

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 16, 2013**

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Eric Prause, Chair
Andy Kidd, Vice Chair
Horace Brown, Secretary
Michael Stebe

Alternates: Susan Shanbaum
Julian Stoppelman (sitting)

Absent: Chirag Thaker
Anthony Petrone

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director of Planning
Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner
Matthew Bordeaux, Environmental Planner
and Wetlands Agent
Ginger MacHattie, Recording Secretary

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing at 7:05 p.m. The Secretary read the legal notice for the application when the call was made.

HIGHLAND OAKS CORP. – for a 2 lot re-subdivision of an approved 6 lot subdivision on Abigail Circle, Residence AA zone – Re-subdivision (2013-044) – *continued*

Attorney Stanley Falkenstein said he had nothing to add to the presentation but wanted the Land Surveyor to explain one change that was made since the applicant was here previously.

Mr. Rob Helstrom, land surveyor, explained that a major change was made on lot 54. Originally a grinder pump was to be utilized but now sewer service can be achieved with a 2% gravity feed. Lot 83 will be the only lot with a grinder pump, he said.

Chairman Prause opened the floor for public comment either in favor of or in opposition to this application.

Mr. Thomas Pastor, 205 Garth Road, said he lives adjacent to the applicant's property on two sides and strongly supports the project.

Ms. Bertotti said Town staff has completed its plan review and requires minor revisions to the notes.

The public hearing on this application was closed.

VH, LLC – for a zone change from Rural Residence to Planned Residence Development and a preliminary plan of development for one single family home and 16 multi-family units at 594 Tolland Turnpike – PRD Zone Change and Preliminary Plan of Development (2013-040)

Mr. Kevin Grindle, landscape architect, spoke on behalf of the applicant, VH, LLC. The application is for a zone change from Rural Residence to a Planned Residence Development and the approval of a preliminary plan of development. The 6.09 acre parcel is at 594 Tolland Turnpike which is on the south side of Tolland Turnpike between Slater Street to the north and Union Street to the east. Referring to sheet 2 of the plans, Mr. Grindle pointed out Kristyn Circle, which is a recently built PRD to the east of the subject property.

Mr. Grindle noted the wetland delineation coming through the center of the applicant's property. A little over 3 acres of the parcel is wetland and a little over 0.25 acres has slopes greater than 15%, he said. When looking at developing the parcel, there will be a total density of 2.8 units per acre based on the total acreage of the property. Taking out the wetlands and steep slope areas, the applicant is left with 6.3 units per acre. The Manchester zoning regulations allow PRD zoning with up to ten units per acre. Currently the Manchester 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development characterizes this area as a traditional suburban neighborhood with density between three and ten units per acre. The 6.3 units per acre fall well within the maximum for PRD zone as well as within the characteristics of the traditional suburban neighborhood. When developing the site, the sixteen proposed units will be developed as close to Tolland Turnpike as possible in order to keep them as far from the wetlands as possible, he said.

Mr. Grindle reviewed the displayed site plan, which included a 500' long, 24' wide driveway ending in a cul-de-sac to the east. He anticipates the trash and recycling receptacles as well as the mail pad will be located in the cul-de-sac. There will be a recreation area to the south of the units adjacent to the wetland area. Units are oriented towards the driveway interior to the site. The front door, driveway and garage will be facing the site driveway. He said that gives occupants and visitors a community or neighborhood feel. The rear of the units, facing the street, will be screened. This will be very similar to the Ripley Hill Development approved earlier. There will be a first floor deck. He said the proposal is to utilize both vegetative and fenced screening as need be. This will provide the residents some privacy and a buffer for people passing by on Tolland Turnpike. There will be a 15' buffer along the easterly side of the development and the rear side of the PRD on Kristyn Circle. The applicant is requesting a variance from the buffer requirement on the southerly side where the development is abutting the three acres of wetland.

Mr. Grindle said there will be a 24' wide access drive with no sidewalks. On Tolland Turnpike, there is a sidewalk to the north but the applicant is not proposing any along the frontage of the development. He said a development of this scale, with a small cul-de-sac, will have low traffic volumes and low speeds, which allows for safe walking conditions for residents.

Mr. Grindle reviewed the plans for the proposed units, which show a bonus room. He said the intent is to provide two bedroom units. The recreation area will be sized for two bedrooms in each unit. This application is consistent with the Manchester 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development and preserves the wetland area as well as the neighborhood character, he said.

In response to questions from Mr. Stoppelman, Mr. Grindle said the existing driveway will remain for the current single family dwelling. There will be 200' between the curb cut for the development and the existing driveway to the west.

In response to questions from Mr. Brown, Mr. Grindle confirmed all floor plans are identical with two bedrooms, plus a study and storage room. It has not been determined whether the units will be rentals or condominiums. The design intent is to make the study difficult to modify into a third bedroom.

Mr. Kidd asked what are the options to orient the buildings toward Tolland Turnpike. Mr. Grindle explained that other options on the orientation of the buildings were considered. One option was turning the units 180 degrees, facing the garages toward Tolland Turnpike, requiring additional curb cuts on Tolland Turnpike. Another option would shift buildings one and two to the area where buildings three and four are, but that would cause significantly more wetland disturbance. Another option would eliminate eight units, making the proposal much less attractive economically. This proposed plan was the best choice overall, he said.

Mr. Kidd commented that the front elevations would look better if the single surface roof were broken up. He noted the request for the sidewalk waiver and asked if there are future plans for sidewalks on either side of this property. Mr. Pellegrini said there are no plans at this time. Mr. Kidd said he likes the notion of less impervious surface but pointed out that lack of sidewalks might not be desirable in the winter.

In response to questions from Mr. Kidd, Mr. Grindle said the wetlands area is well vegetated with native species including maple, birch, oak and red maple trees. The recreation area will be accessed from a pathway near the visitor parking and will be an open lawn/field area.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Grindle explained that extending the sidewalk to the west of the development would require significant drainage reconstruction because of the underground drainage in the area.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Grindle said the plans will be configured with a wide opening for the study.

Chairman Prause opened the floor for public comment either in favor of or in opposition to this application.

Mr. John Androlis, 12 Kristyn Circle, said this project will be built directly west of his house and garage. He asked what will happen with the house and whether the plan is to have condominiums or rental units. He would prefer condominiums. If this becomes an apartment complex, lighted recreation areas are a little noisier. He noted the placement of the dumpsters in an area abutting his building. If they will be fenced in, locked and screen, he did not have a problem. Mr. Androlis asked what the start and finish date of construction will be. He asked whether it is the intention of the developer to move the stone wall on Tolland Turnpike.

Ms. Bertotti said there are two staff members with outstanding comments that are minor and technical in nature and can be addressed on the final Mylars. When Ripley Hill was before the

Planning and Zoning Commission requesting waivers for landscaping, the Commission decided that issue would be better addressed during the detailed plan review. Addressing Mr. Androlis' question, Ms. Bertotti explained that once the site plan is approved, State statutes require that the plan be completed within five years.

Mr. Pellegrini explained that the Planning and Zoning Commission does not determine whether a development becomes condominiums or apartments. That decision is left up to the market and developer. The floor plan submitted determines the open space requirements. If the storage areas are considered bedrooms, another 16,000 square feet of open space would be required which seems to be a bit excessive. He said the Commission may wish to revisit that requirement.

Mr. Grindle said the stone wall appears to be on the property line and will be maintained. The single family unit will be maintained as such and sold as a single family property.

The Chairman closed the Public Hearing portion of the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

**NOTICE: A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THIS PUBLIC HEARING CAN
BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.**