

**Charlottesville Planning Commission
Preliminary Hearing - Franklin LLC PUD Site Plan
Monday, April 11, 2006**

Transcription services generously donated by Willoughby Parks, Woolen Mills resident

CPC Members:

Karen Firehock - (Chairman)
John Fink - (Vice-Chairman)
Craig Barton
Michael Farruggio
Cheri Lewis
Bill Lucy
Kevin O'Halloran

Staff:

Brian Haluska – Neighborhood Development Services

Applicant:

Kent Dougherty – Franklin LLC

Haluska: This is a straight PUD by the applicants this time. It is looking at the text map, 56 parcel 114.2. The rezoning would be from R1S to PUD. The applicant is proposing six units. Three, you know, two, three in a clusters. So under our ordinance it would be considered townhouses.

O'Halloran: Which can be single family.

Haluska: Which can be single family.

(Talking together)

Firehock: Just continue on. Ignore the hecklers.

Haluska: The (word) shows 69 % open space. Twenty percent of that would be undisturbed in the process. There was clearing specifically in the back of the parcel. And the applicant is showing twelve parking spaces for the units. It would be required to do six by rights, so they're doubling the amount. The configuration is behind Mr. Tolbert on the wall there, and you should have a packet of information along with a conceptual type plan. And I'll be happy to answer any questions that you have to the best of my ability.

Firehock: I'll just wait for the applicant. The applicant's here, right?

Haluska: Yes, the representative. The applicant is present.

Lucy: Just a quick question. What's the by-right on this?

Haluska: The by-right as we've determined is four . It can be subdivided into four lots each with a single family residence with the possibility of an accessory apartment if one of the units is unoccupied. So four single-family dwellings. Granted , keep in mind, this would be four different lots. Each would have its own separate driveway.

Lucy: Yes.

Firehock: Are there any other questions for...?

Lucy: At 8,000 square feet per unit?

Haluska: I think it said 50 feet of road frontage. I think that's the limiting factor.

Lucy: That's 6,000 minimum. And they'd all be (inaudible).

Haluska: Yes.

Firehock: More questions? Okay, the applicant is here? Here.

Dougherty: My name is Kent Dougherty. I live at 123 Goodman Street in Charlottesville.

Firehock: Another local. What would you like to tell us about your concept?

Dougherty: I didn't really know I was (inaudible).

Firehock: You don't have to, but it would help.

Dougherty: Sure. I will. I have to.

Farruggio: We can grill him if he... (talking together).

Firehock: Anything you want to tell us.

Dougherty: A couple of quick points. We do feel this is a great in-fill site. One of the reasons we went after this lot is it's a perfect sort of transition edge line between the single-family matrix of East Market Street and Woolen Mills and much heavier industrial usage along the tracks, Franklin, Carlton. Adjacency for our three single-family lots to the north and to the south we have the new industrial park on the corner there. The CSX tracks, Sunrise Court Trailer Park, the Ferron Concrete Plant and directly across the street is the Woolen Mills Self-Storage Unit. These units will look onto the self-storage units.

For all these reasons we just feel it's an appropriate site for higher density. We feel we can achieve a much more interesting site plan as opposed to doing by right before. We feel it meets the city's objectives of higher density and better... it's all here in the PUD application.

I would also like to say based on the conversation you had with the last applicant, early in the process we met with Mr. Higgins and with Brian and discussed this site. We originally proposed a much higher density for this site: twelve units. Basically two, two courtyard developments. two courtyard – a lawn based around a central courtyard.

We then immediately met with the neighborhood. This was a couple of months ago. They reacted pretty strongly to that plan. I have it here if anyone's interested. And based on their reaction we scaled back from what we thought was a more interesting urban, sort of urban move and landscape move to this six-unit plan you see before you. And that was just basically being respectful of their objections to the higher density of ten to twelve units.

I will mention that in the conversation I had with Brian, and with Ron, there was a conversation about affordability, something we could have achieved with the higher density. We discussed one or two affordable units. Had a long conversation about that. With the six units that is no longer an option for us. I think that's about it.

Farruggio: Will these units all be for sale?

Dougherty: They will all be for sale, yes. I will mention that it's a left over site. It's been looked at many times by many developers. We are hoping to be the kind of builders who are seeking these sort of leftover sites and creatively meeting the challenges they present. We will have to put in approximately 300 feet of public sewer at our own expense. There's no public sewer on Franklin Street at the moment.

Firehock: Questions, reactions.

Farruggio: Comments perhaps?

Firehock: Anything.

Farruggio: How wide are these units individually and how many square feet are you envisioning inside?

Dougherty: They are shown diagrammatically at 20 by 40. Two floor. Architecturally there are some, we don't have any elevations for you. But pictures shown are indicative of what we hope to do in keeping with the neighborhood. Two-story frame residence with gables, front porches.

Farruggio: Basements?

Dougherty: No basements. It's a very low-lying lot.

Firehock: It kind of dips down. So it might have water issues or...?

Dougherty: We're waiting on some soil (inaudible).

Firehock: Okay.

Farruggio: What about use of the attic area above the second floor? Is there any (inaudible) for two and half-story, three-story usage?

Dougherty: Not at this time. But then we haven't really gotten into the architectural (inaudible). I think we're right now at the sort of two-story 20 by 40 foot.

Farruggio: And looking at the lot and looking at the six that you have laid out with seven units there, all the way to the right of the schematic, you think there's a place for a seventh unit in there and including some affordability?

Dougherty: McKee Carson is working on the site plan for this for us. I think we're pretty tight. We'd love to get this out of here. I think we don't want to cram. We like having the two buildings. The only way to achieve that would probably be to have one block of seven, which I believe is allowed under townhouse ordinances. However, that feels a little chunky I think for the site. That's one of the reasons I think that the designers shied away from that. It's certainly something we'd be willing to discuss.

Farruggio: I just noticed that the set-back requirements on that side are against the railroad property so it's not as if you were encroaching on somebody else's yard.

Dougherty: Right.

Firehock: But they don't have to worry so much about the set-back with a PUD.

Farruggio: That's true as well.

Firehock: If they can creatively arrange their lot. (Inaudible).

Farruggio: The other thing I wanted to point out was this PUD as different to the other one I think is more appropriate to townhouses. You know because of the curve in the road, the separation from the other detached houses by the lay of the land, the storage across the street. Plus the added benefit of just having one entrance instead of having four driveways on that road. I think this lends toward that detached-type houses as opposed to demanding detached ones. And that's my considerations.

Lewis: If you do a seventh unit that was affordable you'd have a fifteen percent affordability, which is roughly if you were developing the county what would be required of you.

O'Halloran: Hopefully you're going to kick in a ten or more.

Lewis: Shhhh.

Barton: Don't ruin her argument with facts.

Lewis: I didn't know that!

O'Halloran: It helps spread the gospel.

Lewis: It does.

O'Donnell: It's still a good idea to do it.

Firehock: It's also again. There's also other ways.

Lewis: It looks like you've got some land to do it, I mean that's what Mr. Farruggio is suggesting.

Farruggio: Just to the right of that it seems like it could easily...

Firehock: But there's also the way to get affordability too, which is again, buying down the mortgage.

Farruggio: You know there's one thing about (unintelligible). I want to add one other thing. I really applaud the way that you did put the parking around the back and that you did have the whole tree preserve. I'm not sure what the lay of the land is behind that, but you did preserve, what is it, 22%?

Firehock: The tree preserve land is like...

Fink: No, it's a fairly narrow...

Lewis: It only goes up ten feet from just about the parking area into the back.

Farruggio: Leaving the tree preserve that you have in the back and trying to fit something else in to do something affordable all the way to the right, it's...

Fink: I don't think you can do it all the way to the right. You've got a 50 foot from the center of the track to the corner of the building. My building's on the other side. I think that this corner actually would be problematic. It's a very tight corner.

Firehock: I'm sorry.

Fink: I have another question for you. I know that your road borders the backyard of an existing home there?

Dougherty: Two.

Fink: Two but actually the tree preserve, is it kind of at the intersection of those two property lines? I mean the way I walked it the other day. And I'm just curious about your plans to visually buffer from the backyard of that homeowner. So they wouldn't see cars coming and going?

Dougherty: Right. The plan shows... again the key person that's working on this. You know they're trying to do more and more sustainable and native (word), so what they're proposing is a basically native hedge or a hedge of native species. It would probably be better to do something evergreen with non-native species like a large evergreen. I don't know how to assure you that we would be doing everything that we could to make that a pretty opaque barrier.

Fink: Something I'd be sensitive to for your neighbors.

Dougherty: Absolutely. And we've talked to them about that. Of course most native species are deciduous. But we certainly would be doing everything we could to block. Actually their home sits very close to Market Street and there's actually a couple of hundred feet of backyard.

Firehock: It's a huge backyard they have.

Fink: I understand. I live in the Woolen Mills and we typically have big lots there. But it's as new development in a relatively tight site, it's just always good to be sensitive to the existing neighbors

Dougherty: Absolutely, which is one of the reasons we've met twice with the neighbors.

Dougherty: Just for reference, these are a couple of iterations. The first, let's see, the first... one of the first things we came up with. You can see we had quite a bit of building towards the back of the site. And when we shied away from doing ten, twelve units we wanted, knowing that we could do the six, we just wanted to pull them up on the street, just to basically give the street a front face. And that's why we pushed the park around the back.

Firehock: Do they have front porches that are fronting on Franklin Street?

Dougherty: You'll have front porches fronting on Franklin Street, yes.

Firehock: Too bad the self-storage is an unattractive building.

Dougherty: Who knows how long it will be there... (laughter)

Barton: It looks as if you have in the six the configuration which you've got essentially two pods of three, three units with a space between them. The space between them appears to be about the dimension of one of the units. Easily, as I read the plan, it's understandably a sketch. It seems as if the potential for a seventh unit exists fairly easily by considering that. I would - when you come before us the next time- I actually want to understand if that's a critical part of the scheme in terms to getting people to the front. And it doesn't appear to in terms of how you describe the front of the scheme today. Or if that's actually the potential for an affordable unit., or the envelope for an affordable unit actually exists in the configuration that you've laid out. And my suspicion is that it does, without actually dramatically transforming the plan as we see it. I think you could tighten up some of the dimensions particularly as you get close to the road and close to the property line, you know, the railroad, you could probably get a seventh unit in there. And I know the neighborhood is concerned about density. But it seems to me that one could make an argument about seven units as opposed to twelve. So it's something that I think we're going - I'm going to want to talk very carefully about it, precisely about it at our next, the next time we see you.

Dougherty: Especially if we had one scheme with eighteen-foot wide units. It adds up over six units.

Barton: Well. You know, it could be that one of the units is going to be smaller.

Dougherty: Two-hundred and forty. If we went to 18 by 40.

Barton: Or if one of them is smaller.

Dougherty: Exactly. If one of them is larger.

Barton: It seems like there are opportunities you might want to explore.

Firehock: Any suggestions?

Lewis: I just was going to say I like the variation of setbacks along Franklin Street. Very attractive design and the tree preserve, relegated parking, front porches. It seems like a thoughtful design and an improvement on what you were going to do before. Thank you.

Firehock: Other comments? Don't forget about long-lived native species!

(END)