**PLANNING COMMISSION**
**OF THE CITY OF CHESTERFIELD**
**AT CHESTERFIELD CITY HALL**
**JULY 25, 2011**

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m.

## I. ROLL CALL

| PRESENT | ABSENT |
|---|---|
| Mr. Bruce DeGroot | |
| Ms. Wendy Geckeler | |
| Ms. Laura Lueking | |
| Ms. Debbie Midgley | |
| Mr. Stanley Proctor | |
| Mr. Robert Puyear | |
| Mr. Michael Watson | |
| Mr. Steven Wuennenberg | |
| Chair Amy Nolan | |

Councilmember Connie Fults, Council Liaison
Harry O'Rourke, representing City Attorney
Ms. Aimee Nassif, Planning & Development Services Director
Mr. Shawn Seymour, Senior Planner
Ms. Susan Mueller, Principal Engineer
Ms. Mary Ann Madden, Recording Secretary

## II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – All

## III. SILENT PRAYER

Chair Nolan acknowledged the attendance of Councilmember Connie Fults, Council Liaison; Councilmember Derek Grier, Ward II; and Councilmember Bob Nation; Ward IV.

## IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS – Commissioner Proctor read the "Opening Comments" for the Public Hearings.

**A.** **P.Z. 03-2011 Arbors at Wild Horse Creek (17560 Wild Horse Creek, LLC.)**: A request for a zoning map amendment from a "NU" Non-Urban District to a "E-1 AC" Estate District (one acre) of 23.422 acres in size and located on the south side of Wild Horse Creek Road west of its intersection of Long Road and east of its intersection with Wild Horse Parkway Drive (18V330046).

**and**

**B.** **P.Z. 04-2011 Arbors at Wild Horse Creek (17560 Wild Horse Creek, LLC.)**: A request for a zoning map amendment from a "E-1 AC" Estate District (one acre) to a "PUD" Planned Unit Development of 23.422 acres in size and located on the south side of Wild Horse Creek Road west of its intersection of Long Road and east of its intersection with Wild Horse Parkway Drive (18V330046).

**STAFF PRESENTATION:**

Senior Planner Shawn Seymour gave a PowerPoint presentation showing photographs of the site and surrounding area. Mr. Seymour stated the following:

- P.Z. 03-2011 - The "E-1 AC" Estate District will establish the residential density for the development and will permit density at a maximum of one residential unit per acre of development.
- P.Z. 04-2011 – Requests a zoning map amendment to allow a "PUD" Planned Unit Development, which will allow flexibility in the setbacks and minimum lot sizes.
- All Public Hearing notification requirements per City and State code were met.
- The site is currently undeveloped and is used for agricultural purposes.
- Site History
  - The site was zoned "NU" Non-Urban District by St. Louis County prior to the City's incorporation.
  - In 2001, there was an attempt to change the zoning for a portion of the subject site to E-3 (1/2 Acre) with a PEU, which would have permitted lots of 1/4 acre in size. *The petition was withdrawn in 2001.*
  - Later in 2001, there was another attempt to change the zoning to E-3 (1/2 Acre). *The petition went inactive.*
  - In 2002, there were two attempts to change the zoning to E-3 (1/2 acre). *Both petitions went inactive.*
- The Comprehensive Land Use Plan designates the site as *Residential Single Family.*
- The Petitioner has submitted a Conceptual Development Plan, which proposes the following:
  - A 50-foot landscape buffer along the portion of the development that borders the Wild Horse subdivision vs. the required 30-foot buffer.
  - Preserving 49% of the existing tree canopy vs. the required minimum of 30% tree canopy preservation.

- The site's topography changes drastically in height and includes a 30-foot drop-off from Wild Horse Creek Road to the south end of the site. The Petitioner intends to maintain the water courses and topography, which allows for minimal grading. The Petitioners feel that by maintaining the topography, tree canopy and water courses, it will add to the character of the development.
- The proposed minimum lot sizes are ½ acre in size, which are less than what is allowed by the E-1 zoning. But the lots vary in size and go up to nearly one acre.
- Issues under Review by Staff:
  - Minor site design issues related to setbacks and tree preservation areas.
  - Outside agency review letters

**DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Watson asked if there are any half-acre lots in the adjacent R1 neighborhood to the west. Mr. Seymour replied that there are half-acre lots but noted that the PEU at that time required larger lots along a right-of-way (Wild Horse Creek Road) while the internal lots could drop down to a half-acre in size.

Ms. Aimee Nassif, Planning and Development Services Director noted that there are differences between the Conceptual Site Plan and the Preliminary Plan with respect to how far some of the lots extend back into the tree line. Mr. Seymour stated that Staff is working with the Petitioners to "fine-tune those setbacks and property lines to better represent the tree canopy to be preserved".

**PETITIONERS' PRESENTATION:**

1. Mr. Jeff Schindler, 16091 Swingley Ridge Drive, Chesterfield, MO introduced the team members working on the Arbors at Wild Horse Creek development and expressed their excitement about this project. He gave a brief update on McBride & Sons Homes noting that they have been a Chesterfield corporate citizen for over 23 years. He went on to say that they have built many subdivisions in Chesterfield, most recently at Kendall Bluffs, Paddington and Brunhaven.

2. Ms. Jeannie Aumiller, General Counsel, McBride & Sons Homes, 16091 Swingley Ridge, Chesterfield, MO gave a PowerPoint presentation and stated the following:

   McBride had the following three primary goals when it designed the site:

   1. To be consistent with surrounding land uses
      - They researched the area, surrounding uses and residential designations, lot uses, and densities. They found that the area is predominantly 1 acre density with lots sizes averaging ½ to 1 acre.
      - In light of the adjacent Wild Horse subdivision, they felt that mirroring that type of use and zoning would be consistent with their project.
      - They have determined that E-1 acre with a PUD, with all lots in excess of 24,000 sq. ft., is the most compatible zoning for the area.

   2. To preserve the following natural resources for the benefit of future residents
      - Two ephemeral tributaries to the Bonhomme Creek
      - Existing tree canopy in the middle and eastern portions of the site

- Natural slopes – approximately 31% of the site will not be touched by development

3. To design a community worthy of McBride's most luxurious product
   - They believe they have achieved this goal by the one-acre density, preservation of natural resources, and features which create a sustainable neighborhood

Ms. Aumiller went on to say that they feel that the E-1 PUD Zoning:

- Is consistent with the surrounding zonings;
- Conforms to the Single Family Designation established by the Comprehensive Plan; and
- Was needed to preserve the natural resources, to provide sustainable features, to provide enhanced buffers, to provide a more spacious entrance, and lot sizes which all exceed 24,000 sq. ft.

They feel the E-1PUD zoning is appropriate because:

- One-acre density is the predominant residential density in the area although there are small pockets of E ½ and E 2 nearby.
- Lots sizes between ½ acre to 1 acre are typical in the area.
- Residents felt strongly about establishing the 1 acre PUD designation on this site which is equivalent to the R-1 PEU designation for the adjacent Wild Horse Subdivision.
- It encourages flexibility to the density requirements and development standards, which encourage exceptional design, character, quality, facilitate the provision of streets and utilities and preserve natural and scenic features and open space.

PUD design features achieved by the proposed plan include:

- Maintaining the existing topography in areas of site
- Creation of open space
- Greenways
- Trails
- Preservation of mature trees
- Enhanced landscaping
- Deeper buffers
- Planting along public right-of-way
- Structures designed to exceed the typical building design and materials
- Traffic mitigation measures
- Energy-efficient design

Key Features of the proposed site include:

- Density of less than 1 acre
- 22 large wooded lots on 23 acres
- All lot sizes exceed 24,000 sq. ft.
- 49% tree preservation which is 19% in excess of the City's 30% minimum
- Sustainable Features include: cul-de-sac; roundabout; trails; enhanced buffers
- Low impact storm water design

3. Mr. John Berendzen, Fox Architects, 617 Fair Oaks, Webster Groves, MO stated the following:
   - The site design includes sustainable concepts, which is addressed by creating "a sense of place", whereby residents become invested in it and take better care of it. The "sense of place" is achieved by:
     - Open trails and common spaces, which tend to give importance to an area;
     - Roundabout feature, which serves to calm traffic;
     - Landscaping – Native and adaptive plants and landscaped buffers tend to limit storm water problems and improve both the quality and quantity of storm water runoff.
     - Energy-efficient homes with the use of sustainable materials, improved water conservation, improved urban heat island effect, cool roofs, etc.

   Ms. Aumiller then continued with the presentation noting the following:
   - The buffers provide an environmental function and a visual.
   - They have done some very innovative things with respect to water quality.
   - Homes will have 3-car side entry garages as standard on all lots; Hardie Board siding will be used; and upscale landscaping packages will be offered.
   - They intend to adopt some environmentally conscious techniques in their homebuilding operations.
   - Their plan is the result of six months of design, research and communication which occurred before their application was submitted.

   In summary, highlights include:
   - Compatible with surrounding land uses and the Comprehensive Plan
   - Preservation of natural features
   - 49% tree preservation
   - 32% open space
   - Country-Estate inspired site design which encourages a "sense of place"
   - Luxury product
   - Surrounding neighbors are very positive about the plan
   - Achieves PUD design features

4. Mr. Jeremy Roth, Land Development General Manager for McBride & Sons, 16091 Swingley Ridge Road, Chesterfield, MO was available for questions.

5. Mr. Mike Falkner, Sterling Engineers, 5055 New Baumgartner, St. Louis, MO was available for questions.

**DISCUSSION**

During discussion, the following points were brought out:

- Target price for the proposed homes: While the market is still being analyzed, it is anticipated that the homes will be in line with the values of the adjacent Wild Horse community at approximately $500,000.

- The development will not be a gated community and the streets will not be private.

- Fencing/Landscape Buffer: The concept includes a fence - although not a continuous fence, it would be constructed to give the development a visual aesthetic – such as a country-estate inspired fence.

  Commissioner Lueking has concerns with a fence in this area. She stated that since the fronts of the houses in Wild Horse subdivision will be facing the backs of the proposed houses, the landscape buffer is important. Ms. Aumiller stated that this is the reason why the buffer has been enhanced to 50 ft. In addition, the Petitioners would be willing to eliminate the fence if it is unwanted by neighboring residents.

  Mr. Seymour then confirmed that there will be very few houses in the Wild Horse subdivision that will front the proposed development – all of the homes in that portion of the subdivision face onto cul-de-sacs.

  It was also confirmed that the way the lots are now assembled, the 50-foot buffer is on the homeowners' property – Staff is working on this issue with the Petitioners. It was also clarified that a fence cannot be placed on the outside of the 50-foot landscape buffer – the buffer is devoid of structure.

**SPEAKERS IN FAVOR:** None

**SPEAKERS IN OPPOSITION:** None

**SPEAKERS – NEUTRAL:** None

**ISSUES:**
Other than the issues previously identified by Staff, no issues were raised.

Chair Nolan then directed Mr. Seymour to include language in the Attachment A that the Site Plan is to be reviewed by the Architectural Review Board.

Commissioner Proctor read the Closing Comments for the Public Hearings.

Ms. Nassif then addressed the audience and explained the process for these petitions following the Public Hearing:

- Staff will work with the Applicant on outstanding issues.
- A Vote Meeting will be held at a future meeting of the Planning Commission.
- The petitions are then forwarded to the Planning & Public Works Committee for review.
- The petitions are then forwarded to City Council for approval.
- Once zoning is established, the Site Plan review process will begin. During this stage, details of the site plan will be reviewed by Staff – such as landscaping, site layout, architectural details, renderings, etc.

- The Site Plan will then be reviewed by the Architectural Review Board and then back to Planning Commission.

## V. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

**Commissioner Midgley made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2011 Planning Commission Meeting.** The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lueking and **passed by a voice vote of 7 to 0 with 2 abstentions from Commissioners DeGroot and Puyear.**

## VI. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

## VII. SITE PLANS, BUILDING ELEVATIONS AND SIGNS - None

## VIII. OLD BUSINESS - None

## IX. NEW BUSINESS

### A. Amendment to By-Laws to eliminate the Architectural Review Committee and the Landscape Committee

**Commissioner Lueking made a motion to amend the By-Laws to eliminate the Architectural Review Committee and the Landscape Committee.** The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and **passed by a voice vote of 9 to 0**.

Discussion was then held about the possibility of changing the meeting time of the Planning Commission meetings from 7:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Commissioner Lueking indicated her intention to vote against such a change because she believes it could be confusing to the public to change the time for Public Hearings.

**Commissioner Wuennenberg then made a motion to amend the By-Laws to change the meeting time of the Planning Commission meetings from 7:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.** The motion was seconded by Commissioner Geckeler.

**Upon roll call, the vote was as follows:**

**Aye: Commissioner Wuennenberg, Commissioner DeGroot, Commissioner Geckeler, Commissioner Midgley, Commissioner Proctor, Commissioner Puyear, Chair Nolan**

**Nay: Commissioner Watson, Commissioner Lueking**

**The motion passed by a vote of 7 to 2.**

Ms. Nassif stated that Staff will provide copies of the amended By-Laws to all Planning Commission members.

***STAFF NOTE: The 6:30 p.m. starting time for Planning Commission meetings will begin with the September 12th meeting.***

## X. COMMITTEE REPORTS - None

## XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

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Michael Watson, Secretary