

Minutes
Baltimore County **Design Review Panel**
May 14, 2008

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Call to order

Chairman, Geoffrey Glazer, called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Baltimore County Design Review Panel to order at 6:00 p.m. The following panel members were:

Present	Not Present
Mr. Geoffrey Glazer	Ms. Betsy Boykin
Mr. Dean Hoover	Mr. Scott Rykiel
Ms. Magda Westerhout	Mr. Derrick Burnett
Mr. Christopher Parts	Mr. Donald Kann
Ms. Kathy Palencar (Resident Member – RRLR)	Mr. Thomas Repsher
Mr. Timothy McCubbin (Resident Member – Middle River)	

County staff present included:
Pat Keller, Lynn Lanham, Jenifer German, Krystle Patchak

Minutes of the April 9, 2008 meeting

Ms. Westerhout moved the acceptance of the draft minutes and the motion was seconded by Mr. Hoover and passed by acclamation at 6:03 p.m.

The approved minutes are filed as Appendix B.

ITEM 1

PROJECT NAME: 1212 Ridervale Road

DRP PROJECT #: 494

PROJECT TYPE: Residential, Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Bill Nesbitt, resident of 1212 Ridervale Road, presented the project to the panel. The property in question backs up to a line of trees and the light rail system. The proposal calls for an addition greater than 50% onto the rear of the existing garage. The addition will be used as a master suite. Access to the addition will be through the garage or breezeway that will face the existing home. This project also calls for the re-engineering of the main entrance to the house as well as adding a covered porch and enclosed vestibule at the front of the dwelling.

A 600 square foot storage area and crawl space will be created under the addition. The lot has a sloping topography, therefore all excavated earth will be used to grade around the addition.

The addition will be constructed of hardi-panel and will be painted to match the existing structure. The roof shingles will also be the same material and color as the home's existing roof shingles.

The property owner has met with surrounding neighbors prior to the Design Review Panel meeting. Written approval was obtained from the neighbors on either side of 1212 Ridervale Road as well as residents from across the street.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Mr. Glazer complimented the applicant on a well prepared project and package. He felt that it was very useful to have letters of support prior to the panel meeting.

Ms. Palencar, residential reviewer for the Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland Area, stated that she agreed with Mr. Glazer and feels that the project is very nice in quality and works well with the surrounding community.

Mr. Parts suggested the consideration a brick water table. He suggested carrying the water table around the addition and transitioning it into the hardi-panel.

Ms. Westerhout stated that she agreed with all of the previous panel member comments.

DISPOSITION:

A motion was made by Ms. Westerhout to approve the project as presented. It was suggested that the applicant consider the water table issue.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Parts and approved by acclamation at 6:13 p.m.

ITEM 2

PROJECT NAME: Vincent Farms

DRP PROJECT #: 495

PROJECT TYPE: Residential, Middle River

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Scott Barhight, of Whiteford Taylor Preston, introduced the project to the panel. This is the first project to come before the panel under the Middle River Plan. Mr. Barhight also commented on the pending legislation, which has not yet been voted on but will require 75 ft. wide lots. He explained that if this legislation passes, the site plan would basically remain the same, with the lot size being revised and number of lots reduced.

Kristy Bischoff, of Daft McCune Walker, walked the panel through the proposal. The proposal calls for 35 single-family detached dwellings being constructed on an approximately 14 acre site, zoned DR 3.5. The site is located on the east side of Vincent Farm Lane, south of Ebenezer Road in White Marsh/Middle River, Maryland. In its current state, the site is primarily agricultural land with a stream that runs through the southern portion of the site. The stream will be protected by a forest buffer and the areas not already wooded will be planted. The site is directly adjacent to the south of the new Vincent Farm Elementary School property, currently under construction.

Active open space is proposed adjacent to the school property with a pathway connection from the proposed development to the school property. There is also an area of Passive Open Space that is centrally located within the proposed community.

Ms. Bischoff also explained that they plan to widen Vincent Farm Lane on the side of the road where the project is proposed. The entrance/exit to the site will be placed directly across from Gambrill Road.

Street trees and flowering trees are proposed throughout the site. Signage is proposed at the entrance to the site.

There are various home types available in the development. All homes will be 2-story with attached garages. Buyers will have the choice of which model and elevation. Materials will primarily include vinyl siding with some partial brick use. Privacy fences in the rear yards will be allowed as well as decks.

The Planning Office prepared a staff report for the project (Appendix C).

In response to the staff report, the applicant stated that they would be willing to divide the garage doors and they plan to continue to use siding on all sides and the rear of the homes. They also commented on the minimum 4ft. projection of the garages. The applicant would like this to be 4ft. from the porch or overhang. As far as removing lots in the center of the loop road system, the applicant feels that adequate open space is being provided, so there is no need to remove lots.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Timothy McCubbin, resident member for Middle River, expressed his concerns to the applicant. He explained that most homes in the area are 100% brick. He recommends having an all brick option available for buyers. Mr. McCubbin also questioned lot 28 and its impact on the forest buffer. Ms. Bischoff explained that they will be asking for a waiver. Mr. McCubbin also commented on the elimination of lot 34. The applicant stated that if the pending legislation regarding lot size is passed, some lots will need to be removed in the center. Mr. McCubbin also stated that the community is concerned with the sidewalks being provided. The current neighborhood has no sidewalks. Mr. Keller explained that this project is more of an urban project and the sidewalks are needed for circulation throughout the site and to the school.

Mr. Hoover questioned the relationship between lots 35 and 28 to the site. He feels that they are large homes sitting very close to the surrounding neighborhood. Mr. Hoover also questioned the grading into the forest buffer that will take place on lots 18-27. Ms. Bischoff explained that a variance will be needed and they plan to re-plant the impacted area.

Ms. Westerhout questioned how far apart the homes are. The applicant explained that they sit approximately 20ft. from each other. Ms. Westerhout was concerned with no windows on the sides of the homes. She also feels that the garage is the most prominent element of the homes, which is not a good design. She suggested using shared driveways and detached garages in the rear yard. Ms. Westerhout also stated that sidewalks are necessary in this community.

Mr. Parts also commented on the small amount of windows on the side elevations. He was specifically concerned with lots 27 and 28 and their large vinyl siding appearance at the entrance to the site. Mr. Parts also commented on the removal of lot 34. He suggested removing the home or reconfiguring it. Mr. Parts also stated that most of the available home elevations have the garage as the prominent element. He would also like to see the height of the garage doors aligned with the height of the main entrance doors and windows. Mr. Parts also suggested only providing sidewalks on one side of the street.

Mr. Glazer questioned the applicant about the builder for the project. The elevations that were provided are from Ryan Homes but no formal contract is in place. Therefore another builder could possibly be used and provide different products.

SPEAKERS COMMENTS:

Tom Germroth, of the Vincent Farm/Bird River Community Association stated that all houses in the immediate area are brick on all sides. He conducted a survey of homes on surrounding roads and he suggested that the community be completed in all brick. Mr. Germroth also stated that he agrees with staff regarding the prominence of the garages. He would like to see staff's comments addressed. Mr. Gemroth stated that the community's main concern is the amount of houses that are being placed on the land, and the potential increase in traffic. He would like the community to retain its rural character.

Elaine McCubbin, of 10500 Vincent Farm Lane, stated that she would like the applicant to try to address the comments made by both the panel and staff at this point. She also stated that preservation of the community is most important.

Jim Joyce, of Iron Horse Properties, stated that the development is to be built by a tract builder. He also stated that they are willing to work through the project with the Planning Office to address the comments and concerns by both staff and the panel.

DISPOSITION:

A motion was made by Mr. McCubbin to table the project until legislation is decided. Mr. Parts corrected the motion to state that the project be revised and address the comments made by both the panel and planning staff.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Hoover and passed by acclamation at 7:18 p.m.

Mr. Glazer recommended that the applicant meet with the Planning Office to help work through the issues and comments that were raised.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Code Statement: Section 32 – 4 – 203 (i) (2) of the Baltimore County Code states, *The Panel's recommendation is binding on the Hearing Officer, and on the agencies under subsection (l), (Directors of the Office of Planning, the Department of Permits and Development Management and the Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management), unless the Hearing Officer or agencies find that the Panel's actions constitute an abuse of its discretion or are unsupported by the documentation and evidence presented.*

Approved as of July 9, 2008