

VILLAGE OF SOUTH LEBANON
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
July 13, 2021
6:30 P.M.

1. Mayor Smith opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. with the Pledge.

2. ATTENDANCE

Linda Allen – Present

Linda Burke – Present

Bryan Corcoran – Present

Maryan Harrison – Present

Bill Madison – Absent

Rolin Spicer – Present

3. Mayor Smith stated that we have a special meeting for a Public Hearing in reference to the Drees development.

4. Mayor Smith opened the floor to the public.

Alex Martin with Drees Homes, 211 Grandview Drive, Fort Mitchell, KY 41017, gave a presentation regarding a proposed neighborhood they are calling Highmeadow which fronts Zoar Road for about half of the parcel, and is adjacent to the Wynstead neighborhood. The parcel is 29.2 acres, just south of the Little Miami River, it recently annexed into South Lebanon with a R-1 Single Family Residential District Regulation, and they are seeking a zone change to R-3 designation. Dress is proposing to provide 74 lots on this site. If the zoning is approved to a R-3 designation, Dress will complete construction drawings with considerations from past meetings where neighborhood concerns were discussed about tree lines on boundaries. He stated that they have gone back to their engineers and asked them to change grading and pull back from the boundaries as much as possible to try and save any trees that are on the boundary lines. As of today, he could not tell Council how many feet off the boundary line because it is still with the engineers. Dress has looked at the South Lebanon Comprehensive Plan and it shows the need for future neighborhood residential areas and that is what their plan is looking to accomplish. Drees Homes is proposing to offer single family lots.

Mr. Martin presented three pictures of entrance monuments from other Drees neighborhoods, with the scope and scale they have in mind for Highmeadow. Additionally, they look to have a focal point of a pond in the middle of this parcel with additional green space surrounding it. There is a tree line on the northern side of the pond as well as behind the lots. This follows a natural wooded area that they are looking to maintain as much as possible. They will also look to put a gazebo and green space on the west side.

He also presented examples of the architecture Dress intends to offer. The square footage of the homes range from 1,400 square feet to 2,900 square feet. The sale prices of these homes will start in the low \$300,000's to well over \$400,000. The lot widths will be 65' for a total of 74 lots on this site. They are looking at a larger project including this parcel

that would be a total of 109 lots. The front setback would 25', the side setbacks would be 6' minimum with a 16' total side setback, and a 30' rear setback.

The total acres at this site are 29.2 acres and with 74 lots it ends up being 2.53 lots per acre.

Administrator Jerry Haddix stated that this property was officially annexed on March 26, 2021, the Creedon Annexation, the township zoning was R-1 and they have requested to go to R-3. On May 26, 2021 the Planning Commission conducted a required Public Hearing per the Village Zoning Code. Upon review the Planning Commission recommended the approval of the amendment based on the following factors: it is consistent with existing land uses surrounding it, and the requested changes are consistent with the adopted Village Comprehensive Plan. This public hearing was advertised in the newspaper on June 13, 2021 which is 30 days prior to the public hearing which is required by the zoning code. The public notice was also mailed to the surrounding property owners on June 22, 2021 which is 20 days prior to the public hearing which is required by the zoning code.

Mayor Smith discussed what Drees has done in the community of South Lebanon; being the first developer in South Lebanon, and building both Stonebrook, and Shepherds Crossing. The new water agreement we have with the county allows for this to be the first development where we provide all the utilities and do all the billing.

Becky Ehling, 5499 Zoar Road Morrow, OH 45152, stated that as you move out from your central downtown area you usually begin feathering out your zoning and making the lots bigger while zoning into agricultural areas. What they are asking for, the density, once it is passed, they can build whatever density they want. What we have been shown is a conceptual plan and not the actual plan. This is not the correct stage; it looks nice and pulls you in but what we are looking at is the actual zoning of what it could be and any builder can do whatever is permitted in that zone no matter what is shown right now because you are not approving that. Do not get caught up in a Power Point but think of your community as a whole because at the last meeting you also had your Land Use Plan being evaluated and what you want on that and the surrounding area, I am a surrounding area. Density stays within an area and then you feather out. Think about consistency and feathering out.

Kevin Ehling, 5499 Zoar Road Morrow, OH 45152, asked about the density on this piece when it was mentioned that the entire development is more; what will the density be on the total. I did the quick math and you let us know that it is 2.5 units per acre on this but once you add in the next 10 acres, we are getting ready to annex, then it's up to almost 3 units. I don't like you saying we have this dense of a development when it's not, it is already going to be denser than you are displaying here. That is what Becky was saying too; we are here to approve the zoning, not this plan. You are here to approve R-3 Zoning that will allow, if something were to happen to Drees, to have something much more dense and much different than what we see here. Once you approve the zoning

things can change and you are here to approve the zoning. We measure our lots in acres not square feet. Do you want this dense of zoning right next to rural areas?

Brian Charlton, 857 Emerald Drive, South Lebanon, OH 45065, relayed his and several of his neighbors concerns regarding the tree line. The tree line is the main reason we bought the property that we purchased, and we are hearing rumors that it may be taken down. You mentioned greenspace and I would think that a tree line would be attractive to the buyers of Drees Homes. If you remove the tree line, are you prepared to pay for damages to the other trees nearby because this will probably not be done in a careful manner. My neighbors and I will be watching the process very carefully. We don't want it touched but if it is it must be done in a meticulous fashion because when you start ripping trees out, you're going to do some damage to the nearby trees on our side and this is important for the builder to consider.

Mayor Smith closed the floor to the public.

5. Alex Martin responded to the comments previously brought up. The plan is conceptual, but this is what Dress is planning to do if the zoning is approved to change to R-3. If approved, they would immediately submit development plans according to this concept plan and they do not anticipate any density increase. He cannot say that this is the exact development plan, but this is our intent. If the zoning is approved this is what would be turned in as a development plan. Mayor Smith asked don't you have to abide by the rules that the Planning Commission put down, exactly what they have agreed to and fulfill that obligation to which Martin stated they do. Martin continued stating that it is not their intent to mislead anyone. This parcel is the one they are discussing today and the only information he can give today. The other parcel mentioned, they are only under contract to potentially purchase; it has not been purchased and has not been annexed into South Lebanon. Martin stated that as for the trees along Wynstead, with the grading they are intending to keep as far back away from the property line as possible. They are intending on keeping as much of a buffer as we can and agree that the trees have a lot of value to the homeowner, and they make the community look great as well. Dress is on the same page and that is why they went back to their engineers to pull back the grading. They have spoken with a couple of neighbors in Wynstead and offered to walk the lot lines with them and would be more than happy to do that with other neighbors as well.
6. Corcoran asked what school district this would be in and Haddix remarked Little Miami. Corcoran questioned Martin about the tree line stating that the area where these houses will go, there is a large field with a tree line in the back that slopes down and then the bike trail and the Little Miami River at the bottom to which Mayor Smith commented that that is his property on that side. Martin stated that the part highlighted in yellow on the site map is the location they are talking about. Mayor Smith commented that it is across the street from that one. Corcoran asked if this would be a community that has sidewalk access, a homeowner's association, a swimming pool, or anything like that or is it just homes. Martin responded that it will have a homeowner's association so any green space will be maintained by the HOA as well as the entrance monument and gazebo.

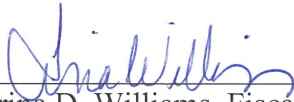
There will be sidewalks as well on the interior of the neighborhood. There will not be a pool.

7. Burke stated a concern for the density of the homes that are put in. The lots are getting too small with too many houses in one place. She would like to see bigger lots and feathering out because there are developments all over that are getting denser and denser instead of blending in. I want to see homes built just with larger lots. Martin responded that because they are submitting their development plans, if this is approved, we do that by phase so we would be developing phase 1 initially in the front of the neighborhood. So, it is something that we can look at and see if it's possible to make any of the future lots a little bit larger. This is not something I can promise but we can look at it and see if it is economically feasible to develop. Haddix stated that what he is purposing are 65' lots which are still 5' greater than the minimum 60'.
8. Allen remarked that a while back there was another development and we spoke on the same issue, the size of the lots, however it does come into alignment with our zoning and planning. Maybe we need to approach Planning and Zoning and change it there because as long as they come in with plans that comply; we as a Council need to talk to Planning and Zoning and enlarge that then. Burke commented that she thinks we should initiate that study. Allen continued that when these plans come in, they still go through Planning and Zoning and the Council, but we must be very observant.
9. Mayor Smith stated that once the plans are submitted to the Planning Commission, they must follow them and the Commission itself will try to make sure the concerns of the neighbors are taken care of. It looks like Drees has come back from the Commission and is trying to accomplish that.
10. Corcoran asked if this is passed tonight what is the next step, is there another hurdle that comes to the council. Mayor Smith remarked that if it is passed then they will submit it to the Planning and then the engineers we hire will look at it and then the information they have submitted here will also be submitted to the Planning Commission to make sure they follow through with the terms; try to keep the tree line and any of the adjustments. The South Lebanon Planning Commission has three members of the public on it along with our staff. Corcoran asked if there would be another vote and Mayor Smith stated there would not, just the permitting process and enforcement of compliance. They would have the ability to stop the project if it does not meet the terms that they've outlined. Corcoran asked if Drees was to deviate from what they have been...Mayor Smith stated it would not be approved, it would have to be approved again by the Planning Commission.
11. Haddix stated that the Council does have to approve the development agreement, that is the final piece, it states the bonding and the actual development agreement of what their responsibilities are. The final piece will come back here one more time.

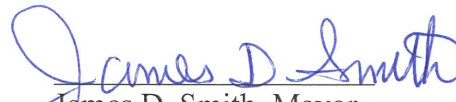
12. ORDINANCE 2021-14, THIRD READING, AN ORDINANCE APPROVING ZONING MAP AMENDMENT UPON COMPLETION OF ANNEXATION AT 5379 ZOAR ROAD CONTAINED IN THE CREEDON ANNEXATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15.7.13 OF THE VILLAGE ZONING REGULATIONS

By title only, Ordinance 2021-14, a motion to adopt was made by Allen, seconded by Corcoran, all yeas.

13. Mayor Smith asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 p.m. A motion was made by Burke, seconded by Allen, all yeas.



Petrina D. Williams, Fiscal Officer



James D. Smith, Mayor

For an audio copy of the July 13, 2021, minutes of the Village of South Lebanon Council special meeting, please contact Fiscal Officer twilliams@southlebanonohio.org.