BOROUGH OF WOODCLIFF LAKE
PLANNING BOARD
AUGUST 18, 2015
MINUTES

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m. at Borough Hall by the Vice Chairman Langschultz.

Adequate Notice Statement:

The Chairman announced that the Meeting, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231, was announced at the Reorganization Meeting held on January 12, 2015 in the Municipal Building. Notice of this meeting was posted and two newspapers, The Record and The Ridgewood News were notified. Notice was also provided, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law, of the Planning Board's intention to conduct formal business at this meeting.

The public was advised of the Planning Board's rule that the meetings will be concluded by 11:00 p.m.

Flag Salute

Roll Call:

George Fry, Chairman	Absent
Joseph Langschultz, Vice Chairman	Present
Al Dattoli	Present
Thomas Panso, Council	Present
Bertram Siegel	Present
Reuben Twersky, Alt. 1	Present
David Ciaudelli	Present
Robert Nathin	Present
David York, Alt. 2	Present
Josephine Higgins	Present
Robert Friedberg	Absent
Marc Leibman, Attorney	Present
David Juzmeski, Neglia Engineering	Present
Richard Preiss, Phillips Preiss Planners	Present
Tonya Tardibuono, Secretary	Present

Minutes:

The minutes of June 29, 2015 were approved on a motion from Mr. Dattoli, seconded by Mr. Ciaudelli, and carried by all.

Continuing Application:

Woodcliff Lake Investors I, LLC – The Gables at Woodcliff Lake
County Road and Harriet Drive
Block 303, Lots 1 & 2 – Block 303.01, Lots 3 & 4
Block 401, Lots 1.01 – 1.03
Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan

Attorney Louis D'Arminio of the Price Meese law firm was present on behalf of the applicant Woodcliff Lake Investors I, LLC. He explained how the applicant did some changes and they would submit a revised set of site plans by the next meeting.

The project Engineer, Mr. Michael Dipple of L2A Land Design, LLC located in Englewood, New Jersey was previously sworn in. Mr. Griffiths introduced Exhibit A-16, a revised site plan. He spoke about several revisions.

One of the most substantial changes we have is the right-in, right-out driveway. It improves the sight distance issue that could be there coming up on County Road. That was the only traffic change.

Mr. Dipple stated the landscaping was changed on the west side to 30 feet as required by the ordinance, and they will make sure the end of the trees is where the 30 feet lands, and not the landscaped bed.

Mr. Dipple spoke about how they had a little trouble with the aboveground detention basins on Units 25 through 28 and 17 through 20, where the basin was encroaching on the back yard. So they took the basins and placed them underground.

There was some previous questions about the grading. The basin along County Road is behind the middle units, which lies in an east-west direction, and the long basin on the west side which sits in a north-south direction. Mr. Dipple said they softened the grading going into that. Previously they had a three-to-one slope. It has now been changed to a five-to-one.

Mr. Dipple spoke about there being a lot of concern about the offset of the building. If you look at the architectural drawings you will see one of the end units was actually flipped. Now on each unit you will see the last driveway adjacent to the driveway immediately to the right.

A survey was completed of all of the trees. Mr. Dipple spoke about the findings. In general he said there is a lot of trees, but most of them are not very large, between 6 and 12 inches in diameter. Overall he stated there is a lot of trees to be preserved.

The lighting was changed around a little. Mr. Dipple stated that he thinks they came up with a better lightening scheme. The change resulted in one more pole, but we illuminated the visitor parking spaces by adjusting the lights.

Mr. Dipple said they received a significant number of comments from Bergen County Sewer Conservation. With six detention basins, they had a lot to say. He said they amended the plans and are now waiting to hear back from them.

Mr. D'Arminio questioned Mr. Dipple on a couple of issues. He wanted to know if there was a turnaround lane at the end of Pickwick Lane. Mr. Dipple said yes. He also inquired about some additional work in the terms of landscaping. Mr. Dipple went into detail the changes that were made.

Mr. Siegel wants to have some assurance that putting the bump-outs, whether they are foundational or they are bump-outs that are non-foundational, will have no adverse effect on the engineering aspect of the runoff. Mr. Dipple replied it definitely won't have an adverse effect on the overall flow of water.

Mr. Dattoli thanked the applicant for listening to the Board. He commented that they came a long way, in a short period of time. He asked if all four units in each building have the same first floor elevation, or if there is steps within the building. Mr. Dipple answered no steps. Mr. Dattoli then questioned the separation distance between the two driveways, the widths and the materials used. Mr. Dipple replied asphalt, 18 feet and the separation appears to be 4 feet. Mr. Dattoli then asked about the separation, if it will be a planted or brick paver island. Mr. Dipple replied planted.

Mr. Twersky questioned where the bay windows would be placed. Mr. D'Arminio said that it's within the end unit but they don't know where. It all depends on whether they pick a Stanton unit or not. He stated that a bay window will be there, just unsure of its exact placement. Mr. Twersky asked if that can be a condition. This matter was then discussed in detail, by all members present. Mr. Leibman stated that the Board wants to make sure that this attractive architectural feature is on the end units that face the roadways. Mr. Dipple pointed out that would be Unit 1, Unit 5, Unit 12, Unit 25, Unit 13, Unit 29 and Unit 40.

David Juzmeski from Neglia Engineering Associates in Lyndhurst, New Jersey, was sworn in by Attorney Leibman as the Borough Engineer. Mr. Juzmeski spoke with the applicant's engineer, Mr. Dipple. He said that the majority of the comments have been addressed and he understands there are some modifications that need to be made. They can be made between the two offices if granted approval.

Mr. Dattoli asked if the curbing for the intersection of Pickwick Lane and County Road is a mountable curb, or a regular eight-inch face curb. Mr. Dipple responded that typically when dealing with the county we run the eight-inch concrete curb up to the point where it passes the ADA accessible ramp and then go down to the six-inches. He wasn't sure what he did in this case, but he thinks he uses concrete in the middle. Mr. Dattoli expresses his concerns that people will still try to make a left hand turn if it's an eight inch face. Mr. Dipple said he would propose it to the county.

Mr. Nathin asked if the curbs in the development are all Belgium block. Mr. Dipple responded yes but there will be no curb around the driveway just the roadway and the parking area. We will have to use concrete on the county right of way. We transition at the ADA ramp.

Mrs. Higgins asked about snow removal. Mr. Dipple responded that the snow will be plowed just like it is anywhere. He doesn't see any snow removal issues.

Mr. Twersky inquired if the mountable curb was discussed with the fire department and if they could make the right-in and right-out. Mr. Dipple said it should not be an issue at all. Mr. Leibman stated that if necessary the applicant will widen County Road entrance per the fire department.

Mr. Langschultz asked if there was a fire hydrant at the end of the road planned. Mr. Dipple replied that was in the letter. We are proposing two fire hydrants. The RSIS is 400 feet along the roadway to any residential unit. He will look into the utility plan to be sure of the exact locations. Mr. Langschultz asked if the applicant met the foot-candles for the parking and how many poles would be installed. Mr. Dipple replied we have very good illumination going up and down the road and the sidewalk with 15 poles in total.

The meeting was open to the public for any questions of Mr. Dipple on a motion from Mr. Dattoli, and seconded by Mrs. Higgins and carried by all.

John Stella, Woodcliff Lake – Asked if all of the retention basins are underground. Mr. Dipple replied that they were designed to be aboveground and it's permitted. We tried to design it in a way that the water would come in and evacuate quickly. Mr. Stella asked if it could be underground. Mr. Dipple responded that it's possible but they get quite a bit bigger when you put them underground and you don't get that 100-percent void versus the void that you get with stone and a pipe.

This public portion of the meeting was closed on a motion from Mrs. Higgins, and seconded by Mr. Dattoli and carried by all.

Mr. Leibman stated that Mr. James Mullen is present and available from cross-examination by members of the public. Mr. James Mullen, Esq. is a licensed attorney in the state of New Jersey and spoke previously about this application.

The meeting was open to the public for any questions of Mr. Mullen on a motion from Mr. Dattoli, and seconded by Mr. Nathin, and carried by all. With no one wishing to be heard, this public portion of the meeting was closed on a motion from Mrs. Higgins, and seconded by Mr. Dattoli and carried by all.

Mr. Dattoli spoke about how the zoning limits the units to three bedrooms only. He expressed his concern about the unit owners turning the lofts and libraries into bedrooms. He wanted to know if we could restrict the windows in those spaces to be something less than an egress window. Mr. Liebman replied that you can, but you wouldn't want to because you would be creating a dangerous situation. Mr. D'Arminio stated that in order to build an extra bedroom they would have to get a building permits and if they don't they are acting illegally, then they are subject to fines and violations. Mr. Dattoli asked if we can ask for language in the master detail that says no units will have more than three bedrooms. Mr. D'Arminio responded that would be in the master deed anyway be we'll do that.

Mr. Panso asked about the demolition of the old homes and if they had asbestos, what is the plan for remediation to prevent the spread of the asbestos. Mr. Dipple responded that they would need to get a demolition permit from the building department. The licensed demolition contractor pulling the permit would have to comply with the rules and regulations for demolition.

Mr. Twersky asked if there is an anticipated schedule. Mr. Mulled replied that they still need to get through ancillary governmental approvals, county, soil conservation and sewer. If we have an approval and get a resolution in 30 days, maybe within 90 to 120 days we could be ready to start the demolition in the late winter. Each townhouse unit takes three months and they get built as they are purchased. Mr. Twersky asked if they have had any sales yet. Mr. Mullen responded not yet, once we get the approvals we have to apply to the Department of Community Affairs to be registered and then we can begin sales.

The meeting was open to the public for public final comments on a motion from Mr. Dattoli, and seconded by Mr. York, and carried by all. With no one wishing to be heard, this public portion of the meeting was closed on a motion from Mr. Dattoli, and seconded by Mr. Siegel and carried by all.

Mr. D'Arminio briefly went over the application and some final thoughts that he wanted the board to hear.

The board members then had a final discussion.

Mr. Nathin – Is very disappointed with this project. The floor plans are nothing that Woodcliff Lake resident's desire. There is no coat closet, the bedroom closets are small, the main walkway into the dining room and living is not wide enough and the garages are small. The outside looks beautiful, but the inside is terrible. He thinks that in this price range of $700,000 to $800,000 Pulte would better off designing better units for slightly more money.

Mr. Siegel – Thinks this project is an embarrassment to this community. The units are mediocre, outdated and inefficient. He commended Chairman Fry and the Planning Board for contributing substantially and for conducting the meetings in a very respectful and intelligent way. Overall he said the applicant and their professionals did a wonderful job, even if he disagrees with the interior.

Mr. Panso – After three years he thought this project would turn out better. He thinks the Planning Board made good choices and Pulte was willing to make the changes. However it's the things that we can't control that really bother him.

Mr. Claudelli – Agrees with Mr. Nathin. He stated this project is disappointing to him and he cannot help to think that it's disappointing to everybody in Woodcliff Lake. We have a unique and special community and these models are unremarkable.

Mr. York – No comment.

Mr. Dattoli – Stated that we have come a long way in a short period of time. Pulte did listen to us. He agrees with everybody the floor plans are not what people in the Pascack Valley desire. They did a great job with the site plan, but the interiors are D's at best.

Mrs. Higgins – Agrees with Mr. Nathin. Thinks that prior to building they should re-layout a couple of things. Also has some concerns about the water tables in the basements and snow removal.

Mr. Twersky – Echoes the other members. He thinks it was a mistake to bring on a company like Pulte, who is just going to offer these small units. He believes they should re-examine this and take the pulse of Woodcliff Lake.

Mr. Langschultz – Thinks that the interior design is a bit too small for what the people of Woodcliff Lake want. As far as the project is concerned he believes the Board did the best they could making the outside and landscaping look great.

Mr. Liebman reminds the Board that the applicant has a largely compliant plan. They are seeking a height variance due to the topography of the property, a setback variance for the faux guard hut and a variance relief for the bump-out.

Mr. Liebman states that there will be a developers agreement and the master deed to make sure it complies with the items that have been discussed; Subject to approval by the Board engineer with respect to stormwater drainage; fire hydrants will be placed in a maximum of three locations; the bump-outs that we discussed; the curbing will be mountable, if approved by the County Planning Board, with the eight-inch block. The applicant is going to work to preserve as many trees as possible, but it may not be possible to save all of them and the end units 1, 5, 12, 25, 13, 29, 24, and 40 will have bump-outs.

A motion was made by Mr. Dattoli to approve the application with all of the conditions and comments that we reported. The motion was seconded by Mr. Siegel and carried by roll call vote as follows:

Mr. Ciaudelli	No
Mrs. Higgins	Yes
Mr. Nathin	Yes
Mr. Panso	Yes
Mr. Twersky	Yes
Mr. York	Yes
Mr. Dattoli	Yes
Mr. Siegel	Yes
Mr. Langschultz	Yes

The resolution will be heard at the next meeting of the Board.

Richard Preiss spoke briefly about Broadway Corridor.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion from Mrs. Higgins and seconded by Mr. Dattoli and carried by all.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tonya Tardibuono, Secretary