

MURRAY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2013
5:00 P.M.

The Murray Planning Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, November 19, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. in the council chambers of City Hall located at 104 N. 5th Street.

Commissioners Present: Mary Anne Medlock, Kevin Perry, Ed Pavlick, Marc Peebles, Jeremy Boyd, Loretta Jobs, Tom Kind and Robin Zhang

Commissioners Absent: John Krieb and Ed Davis

Also Present: Candace Dowdy, Justin Crice, Reta Gray, Hawkins Teague, Nat Rassi, Gary Keckley and public audience

Chairman Pavlick called the meeting to order and welcomed all guests and applicants. Candace Dowdy swore in new board member Robin Zhang. Chairman Pavlick asked the commissioners if there were any changes, additions or deletions to the minutes from the October 15, 2013 regular meeting. Ms. Dowdy noted that after proofreading the minutes there were a few minor changes that she would be making to the minutes and that they were discussed with Chairman Pavlick.

Jeremy Boyd made a motion to accept the minutes from the October 15, 2013 Planning Commission regular meeting as amended. Marc Peebles seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Advisory Meeting: Proposed Residential Planned Development Project located on North 16th Street – The Keys – Nat Rassi, JN Rassi, Inc.: A Power Point presentation was used to show the property on North 16th. This property is zoned B-2 Highway Commercial and is surrounded by B-2 in all directions with R-4 Multi-Family Residential to the Northwest. Justin Crice explained that Nat Rassi, with JN Rassi Inc., is proposing to develop five lots of the Hale Development Company property into a residential planned development project. This property totals 4.22 acres and is located north of The Keg Restaurant and southwest of the August Moon property on Lowes Drive. Mr. Rassi has submitted plans proposing to construct six (6) three story residential apartment buildings at this site with plans for a clubhouse and a swimming pool. A minor subdivision plat combining these five lots will have to be submitted and approved to develop this property as a PDP. Mr. Crice stated that the site plan proposes two means of ingress/egress to the property from North 16th Street as well as Lowes Drive and that Mr. Rassi indicated he would be willing to work on those proposed entrances if necessary. Parking has been placed around the units and is mostly shown within the building setbacks. Mr. Rassi is proposing to put 72 four bedroom units at this location for a total of 288 beds. The drive aisle will maintain 24 feet around the development and Fire Marshall Dickie Walls stated this was sufficient space for emergency access. Don Roger with Murray Sanitation Department recommended a compactor, for a development of this size but there has not been a location designated on the site plan at this time. Mr. Crice continued that density for this proposed development is shown to be 17 units per acre. The Murray Zoning Ordinance does not define density for a B-2 Business District, so density in a business district has been looked at in one of following three ways:

- The R-3 residential zoning district bases density on square footage per unit and would allow up to 59 units on this property.

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- The R-4 residential zoning district bases density on square footage per unit and would allow up to 89 units on this property.
- In the Future Land Use Element of the 2009 Murray Comprehensive Plan, the high density residential areas have a gross density of 15.8 units per acre which would allow up to 67 units on this property.

Parking is being shown with 288 spaces for residents and 26 for visitors for a total of 314 striped spaces. This proposal would require a variance because the regulations require one (1) additional space per dwelling unit for visitor parking for a total of 360 required spaces with 4 spaces being allotted for the dumpster area. The submitted renderings do not show an elevation of the building, but the maximum building height in a B-2 Zoning District is 35 feet. Mr. Crice referred to the sidewalks along North 16th that were installed during 2012. Mr. Crice stated that he had looked at the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet traffic numbers for this area that were compiled in 2012. The results showed that north of University Heights Subdivision and south of Campus Suites there were approximately 4,000 vehicles traveling there every day. On the south side of Hwy 121, there were some 6,000 vehicles counted during a 2011 count. Mr. Crice showed the proposed location on the Future Land Use Map which is identified as Commercial use and then he reviewed some Census numbers for 2010 for the immediate area. Mr. Crice said the State does have plans for expansion of Hwy 121 Bypass North. The widening will affect the intersection at North 16th and Hwy 121 and will begin near the same area of the proposed development.

Candace Dowdy pointed out a couple of things for the commissioners to consider. Ms. Dowdy stated that Planning Staff has some concern as far as the number of units being proposed since the property is located in a B-2 Zoning District where there are really no regulations to calculate the appropriate number of units for density. Typically, Planning Staff would compare it to the R-3 or R-4 Zoning District which are both multi-family. She continued that if this property is developed as residential use it doesn't leave much commercial property available for development between 12th and 16th Streets along the 121 corridor. Ms. Dowdy referred to the Campus Suites project as it is also zoned B-2 and has a lower density. In the Comprehensive Plan, it states that the higher density residential areas should be closer to Murray State's campus. Ms. Dowdy explained that a sewer line runs diagonally across the property near the proposed location of the swimming pool and that could present an issue. In addition, the proposed buildings are three story and the only other three story developments in this area sit back further off the street. Commissioner Kind said that he has some concerns with the drainage. He does not know the plans for stormwater detention; however, the drainage runs south towards The Keg and he remembers when this area flooded some years back and there were cars floating and a big pipe sticking up out of the ground. Mr. Kind continued that if he lived there, he would want to walk to Campus and there are not any sidewalks on that section of North 16th Street that link up to the Hwy 121 intersection. Ms. Dowdy said that when the road is widened and the intersection improved, the State will be installing sidewalks to that area. Ms. Dowdy continued to say that earlier in the day she and David Roberts were discussing this project, and they thought the reality of students walking from this location all the way to the campus was unlikely.

(James) Nat Rassi, Hedge Row Court, Monticello, Illinois was sworn in. Mr. Rassi stated that beyond this first step of getting approved for the project, one of the first things they will work on is the Civil Engineering and address the stormwater drainage. He did continue that the drainage will be buried with underground retention with the intent to slow down the flow of water into the existing storm sewer. Chairman Pavlick asked who they would be targeting by having four bedroom units. Mr. Rassi replied that they were targeting students. "Purpose built student housing" is the new wave in the student housing industry and a national market. Most of the people that are involved in this type of development keep

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their eyes on good campuses and try to find good locations to develop or to acquire new properties. The four bedroom four bathroom model is very common because basically each student gets their own private suite. Mr. Rassi said there are two other “purpose built student housing” developments in Murray and they are now both owned by Campus Evolution Villages. These two developments have a total of 900 beds between them in student housing; they are 100% occupied and traditionally stay at that percentage. In the scope of choosing this particular property, they focused on the proximity of the site to Murray State University for a walkable alternative. Nationally they also focus on the barriers in relation to how many busy streets will have to be crossed. They feel that a good proportion of the students will choose to walk to class and leave their automobiles parked. Mr. Rassi stated that the three story buildings will be constructed within the 35 foot height limit. He continued that there is some slope to the property and once they get a little bit further along with the project, they will have detailed topographical information that will help determine whether the housing will have 8 or 9 foot ceilings. Mr. Rassi said that parking will be the only variance needed and he would be willing to sacrifice additional spaces for more green space. He is sure there will be more conversation later on plantings for the North 16th side to help beautify that area as well. Chairman Pavlick asked if they would consider putting in a fence between the development and The Keg Restaurant. Mr. Rassi replied that they would in order to block that off for visual reasons. Commissioner Medlock asked if the 16th Street entrance was viable. Mr. Rassi said that his preference would be to eliminate it all together but if there is a requirement from the Fire Marshal, they will put it in. He added that he does have concerns with the way it empties onto 16th Street. Mr. Rassi stated that they are willing to work with the City on making that decision of keeping two entrances or only having one. Commissioner Perry said that he was not sure that a second egress was necessary because the property is surrounded by roads and if there was an emergency, he is sure that the emergency vehicles would jump the curbs.

Ms. Dowdy asked if they could eliminate one of the buildings, spread the other ones out a bit and create more green space. Mr. Rassi said that they would have to run the numbers on that before committing to that. One of the reasons that he came to Murray is because he likes the area. After visiting here for the past year, he has found that the rents aren't really that high; therefore, they need to have as much density as they can. This is a projected high density development and they are willing to look at it in more detail. In buildings #3 and #5, they have discussed putting some three bedroom units in versus the four bedroom units that are proposed. This would give a longer landscape area between each building. His responsibility is to find investors that are willing to invest 13 million dollars into a project as this. In order to do that, the project has to generate the cash flow. Each building will have twelve apartments with four bedrooms per unit totaling 48 bedrooms per building. There is approximately 20 feet between the buildings and they plan on creating picnic areas in that space. Security is a big part of their objective; therefore, there will be adequate outdoor lighting. Mr. Crice asked what type of material the outside of the buildings would be. Mr. Rassi replied that they would probably be fiber cement or a solid material. They will not be using vinyl as it does not have the tendency to hold up well. They would entertain the idea of brick; however, it doesn't exactly fit into the motif they are looking for. They are intending on adding some color to that corridor and the Florida Keys has lots of color; thus the idea of “The Keys” came about. Mr. Crice asked if the idea of putting bike racks would encourage the tenants to bike. Mr. Rassi replied that he thought so. Mr. Rassi said there are not any other pieces of property that are available that are any closer to Murray State and that was actually one of the benefits of this particular piece of land. As they give tours through the property in the future, they will stress that the property is within walking distance to the campus. Commissioner Jobs asked how many entrances there were to each building. Mr. Rassi explained that there will be an entrance at each end of the building with an open air breezeway in the middle. Mr. Crice stated that he had previously lived in student housing with open breezeways that tend to deteriorate throughout time and he then asked if Mr. Rassi had considered enclosing that

breezeway. Mr. Rassi replied that it would depend on the building and fire codes. He continued that they would consider doing that; however, they do not wish to heat or air condition that area. Keeping the buildings clean is a big part of their job and anything that they can do to prevent cleaning everyday will be considered. Commissioner Perry asked if Mr. Rassi had been involved in a project of this kind before. Mr. Rassi replied that he had been a part of seven other developments, but not one such as this; however, he has actually managed several other similar developments.

Chairman Pavlick asked the commissioners if they were ready to give Mr. Rassi some direction as to whether he should move forward with this proposal. Ms. Dowdy suggested that Mr. Rassi look at working the following items into the site plan:

- Look at the density numbers
- Look at bike racks
- Locate site for garbage compactor
- Keep the height of the buildings at 35 feet
- Stormwater detention

Marc Peebles made a motion to forward this project to the Murray Board of Zoning Adjustments for a compatibility hearing. Tom Kind seconded the motion and the motion carried with a 7-1 voice vote. Mary Anne Medlock voted no.

Revised Final Plat Review: Revised Final Plat review for a Residential Planned Development Project located on Utterback Road – The Villages at Hickory Woods (Formerly Wellington Place) – Goodworks Unlimited, LLC: Ms. Dowdy used a Power Point presentation to show the property that Gary Keckley with Goodworks Unlimited, LLC recently purchased on Utterback Road from Paul and Vickie Garland that was being developed as a Residential Planned Development Project known as Wellington Place Apartments. This property is just west of Hickory Woods Retirement Center which Mr. Keckley and Murray Senior Living, LLC also own. The property is located in an R-4 Multi-Family residential zone and is surrounded by county property to the north and west, R-4 Multi-Family residential to the east, and B-2 Highway Commercial to the south. Mr. Keckley is proposing to continue developing this property as residential but would like to alter the final plat that was approved in May of 2012 with a new design for The Villages at Hickory Woods. This project will be geared toward senior residents that still maintain independent living while having the same amenities offered by Hickory Woods Retirement Center. Under the PDP regulations in the Zoning Ordinance it states that there shall be no change, alteration, amendment or extension of any approved PDP final plat unless such change alteration or amendment or extension is approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustments and that the changes must be consistent with the Planning Commission's intent and direction of the project. Ms. Dowdy stated that the original project consisted of 37 one bedroom units and was granted a 33 space parking variance. This revised plat shows a reduction in the number of units to 21 total units. They are proposing one building with seven two bedroom units and one building with six one bedroom units on the south end of the property. Some of these units will have an enclosed one car garage. On the north end of the property they are proposing to construct four duplexes with each unit having two bedrooms and a two car garage. Parking requirements for the development is sufficient based on the parking variance approved for Wellington Place and the parking as shown on the plat. Hickory Woods is in the process of putting a Memory Care Unit around the back of their existing building and in doing so they will be putting a "loop road" on the north side. The revised Final Plat shows a drive connection for the purpose of transporting meals to the new residents as well as an additional means of ingress/egress to

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the property. Underground stormwater detention was already put in place prior to Mr. Keckley purchasing the property.

Ms. Dowdy indicated that Mr. Keckley has stated there is a possibility of purchasing additional land for more units in the future. Mr. Keckley would like to connect this property to the loop road that is being constructed on the Hickory Woods property. Mr. Keckley understood any change to this plat would need approval by the Planning Commission.

Gary Keckley, 2202 Jefferson Court, Franklin, Tennessee was sworn in. Mr. Keckley clarified the negotiations process going on and the proposed boundaries of the property they were trying to acquire. He stated he did not know when the land sale might be finished. He spoke about the future plans and said the proposed loop road was a different phase separate from what was in front of the Planning Commission. Mr. Keckley said he wanted to do the connection/connector loop last to give time to acquire the additional property and come back before the board. Ms. Dowdy then clarified that the Commissioners were voting on the number of units as shown on the plat regardless of how the loop road or connection changes.

Loretta Jobs made a motion to approve the Revised Final Plat for the Residential Planned Development Project located on Utterback Road for The Villages at Hickory Woods by Goodworks Unlimited, LLC, with the reduction in the number of units, parking as presented and there being a joint access road to the Hickory Woods property as a second means of egress. This is contingent upon BZA approval and the project meeting all other city regulations. Jeremy Boyd seconded the motion and the motion carried with a 8-0 roll call vote.

Questions and Comments: Marc Peebles introduced Aaron Dail from the audience. Mr. Dail was recently chosen as the new Murray Chamber President/CEO. Mr. Peebles welcomed Mr. Dail.

Adjournment: Marc Peebles made a motion to adjourn. Jeremy Boyd seconded the motion and the motion passed with a unanimous vote. *The meeting adjourned at 6:15p.m.*

Chairman, Ed Pavlick

Recording Secretary, Reta Gray