her support of trail connectivity from the proposed site to the Metro Park to the North. She also expressed support of using the access road to the North, through Scioto Meadows subdivision to connect the neighborhood to SR 104.

Mr. Callahan responded that he appreciated the feedback and would consider the concerns and comments throughout the development process, and reiterated their intention to work with City, County and State to address potential issues with transportation through the area. He expressed his gratitude for the discussion opportunity and his anticipation to bring the project to Planning Commission in a more formal manner.

Hearing no further questions or concerns, Chair Oyster adjourned the meeting at 2:29 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Hannah White", written over a horizontal line.

Hannah White, Development Assistant

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Julie Oyster", written over a horizontal line.

Julie Oyster, Chair