

Village of Riverwoods
Plan Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes June 6, 2024

A meeting of the Village of Riverwoods Plan Commission was held on Thursday, June 6, 2024 at Village Hall. Chairperson Laurie Breitkopf called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Present:

Laurie Breitkopf, Chairperson
Karl Blalock
Sherry Graditor
Stephen Levin
Kathryn Romanelli

Absent:

Mike Marshall
Carey Rothbardt

Also Present:

Dani Moore, Village Clerk
Steve Witt, Director of Community Services

1. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Graditor moved to approve the minutes from the May 2, 2024 Plan Commission meeting. Commissioner Blalock seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

2. Visitors wishing to address the Plan Commission

There were no visitors wishing to address the Plan Commission.

3. New Business

A. Review of resident request to combine two parcels into one zoning lot for 1400 Woodland Lane

Director Witt reported Jonathan and Donna E. Rosin of 1400 Woodland Lane, Riverwoods, IL 60015 are requesting a recommendation of approval to consolidate two residential parcels into one zoning lot. They own both parcels. The basis for the request is to permit construction of a greenhouse addition to the existing house which would not otherwise be permitted due to a required side yard setback.

The subject parcels are each located within an R-1, 42,000 square feet Single-family Residential District. The parcels are adjoining interior lots. The current use of each of the subject parcels is residential, single-family.

The combining of the two parcels will impact the property as follows.

Zoning: No impact. Combining the two parcels does not result in the resulting property becoming non-compliant with respect to applicable zoning regulations for the Zoning District.

Wetlands: Village staff believes that there are wetlands along the south property line of the 1390 parcel. The presence of wetlands may affect future development on the property but does not affect the combination of the two parcels in question. A wetland delineation report is being procured by the petitioner and the results will be taken under advisement when a development permit is applied for.

Woodlands: There is no record of previous removal of protected woodland at either of the two properties. The proposed driveway to be constructed will cut through a portion of woodland but is not anticipated to exceed the 20% threshold.

Utilities: No impact to utilities on or adjacent to the property.

Mr. Rosin has lived in Riverwoods for 29 years. He purchased the adjacent property a few years ago and wants to combine the two parcels and build their dream home.

Commissioner Graditor moved to send a favorable recommendation to the Board of Trustees to approve the request to combine two residential parcels at 2141 Woodland Lane in Riverwoods, Illinois into one zoning parcel, subject to the following conditions: receipt of a mylar version of a Final Plat of Subdivision of the combined parcels, with the minimum information outlined on the checklist for the preparation of a Plat for Consolidation for Combination of Residential Lots. Commissioner Romanelli seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Blalock, Graditor, Levin, Romanelli, Breitkopf (5)

NAYS: None (0)

B. Review of resident request to combine two parcels into one zoning lot for 2141 Woodland Lane North

Director Witt reported Michael Sokolovsky of 2300 Woodland Lane North, Riverwoods, IL 60015, is requesting a recommendation of approval to subdivide two residential parcels, by realigning the location of the common property line between the subject parcels. The petitioner is requesting to make the 2300 Woodland Lane North parcel compliant with the Zoning District minimum lot area and provide the parcel with lake frontage.

Combining the two parcels will impact the property as follows.

Zoning: Realignment of the common property line will bring the 2300 parcel into compliance with the minimum requirement for lot area for the zoning district while maintaining compliance with same for the 2141 parcel. No other zoning requirements are affected.

Wetlands: Although there are wetlands on both properties, realignment of the common property line does not affect the wetland areas.

Woodlands: There is no record of previous removal of protected woodland at either of the two parcels; therefore, there is no impact.

Utilities: No impact to utilities on or adjacent to the parcels U+002e

Mr. Sokolovsky explained living in Riverwoods is his dream. He resides at the 2300 property. The 2141 property is located immediately south thereof and has been vacant since 2005. The petitioner desires to construct a new house on the 2141 property. At the same time, the petitioner desires to make the 2300 parcel conform to the minimum lot area required by the zoning ordinance for the district and provide lake rights for the 2300 property by adjusting the location of the common property line between the two parcels.

Commissioner Graditor asked whether the 2141 property would be adequate to build a house. Director Witt explained the footprint for future development is good. Commissioner Blalock confirmed the extension to the 2300 parcel would be to the east of the property.

Commissioner Blalock moved to send a favorable recommendation to the Board of Trustees to approve the request to subdivide and realign the two residential parcels at 2300 and 2141 Woodland Lane North in Riverwoods, Illinois, subject to the following conditions: receipt of a mylar version of a Final Plat of Subdivision of the combined parcels, with the minimum information outlined on the checklist for the preparation of a Plat for Consolidation for Combination of Residential Lots. Commissioner Graditor seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Blalock, Graditor, Levin, Romanelli, Breitkopf (5)

NAYS: None (0)

C. Discussion of proposed revision to the Residential Planned Unit Development Ordinance

Mr. Huvad explained Michael Blue and Lee Brown from Teska Associates looked at the existing Residential Planned Development (RPD) Ordinance for Thorngate, which was for 125 acres or more, and made changes which included the desired characteristics that have been discussed by the Plan Commission. The draft ordinance provides that

the minimum area of a RPD site is nine (9) acres with single-family or multi-family dwellings. There are two sets of standards, including design standards and enhanced design standards. The design standards are the minimum required standards to get a RPD recommendation, while the enhanced design standards include modifications from the underlying zoning standard. The modifications include conventional zoning and subdivision regulations that are privileges and will be considered by the Village Board only in direct response to the accrual of tangible benefits from the RPD to the Village or neighborhood. RPDs are listed as Special Uses and require Public Hearings and follow the standards and procedures for a Special Use. In reviewing RPD applications, the Plan Commission also will consider standards consistent with Special Uses. The Village can include conditions of development after approval of the Final Development Plan, the use of land and construction, modifications of any buildings or structures within the RPD, and all applicable Village Ordinances not specifically waived in the Ordinance granting a Special Use permit for the RPD.

Mr. Brown explained the fundamental requirement of setting a high standard to get a RPD is very important. The primary misuse of a RPD is the assumption it is a “get out of jail free” card. Mr. Brown suggested a revised set of procedures. Before a petition gets added to the Plan Commission agenda, Mr. Brown suggested two steps: a conceptual presentation by the developer to the Plan Commission and a presentation/conversation with the neighborhood. In these two steps, the developer will get a sense of what needs to be corrected and/or the reactions of the neighbors to the proposal. Mr. Brown explained these steps can be either optional or required. Mr. Huvarud noted other municipalities have a conceptual presentation to the Village Board. Mr. Brown explained many municipalities do not want to do this because it could influence the Plan Commission. Mr. Blue explained the Plan Commission would not vote or be polled in the concept presentation; rather, they would be able to ask questions and provide direction on what may be needed from the developer.

Director Witt suggested both the existing and revised processes should have a technical review. The review team should include staff, consultants and a couple members of the community. Mr. Brown explained the staff would act as gatekeepers and review the submittal completeness, set the Public Hearing date, ensure proper notice is published, and prepare the staff report. Mr. Huvarud suggested the technical review could be more formalized, with a memo transmitted to the Plan Commission and Board so they stay informed. Mr. Blue noted the community meeting would allow the applicant to hear about the community’s concerns without any members of the Board being present, so it does not give the impression the Board is supporting the proposal. It is important the community understands this is a pre-application period and does not give the applicant rights to begin the project.

Commissioner Romanelli clarified residents would be encouraged to attend such a pre-application meeting, but Plan Commissioners, Trustees and staff would not be there. The developer would listen to the homeowners.

Mr. Huvard noted the Village does not have any mechanism to approve multi-family residential in the Village. Without a revised RPD concept, the Village would not have guidelines. The revised RPD Ordinance would give the Village controls by implementing the standards Mr. Blue noted. The draft enhanced standards were based on the Plan Commission's workshop, and should be reviewed to ensure the standards accurately represent the Plan Commission's analysis.

Commissioner Graditor asked what would happen if a developer would only want nine acres for a proposed RPD out of a 40 acre parcel. Mr. Brown explained the Plan Commission would have to consider subdividing the property.

Chairperson Breitkopf asked if Teska Associates is in favor of the proposed Ordinance as drafted. Mr. Brown is in favor of the proposed Ordinance but would like to see added the two steps he described earlier.

Ch. Breitkopf suggested the commissioners read the Ordinance and come to the next Plan Commission meeting with questions and comments. Mr. Huvard suggested sending changes directly to Director Witt prior to the next meeting.

4. Old Business

There was no Old Business.

5. Staff Report

Mr. Witt reported Riverwoods Montessori School filed an application to construct a new garage on the property. The school is only allowed two buildings on the property under its special use, but the new garage would be a third building.

Mr. Witt met with representatives from Orphans of the Storm, which wants to triple the size of its current facility. This expansion would require approval of a special use.

Mr. Huvard noted the agreement with the Fire District would require a Text Amendment. The current Zoning allows for governmental offices but he questioned whether the Fire station is considered a government office. Mr. Huvard suggested the Plan Commission would not try to rezone the property; rather, they would change the O&R1 regulations to include a fire station. Director Witt suggested changing the ordinance from "governmental office" to "governmental facility." Mr. Huvard noted the side yard setback on the east side of the property is too large for the proposed fire station. He suggested the setback might be modified for a governmental facility by the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Huvard noted Federal Life will request a subdivision of its property into five (5) lots with one being the Fire District lot. A second lot will be for the access road; a third lot will be for the existing detention basin to the southwest; a fourth lot will be for a right-of-way (for Lake County); and the fifth lot will be the remaining Village-owned parcel. Mr. Huvard hopes to have the closing for the Federal Life property on October 15, 2024.

The detention basin would be moved to the area between Meadowlake and the new fire station where the north side parking lots are now located. This area is south of the woodlands, which is the lowest area on the site. The Plan Commission will also consider the plat of subdivision.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business or discussion, Commissioner Graditor moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Levin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm. The next scheduled meeting of the Plan Commission is Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeri Cotton