

**APPROVED**

**MUNICIPALITY OF MT. LEBANON  
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

**DATE:** Wednesday, December 14, 2016

**TIME:** 7 p.m.

**PLACE:** Mt. Lebanon Municipality – Commission Chambers

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Rick Sabeh, Suzanne Sieber, Bill Pope

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Municipal Planner Ian McMeans, Municipal Engineer Dan Deiseroth

**Agenda Items**

Minutes of the October 25, 2016, Planning Board meeting.

**Motion**

Ms. Sieber moved and Mr. Pope seconded to approve the October 25, 2016, Planning Board minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

**Old Business**

There was no old business.

**New Business**

- a. Request for preliminary approval for Toner Plan Revision No. 2, a subdivision of Parcel B in the Toner Plan. Senior Apartments of Mt Lebanon, LP has an equitable interest in a property located at 2904 Castlegate Avenue. The developer is requesting approval to subdivide the parcel currently identified as lot and block 97-F-185 into two lots.

Ben Kelley, Oxford Development, gave a presentation about the project. He said the project being proposed is a 60-unit housing development for seniors. This will provide an opportunity for current homeowners who do not want to stay in a single-family home stay in the area in affordable housing. There are income limits for people who live there, but there does need to be a source of income. Potential residents will need to pass credit checks and criminal checks. It is expected that most of the residents will be from citizens that want to stay in the area. Market studies showed Mt. Lebanon is lacking in this type of product and there is a demand for it.

Bernard Lamm, CommonGround, project civil engineer, said the site is about 8.2 acres. The first item on the agenda is a request for subdivision with approximately 5.6 acres where the current Bradley Center is located, and a 2.6-acre parcel that is greenspace. An entrance is proposed to be off of Midland Avenue, with parking on either side of the drive isle and a turn around. The building will have a covered entrance. To the side of the building there will be a

service entrance, along with a transformer, air conditioning compressor units and a generator, surrounded on three sides. Trash will be housed inside of the building. He gave a description of some of the common areas as well as possible garden areas. One of the topography challenges has been the slope toward McNeilly Road, which is why they did not have a drive coming off that street. There will be a retaining wall to help support the parking area; the building will act as a retaining wall as well. They propose to add a sidewalk along Midland Avenue, but did request a waiver for a sidewalk along McNeilly Road. Storm water will be collected from the building and the parking lot and directed to a storm water retention system, as well as an overflow area that will be connected to the public storm sewer system.

Jeffrey Davis, principal architect for FortyEighty Architecture, gave a presentation regarding the design of the building. The main entrance for the building will be off of the front parking lot. The building is designed with a bend in the middle in relation to the contours of the site, and the hillside from Dorchester Avenue down to McNeilly Road. There will be a covered walkway from the drop-off area at the front of the building. Amenity spaces for the residents will be located on each floor; also included will be an open area with a balcony overlooking McNeilly Road, an exercise room, bicycle storage area, and offices for the management company and supportive services for the residents. Every floor will have laundry facilities with two washers and two dryers. At the south end of the building there will be a glassed-in lounge area on each floor. Each floor will have a trash chute to take trash to the receptacle area. There will be 60 units, with 52 being one-bedroom and eight being two-bedroom units. The materials being proposed for the lower portion of the building are concrete masonry which will tie in to the masonry for the retaining walls. The main part of the building will be brick masonry with horizontal siding under a shingled, gabled roof, which is common to the nearby homes. The design of the building breaks up the massing of the building and puts more focus on the shared spaces in the center of the building. The building is being designed to passive house standards and will be using energy efficient mechanical systems. All of the mechanical units and condensing units will be on the ground behind the fenced area.

Mr. Deiseroth read into the record letters from Gateway Engineers relating to the subdivision plan, the traffic impact study by Michael Haberman, the traffic engineer, and the land development application, each dated December 8, 2016.

### **Citizen Comments**

Diane Samstag, 2827 Midland Avenue, is concerned about the traffic that could be generated on Midland Avenue from this project. She asked if the City of Pittsburgh had been involved with the planning of this project. She feels that the entrance for the building should be on McNeilly Road or the adjacent entranceway for the Salvation Army.

Mr. Deiseroth indicated that the developer will need to get permits from the city in order to build.

Mary Jane Fishonitz, 933 Dorchester Avenue, had several concerns: 1) parking and if there are enough spaces for both residents and visitors; 2) what is planned for the other half of the site that's being subdivided; 3) possible water runoff from the new development, and 4) traffic speed with the new development.

Mr. Sabeh indicated that other half of the property is not before the board at this time, and there are currently no plans for its development.

Nancy Beatty, 2805 Knowlson Ave., voiced her concerns regarding the additional traffic and the effect on the neighborhood.

Dann Franklin, 1102 McNeilly Road, is concerned about the entrance to the project and the parking restrictions this may cause on the surrounding streets. He's also concerned about the possibility of mine subsidence in the area during the construction phase.

Megan Newf, staff person for Councilwoman Rudiak, was there on behalf of the constituents of the 19<sup>th</sup> district. She indicated there would be a public meeting on Thursday, January 12 regarding this project.

Mr. McMeans gave the parking space calculation per the municipal ordinance.

Ray Beatty, 2805 Knowlson Avenue, asked if the parking spaces would be assigned to the units.

Mr. Kelly said this is a senior building, and will be age-restricted. They are expecting about half of the residents not to have a car. There will be a two-night limit on visitation. His experience with similar projects indicates the traffic generation will be well below what the traffic study indicates. The original drive had been proposed to be on Dorchester Avenue, but based on the size of the street, that they would have to have an agreement with another private owner, and the grading challenges of McNeilly Road, it was decided Midland Avenue, which is 50 to 60 feet wide, would provide a safer entranceway. There will be two meetings in January – a special meeting on January 12, and regular meeting on January 16 – for the neighborhoods. An extensive geotechnical report was generated and submitted to the planning board, indicating there is 170 feet of ground between the surface and any mines beneath. The building will be put on spread footers for minimal earth disturbance.

Ms. Samstag asked for clarification regarding the other property development, and again voiced concerns regarding traffic generation on Midland Avenue, and urged them to use McNeilly Road as an entrance point.

Mr. Pope thanked the citizens for their comments and said they raised many of the questions he was going to raise. He asked for hard copies for the board of the architectural renderings. He asked if there would be a new building on the proposed property line.

Mr. Kelly said the current property owner is raising a building where the new property line is being proposed. They also had a geotechnical contractor testing in that area, which also may have accounted to unfamiliar equipment on the property.

Mr. Pope asked about the minimum age of the apartment complex, and asked how they did a market study to find if this type of apartment is needed. And he asked about what types of background checks would be performed for applying residents.

Mr. Kelly said they did some of the market study through census information showing income level, age of nearby houses, and the age of people within a certain market capture area. He said credit checks and criminal records checks would be conducted on all prospective residents. This is not a public housing unit; residents will be expected to show they can pay their rent.

Ms. Seiber thanked the applicant for their informational presentation, but that this was the first time the engineer has had a chance to see the architectural renderings and he needs time to look over the drawings. She suggested that the planning board table any action on the site development plan until the engineer can review the renderings, and to allow the applicant to address the comments in the engineer's review letter.

Mr. Sabeh explained the process for submissions for land development.

**Motion**

Ms. Sieber moved and Mr. Pope seconded to grant preliminary approval for the Senior Apartments of Mt. Lebanon subdivision plan conditioned on the engineer's review comments in a letter dated December 8, 2016. The motion carried unanimously.

- b. Request for preliminary approval of a land development plan. Senior Apartments of Mt Lebanon, LP has an equitable interest in the property located at 2904 Castlegate Avenue. The developer is requesting preliminary approval of a land development plan to construct a 60-unit multi-family building with parking and associated infrastructure.

**Motion**

Mr. Pope moved and Ms. Sieber seconded to table any action on the Senior Apartments of Mt Lebanon Land Development Plan to allow the applicant time to address the comments in the engineer's review letter dated December 8, 2016. The motion carried unanimously.

**Next Meeting** — The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Mt. Lebanon Planning Board is **Tuesday, January 24, 2017**, at 7:00 p.m.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.