Voorhees Township Environmental Commission Minutes July 23, 2019

**\*Special Meeting\***

The Chairperson called the meeting to order. It was stated that this meeting is being held in compliance with the “Open Public Meetings Act and has been duly published and noticed as required by law”.

FLAG SALUTE

ROLL CALL

Present: Mrs. Brown, Mr. Rashatwar, Mrs. Schwartz, Mr. Pike, Mr. Khayati, Mr. Sytnik and Mr. Hale

Absent: Mr. Gaffney

Mr. Joseph Giddings, CME Consultant also present.

NEW BUSINESS

Victory Commons Corporation/Voorhees Housing Associates, LLC

Block: 263/Lot:11

1223 Berlin Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043

Preliminary and Final Site Plan

The attorney for the applicant, Mr. James Burns, Esq. introduces Mr. Nick Cangelosi Vice-President of Development for the Michaels Group. Mr. Cangelosi begins by explaining the application as including 8.12 acres of land located at the easterly side of Haddonfield-Berlin Road. He states that the project aims to build 81 garden-apartment style affordable housing units. In working with Mr. Abromovitz, the property owner and the municipality, the States requirement of providing affordable housing through new construction regulations can be addressed through this project. The Council on Affordable Housing, also known as COAH is the State agency responsible for establishing and monitoring municipal affordable housing obligations in New Jersey. Financing for this project will begin in September through The NJ Mortgage and Finance Agency. The project will consist of 9 buildings which will be family oriented and include a club house, fitness room, community center, multiple purpose room, a Tot Lot and sufficient parking. Mr. Burns asks Mr. Cangelosi to confirm that the project will conform to all Housing Ordinances pursuant with Voorhees Code. He also advises that they meet all the Zoning setbacks and require no variances.

Mr. Burns then introduces the engineer for the project as Mr. Mark Malinowski, PE, PLS with Stout & Caldwell Engineers, LLC. Mr. Malinowski agrees to address the Consultants letter dated 7/19/19. Mr. Hale asks how the applicant plans to satisfy the tree removal assessment and the compensatory replanting. Mr. Malinowski advises that all trees 5 inch in caliber or greater will be inventoried. He further explains that the Northeast and Southeast corners will not need clearing and they will preserve the existing vegetation. Mr. Hale advises that the VEC will ask the Planning Board to make their approval dependent upon a satisfactory Tree Removal/Compensatory Planting plan. He further requests that the applicant revise Section 2.6 of the EIS to address the likely impact of tree removal since it currently states that the project will not result in the loss of natural vegetation. Mr. Hale asks Mr. Malinowski to refer to the Stormwater Review, even though the Planning Board Engineer will address it, and asks that since the stormwater management basin proposes an approximate 14 foot cut that the applicant should submit soil profile pit logs. Applicant advises that the Planning Board Engineer, Rakesh Darji, reviewed the plan and that his review letter to the Planning Board addresses the stormwater and drainage, which is under their prevue. Applicant states that a Phase I Assessment is currently being worked on but is not yet finished.

Mr. Hale then opens the public portion.

John Dusek

8 Bennett Way, Voorhees

Mr. Dusek states that he is aggravated that there are so many typos on the report which makes him question the engineer’s competency. He stated that he is concerned with the possible stormwater run-off and light/sound pollution. Mr. Hale advises that the applicant is meeting all the required standards.

Joe Fierro

4 Bennett Way, Voorhees

Mr. Fierro states that his main concern with the project relates to the soil testing. He advises the committee that he moved his family to Voorhees after his son was diagnosed with lead poisoning. He is worried that displaced soil will cause possible toxins to affect his children’s health. Mr. Fierro also explains that he and his family enjoy watching the abundance of wildlife from their back yard and that construction may displace some wildlife.

David Hargrove

3 Bennett Way, Voorhees

Mr. Hargrove asked for an explanation of the stormwater management system. Mr. Malinowski explained the stormwater discharge process to the audience.

July Homa

9 Bennett Way, Voorhees

Ms. Homa explained that the neighborhood experiences blown sand on a constant basis. She stated that she is concerned that this project will create more. She also asked if an EPA impact study would be done to address the endangered wildlife. Mrs. Brown explained that the EIS the applicant had completed, notes “no endangered” species on site.

Frank Dutton

4 Northgate Drive, Voorhees

Mr. Dutton states that he has observed bald eagles on his property and the adjacent neighborhood and worries that nesting will be disturbed. He states that, although the applicant stated that work will not begin for close to 8 months, he has witnessed and documented bulldozers clearing space for “soil samples”. Mr. Dutton explains that he is also concerned with the materials that “Steve” has been dumping on site. Mr. Dutton has approached Steve numerous times in attempt to be a “good” neighbor, but his concerns were ignored. He has since needed to contact the police regarding his concerns. Mr. Hale agrees to have the Voorhees Code Enforcement office address the issue of illegal dumping and vacant, hazardous structures on the property.

Mr. Hale then closes the public portion to address the committee’s recommendations to the Planning Board. The following recommendations were made and agreed upon by the applicant.

1. With regards to the Consultants letter dated 7/19/19 the applicant agrees to maintain the natural vegetation in the Northeast and Southeast corners. They also agree to complete a tree survey of all 5 inch caliper (or greater trees) and compile a Tree Compensation Plan.

2. The applicant has agreed to revise Section 2.6 of the EIS to read “the project will result in the loss of natural vegetation”.

3. The applicant has agreed to submit soil profile pit logs to demonstrate the minimum separation to the seasonal high-water table has been met.

4. The applicant has agreed to use snow fencing at the project’s outermost barrier as well as silt fencing.

5. The VEC suggests that any approvals by the Planning Board be conditional upon receipt of a completed tree survey and compensation plan.

6. The VEC also suggests that at the completion of a Phase I assessment that any potential environmental concerns be addressed and resolved prior to construction

Mr. Rashgatwar makes a motion to accept the letter as stated above. Mr. Khayati seconds the motion. All members present in favor.

Seeing no further business Mr. Hale asks for a motion to close the meeting.

Mrs. Schawrtz makes a motion and Mr. Rashatwar seconds it.

Seeing there is no public and no further business, Mrs. Schwartz makes a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Rashatwar seconds the motion

MEETING ADJOURNED

VEC Secretary,

**Kendralyn Cornwall**