

**VILLAGE OF HUNTLEY**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION & ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**  
**JOINT MEETING**  
Wednesday, July 30, 2008  
MINUTES

**CALL TO ORDER**

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Tom Kibort called to order the joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals of the Village of Huntley on Wednesday, July 30, 2008 at 7:00 pm in the Municipal Complex Village Board Room at 10987 Main St, Huntley, Illinois 60142. The room is handicap accessible.

**ATTENDANCE`**

**PLANNING**

**COMMISSIONERS** Commissioners Ruby Hornig, Russ Palermo, Dawn Ellison, and Tom Kibort

**COMMISSIONERS**

**ABSENT:** Chairman Ron Hahn; Commissioners David Patterson, and Len Stensing

**ZONING BOARD**

Chairman Jack Tures; Members: Joe Manning, and Lou Stanczak, Christopher Habel, and Donald Bond

**ZONING BOARD**

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Members Terri Martin and Lee Linnenkohl

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Senior Planner Charles Nordman, Planner James Williams, Director of Development Services Lisa Armour, and Recording Secretary Kari Turco of Karick & Associates.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Approval of the June 9, 2008 Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes

Planning Commission Acting Chairman Kibort asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes.

**A MOTION was made to approve the June 9, 2008 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes as presented:**

**MOVED:** Commissioner Ellison

**SECONDED:** Commissioner Hornig

**AYES:** Commissioners Kibort, Hornig, Palermo, and Ellison

**NAYS:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0**

B. Approval of the July 16, 2008, Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes

Chairman Tures asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes.

**A MOTION was made to approve the July 16, 2008 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes as presented:**

**MOVED:** Member Habel  
**SECONDED:** Member Manning  
**AYES:** Members Manning, Habel, Bond; Chairman Tures  
**NAYS:** None  
**ABSTAIN:** Member Stanczak  
**MOTION CARRIED** 4:0:1

**PETITIONS**

- A. Petition No. 08-7.2, Mertz Development Inc., 412 acres, more or less, located at the Northeast corner of the intersection of West Main Street and Coyne Station Road, Requesting Conceptual Review of a proposed mixed-use development.**

Senior Planner Nordman presented the petition.

**Petitioner**

Romke Road, LLC  
4N836 Dunham Road  
Wayne, IL 60184

**Owner**

Romke Road, LLC  
4N836 Dunham Road  
Wayne, IL 60184

**Location**

The ±412-acres, more or less, bounded by the Union Pacific Railroad tracks to the north and northeast, Coyne Station and Marengo Roads to the west and West Main Street to the south.

**Zoning, Land Use and Comprehensive Plan**

The zoning, land use and comprehensive plan land uses were outlined for the property-in-question as well as for the adjacent property tracts.

**Administration/Development Summary**

The proposed Land Use Plan for the ±412 acre site designates approximately 192 acres for residential, 80 acres for retail, 36 acres for stormwater/open space, 21 acres for assisted living, and 16 acres for a transit station. The petitioner is requesting approval for 2,000 dwelling units as part of the project (not including assisted living).

The proposed plan identifies 16 acres adjacent to the extended Algonquin Road and Union Pacific Railroad Line exclusively for a Metra Train Station Complex. However, the site may need to be as much 20 acres in size to accommodate Metra requirements.

Proposed retail development is primarily centered near the intersection of the extended Algonquin Road and Kreutzer Road (74 acres). An additional 6 acres of retail is proposed at the intersection of the Marengo Road and the extended Algonquin Road.

Road improvements for the project include, most notably, the extension of Algonquin Road west of Route 47. Additional improvements would also include the realignment of Main Street and Coyne Station Road and extension of Kreutzer Road through the site.

### **Transit Station Site Selection & Transit Oriented Development Steering Committee**

The Village has recently established a steering committee to create a Transit Station Area Plan and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) development guidelines (It should be noted, this process is independent from the Mertz Development application). This site and another site at Kreutzer Road and the railroad tracks will be evaluated to determine which site is most feasible for a transit station, which could include bus service in lieu of or in addition to a Metra station. The Kreutzer Road property was annexed in 2007 with the Par/Tucker annexation. The annexation agreement required the developer to provide a 20-acre site for a transit station. To lead this process the Village has hired the consulting services of the Lakota Group and Civiltech. This planning assignment is an important opportunity for the Village to:

- *Create a clear, documented vision of the community's transportation future, including the potential for a transit station and development around it.*
- *Create a circulation and access plan along with guidelines for development around the selected transit station site.*
- *Optimize the Village's short- and long-range development framework for the selected station area.*
- *Attract development to the selected site that is compatible with community goals, needs, infrastructure, and character.*

The Lakota Group will work closely with the Village throughout the planning process to garner Village Board, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and community input, including an area/site tour, focus groups, participatory workshops, Staff reviews, and presentations. The Steering Committee kick-off meeting was held on July 22, 2008, and it is anticipated that it will take approximately six months to complete the project. Members of the Steering Committee include representatives from the Village Board, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Metra, Pace, McHenry County Department of Transportation, Kane County Department of Transportation, Regional Transit Authority (RTA), and the McHenry County Conservation District.

### **Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals Requested Action**

It is important to note that this review is conceptual at this time. The petitioner is requesting that the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals review the proposed development to obtain feedback from the Village regarding the possibility of developing the plan as proposed in accordance with the Huntley Zoning Code regulations. This review is conceptual and does not bind the Village in any additional review processes.

The contract purchaser, Troy Mertz, and his representative, Todd Briner with V3 Engineering presented more details for their concept plan.

Mr. Briner began by stating that in February, 2007 the petitioner, in cooperation with Teska and Associates, presented an overview of Transit-Oriented Design (TOD) before a joint meeting of the Village Board, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals. Mr. Briner continued by stating that in the intervening months since the February '07 joint meeting the petitioner has refined a plan for the subject property based on market analysis to develop a specific conceptual design for the subject property. A goal of that plan is to offer a variety of products to meet fluctuations in market demand. Currently, the multi-family rental market is relatively stable as well as for assisted living and, in the petitioner's opinion, it is in the best interest of all concerned to attempt to smooth out the cyclical market trends by offering a variety of housing types, styles and configurations. The first phase may not utilize the smaller-residential lots, but the overall aim was to create a plan that works with an ever-changing market place.

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort asked for details on the proposed row homes.

Mr. Briner said they contemplated row homes similar to the Ryland product in Gilberts. They are not shown on the plan because the existing inventory in Talamore is high. Mr. Briner continued by pointing out urban flats, which are more of a condo-product, similar to those in the Bristol Bay subdivision in Yorkville, replaced half of the row homes. The buyer demographic will be more geared toward transit oriented purchasers – recent college grads and empty nesters with row home buyers having higher incomes.

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort asked what type of product is planned for the 5,000 and 6,000 square foot lots.

Mr. Briner explained it would be most likely a rear loaded product, which has worked in some areas, offering low maintenance and providing a cluster design, similar in scope to duplexes in Sun City with the foundations attached but the appearance of two separate structures.

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort asked if the same developer would build each of the different products, and he was told that each product would most likely be developed by a specialist most capable for producing a specific product line. He then asked if there would be walk-thru retail, big box or smaller urban centers.

Mr. Briner explained the two large polygon areas adjacent to the Algonquin Road extension bubbles would accommodate big-box type development with outlots for restaurants and boutiques further west with the intent to create a town center to support the potential Metra station site.

Action Planning Commission Chairman Kibort asked if there would be retail on the first floor with apartments or condos above, and he was told that they would not be appropriate for a retail parcel that large. Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort suggested that they would be more appropriate next to the Metra station as well as convenience retail in general.

Mr. Mertz stated that he has been working on this project for two years and envisions retail supported by residential. The Senior Assisted Living parcel will incorporate surrounding retail development. Mr. Mertz stated it may be ten years before these elements are complete and when the Metra station is finished. It's completely inappropriate to decide today before we know about Metra.

Mr. Briner added that it needs to remain flexible for those types of uses.

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort asked why the annexation agreement initially had a proposed twenty-acre Metra station parcel that is now only sixteen acres.

Mr. Mertz explained that Metra initially considered a plan incorporating an off-site switching station which is now tentatively proposed for a location to the northwest along the potential Metra-line adjacent to, or near, a future Marengo Metra station. He further explained the 20 acre template included area for stormwater detention. Mr. Mertz explained that stormwater detention would be provided elsewhere within the development.

Mr. Briner added the plan entails only conceptual engineering and detention areas.

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort read a letter from Commissioner Dave Patterson, which expressed Commissioner Patterson's disappointment with the 5-6,000 square foot lots. He advised the Village and the Commission to move slowly and cautiously on this project.

Commissioner Ellison asked about the transition between lot sizes and asked if the project could be reconfigured so as to place the 10,000 square foot lots closer to the five-acre parcels.

Mr. Briner agreed this reconfiguration may be warranted.

Commissioner Ellison asked about Coyne Station Road not having a right-in/right-out and Mr. Briner explained the plan is designed to emphasize Kruetzer Road and de-emphasize Coyne Station to limit the tendency for high speeds along a straight, flat roadway.

Commissioner Ellison expressed concern about pulling all the traffic to the west side of Route 47, and it was explained that the west side will have that traffic regardless. Commissioner Ellison expressed her concern for residents around Bonnie Brae, but commended the petitioner for the plans for Algonquin Road. She suggested letting these residents know about the possibility of a rail yard in proximity to a rail station because they will fight it. It was reiterated that the rail-yard will probably be located in Marengo.

Commissioner Palermo stated that all his concerns have been addressed and he is happy with the concept.

Commissioner Hornig said it is about time something is done with that property and added that it is a good location for the Metra and/or transit station.

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort reiterated the concern with the lot sizes. He added that an original plan for the area was a golf course and mixed-use with the Metra station. This is very conceptual at this time, but give and take may be required by possibly feathering in the dense development near the retail. There is concern with the 10,000 square foot lots instead of the 12,600 square foot lots.

Mr. Briner clarified that the minimum would be 10,000 but the average would be 12,600 or so. The last thing we need is another golf course. One housing movement is that energy is becoming

paramount and the average size of a home is decreasing along with the lots. This is coming faster than anyone anticipated. He added that the other plan in the works shows more detail and the project's walkability, including trails, greenways, open spaces and parks scattered throughout.

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort asked if there is a bridge over the tracks. Mr. Briner answered yes.

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort stated that it is important for the transit site to be sized for the Metra station needs, and the concept of retail on the first floor with convenience shops is important as well as the cohesiveness to the whole development with walkability. He was told that those are the same as the developer's concerns because if there is no cohesiveness, it will flounder.

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort stated that it is important for there to be public entertainment in the common areas.

Zoning Board Member Bond stated that he is very upset about the square footage of the residential lots and that in his opinion none of the proposed lots meet the threshold minimums the ZBA helped to establish a number of years ago. ZBA member Bond recounted his start on the board fifteen years ago when 8,000 square foot lots were typical and how he and fellow board members worked to increase lot sizes to 12,600 square feet. Member Bond then quoted the Lot Standards from the Village's zoning code and recommended an addendum to the code that gives the history for future reference. He added that it is not the row homes or condos he dislikes, but rather the single family home lot sizes. Member Bond stated he appreciates that the plan has evolved from a 90%/10% "split", residential to retail, to an 80%/20% "split" between those respective uses. Presently local schools are overburdened and with 2.1 kids per household this could potentially make them worse. Years ago the comprehensive plan set a goal of 60% to 40%, residential to non-residential "split" and the latest survey indicates a desire for a Metra station, so Member Bond finds no fault on that part of the plan itself but does have a problem with the proposed lot sizes.

Mr. Briner explained that this project is about achieving balance to provide for the entire Village, County and State, and concurred with ZBA member Bonds' statement. The subject development is unprecedented due to the significant capital expenditures to accommodate for the extension of Algonquin Road, the north/south bypass and the reservation of land for the Metra station. Provision of these various project elements requires certain densities and rates of return to offset the expense for the regional transportation requirements included in the development plan. If only one type of housing is built, retail growth suffers. Furthermore, Mr. Briner pointed out, there are portions of Del Webb Sun City with relatively small lots balancing consumer demand with larger-lot portions of the development.

Member Bond suggested keeping in mind Sun City development does not place a single child into the local school system. If the proposed development could guarantee a modest impact on the local schools the smaller lots would stand a greater chance of being approved.

Mr. Briner reiterated the importance of balance. He suggested that the impact fees were set up to mitigate the impact, and it is the fiduciary responsibility of the schools to use those impact fees

appropriately. Mr. Biner commended the village for reaching out to the school district to come up with the impact fee solution and stressed the need for addressing the proposed plan from a balanced perspective.

Member Bond suggested dropping the 5,000 and 6,000 square foot lots, and Mr. Briner explained that it is premature to rule out any land-use during the conceptual, information-gathering stage.

Member Bond said that the developer is not following the rules and the Zoning Board does not have the authority to accommodate these requests.

Member Habel stated that lot size is a concern.

Member Manning asked if there was a timeline available.

Mr. Briner stated it would not be any time soon, this is a long-term project and no one knows when the housing market is coming back. The market will only absorb so much – even in robust times, Sun City took the entire ten years.

Member Manning asked about the infrastructure of the roads, and Mr. Briner explained that they met with the Trustees on January 10. They want Algonquin Road sooner than later so that is our goal. There is no certain date available but it will be sooner than later. This project relies on Algonquin Road as much as the Village needs it. Our interests are aligned on this.

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort repeated that there is a concern with lot sizes but if the retail details are nailed down and the Metra station goes in, all the rest will fall in line. This is the type of product that will affect the number of kids, but the row houses and the higher end townhomes may ease that. We recognize these improvements are financially considerable, so with high quality products, the density is not as much of an issue.

Member Bond stated that he is not against the residential transit oriented design elements of the plan, but he is against the 5,000, 6,000 and 8,000 square foot single-family lots. As policy-makers, we cannot take a businessman's word that the market will turn toward smaller homes and smaller lots.

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort suggested that instead of the 5,000 square foot lots, maybe a multi-family product would be okay. We need a little give and take.

Mr. Briner stated that the developer has not defined a product but is hearing the point.

Zoning Chairman Tures stated that the lot size is also his biggest concern.

Acting Planning Commission Chairman Kibort opened the floor for audience participation, but there was none. He stated that the reaction to the concept is generally favorable other than the lot sizes. Both boards agreed.

## **DISCUSSION**

Senior Planner Nordman announced that the next meetings would be Monday, August 11 and Wednesday, August 13, 2008.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**At 8:10 pm, A MOTION was made to adjourn the Joint Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals July 30, 2008 meeting**

<b>MOVED:</b>	<b>Member Bond</b>
<b>SECONDED:</b>	<b>Commissioner Hornig</b>
<b>All</b>	
<b>NAYS:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>MOTION CARRIED</b>	<b>9:0:0</b>

Respectfully submitted,  
Kari L. Turco  
Kari L. Turco  
Recording Secretary  
Karick & Associates