

WELDON TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
CRYSTAL COMMONS
JULY 9, 2024, 6:00PM

The Supervisor, Carrie Aldrich, call the Public Hearing to order at 6:00PM and gave an opening statement.

Weldon Township Board: C. Aldrich, S. Bobek, F. Griffin, S. Meredith, S. Williams were all in attendance.

Public present: J. Franke, DeeDee Lentz, Becky Sharp, Chuck Kraus, Kellye and John Jelemensky, Tory Tallent, Marv Prepejchal, Michelle Barefoot, John McLaren, Rob Aldrich, Tom Besey, Karyn Thorr, Anne Gunyon, Chris MacInnes, Janna Urbasic, Vicki Schwartz, Kirk Davidson, Cindy Smith, Markaela Bluhm, Maree Mulvoy, Eugene Allen, Ken and Kirsten Cline, Richard Anderson, Phyllis Kladder, Tim Cypher, ZA, Doug Mansfield, Jon Stimson, Colin Merry, + 6 others signed in.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

C. Aldrich, Supervisor, introduced Jon Stimson, Homestretch. He distributed handouts and gave a presentation regarding the Crystal Commons Project for workforce housing. There is lack of affordable housing in the area. A PUD was approved by the Weldon Township Planning Commission unanimously at their meeting May 10, 2023. It meets what the Township wanted with its Master Plan. A copy of the purchase agreement between Crystal Mountain and Homestretch was given to the Supervisor. The property was sold to Homestretch by Crystal Mountain for \$1.00. It has a 45-year deed restriction. There will be three phases with 32 units total. The project will begin Phase I with 12 units. There are four conditions that needed to be met: 1) Finding of Fact updates asked for by the Planning Commission. Jon Stimson went through and explained, 2) Legal reviewed by Mark Johnson, 3) Performance guarantee (bond), pledge to an insurance company to complete the development. If Homestretch does not complete the project, they will not be the owner any longer and the funds will be there to complete it. 4) PILOT program. It exceeds the setbacks. Only 50% of the property is being developed. If there is a natural disaster the evergreen trees will be replaced. Environment will not be affected. Money is available now to do this kind of project. Surrounding property values will not be adversely affected but may enhance them. Renter's income to qualify will be checked annually. Background checks are made. A market study was done by Community Research Services and is included in the handout. Jon went over that study. It was given a positive recommendation. Washer and Dryers are provided, not just the hookups. S. Bobek asked about garbage disposal. It is also provided. Utilities—these units are all electric, no gas. Went over qualifying figures. Income of tenant is reviewed every year. If criminal conduct is reported, it will be investigated. If found to be true, the tenant will be evicted.

Public Comments

Tory Tallent asked if the Project will be using local contractors for services like building and snow removal, etc. He'd also like to be able to give five acres of his twenty acres to his son but because of the Zoning Ordinance he is unable to do that.

Kellye Jelemensky feels all Master Plans are the same. She wanted to know what item# 5.3 in the Zoning Ordinance means. Will PUDs be allowed in all conservation districts? Wants to preserve the Betsie River, rural area, recreation areas. Feels it's not a good fit for this area.

Maree Mulvoy, owner of M&R Plastics, employees residents from Weldon Township in her business in Copemish and there is a housing problem in this area. She is in favor of this development.

Response to Public Comments

Jon Stimson responded to Tory Tallent—yes, they want to employ local contractors that are licensed and insured to do plumbing, electrical, framing, landscaping, and snow removal. Regarding splitting property, Mr. Tallent may come before the Board and make a request to do so. Jon responded to Kellye Jelemensky that Master Plans are mandated by law.

Christine Cline asked if the Weldon Road and Lindy Road would become a four-way stop. Sheriff's Dept now has 24-hour patrol. Doug Mansfield responded that it doesn't warrant a four-way stop at this time.

PILOT Review

Jon Stimson explained the PILOT program. It is an incentive investment in a community to replace property taxes based on the income from rental multiplied by a percentage. It is administered by the State of Michigan. Homestretch is asking for 4% for 30 years. Discussion. Asking for a Tax-Exempt Ordinance for the Crystal Commons. Some units are ADA compliant.

Board Discussion

S. Bobek stated State pays PILOT on State Land.

C. Aldrich stated that Frankfort and Elk Rapids donated property for their housing developments.

S. Williams' concern is if it will benefit our area. He asked about income by County vs Weldon Township. Homestretch has a program to supplement part of the rent. Discussion.

Public Hearing adjourned at 7:31PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Griffin

Weldon Township Clerk