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ca Elgin, Illinois

C'ville panel rejects Centex

By Krista J. Lee
STAFF WRITER

CARPENTERSVILLE — To the applause of dozens of residents, the village plan commission Thursday rejected a concept plan submitted by Centex Homes to develop the former Meadowdale Raceway.

About 50 people attended the meeting to protest the Schaumburg developer's proposal of 187 single-family houses, 152 townhouses

and 300 apartment units on 140 acres. The land is west of Illinois 31, north of the Newport Cove subdivision and south of Raceway Woods Forest Preserve.

Many of those present said they would like to see it remain open space. For now, their wish appears to have been granted.

"I'm not impressed at all. I can't see another 1,000 cars" in the area, Plan Commissioner Ed Ritter said to applause from the audience. "Another 400 kids is not something I

want in this village."

"I feel the same way," said Commissioner Phil McDonald. "I can't stand behind a plan like that."

Commission Chairman Joe Haimann asked the developers why estate lots of at least 1 acre had not been considered.

Jim Truesdell, planning and entitlements manager for Centex Homes, said the development proposal was designed with the village's comprehensive master plan in mind.

Although the property is zoned general industrial, the master plan identified it as residential area with low- to medium-density housing.

Centex: In line with master plan

The concept plan submitted by Centex Homes had a density of 4.6 units per acre, which falls in line with the master plan.

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MARTY O'MARA / THE COURIER NEWS

CENTEX

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"Clearly, our feeling is the (industrial) zoning ... it's an inappropriate zoning today," Truesdell said. "Primarily around the entire site is residential properties."

The master plan called for a road to extend from a residential development to Elm Avenue, which is west of the development. It also called for commercial development along Illinois 31, instead of residential development. Truesdell said these were minor points and didn't really matter.

Where it did not conform with the master plan was including a road connection to Elm Avenue and providing commercial development along Illinois 31. Truesdell said these were minor inconsistencies, and overall the development conforms with the master plan.

Prior to the plan commission meeting, village staff recommended the concept plan not be approved. Concerns over the rezoning and inconsistencies with the master plan, along with the impact it would have on Community Unit School District 300, led the staff to the decision.

Truesdell said he understood those concerns, but the development would generate about \$800,000 in impact fees for the school district plus property taxes.

Petitioners want open space

"Peanuts," cried someone in the audience.

The audience also did not accept Truesdell's explanation of the 37 acres of open space that would be left in the development.

"That amount of open space is not going to appease the people in this area," said Kay Teeter of Carpentersville.

Geoff Petzel, a Dundee-Crown High School student, said even if the developers created a plan with a lower housing density, the land still should not be developed.

"I don't see how that area of the property could be developed without massive grading," he said. "This property is going to be a nightmare."

Prior to the meeting Petzel said he would like to see the property remain open space and continue as an outdoor classroom for Dundee-Crown students.

One way for that to happen is for Dundee Township to purchase the property, a recommendation urged by several people. Although the plan commission has no authority on the matter, one woman held up a petition with 811 signatures of people asking the township to buy the property that once was at the top of its open-space priority list.

But the space is not back on the selling block, yet. Centex Homes still has a contract to purchase the property, and after the meeting Truesdell said he is not sure if the development company is ready to walk away.

"We have to go back and evaluate what our next step will be," he said.

Destinations.

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