

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Docket Number: 1607-PUD-09 (Ord. 16-23)
Petitioner: CalAtlantic Homes of Indiana, Inc. by Nelson & Frankenberger
Request: Petitioner requests a change in zoning from the AG-SF1: Agriculture/Single-Family Rural District to the Liberty Ridge Planned Unit Development (PUD) District to accommodate a single-family residential development.

Enclosed Attachments:

1. Knight Email (07/01/16) Jon and Dawn Knight (4304 W 156th St)
2. Daly Email (07/01/16) John Daly (15936 Little Eagle Creek Ave)
3. Burkman Letter (06/29/16) Kristen Burkman (1924 W 161st St)
4. Levins Letter (07/01/16) Richard Levins (15630 Towne Rd)
5. Sochar Email (07/01/16) David and Cynthia Sochar (16116 Ditch Rd)
6. Smith Email (07/01/16) Jalene and Parker Smith
7. Hymbaugh Email (07/01/16) Karen Hymbaugh (2929 W 159th St)
8. Stafford Email (07/02/16) Cynthia and Steve Stafford (15736 Towne Rd)
9. McKinney Email (07/01/16) Erin McKinney
10. Cook Email (07/05/16) Derek and Cherie Cook (1740 W 161st St)
11. Watkins Letter (07/05/16) Sarah and Gary Watkins (2191 W 166th St)

Kevin M. Todd, AICP

From: Jon Knight <jknight@grandjunctionbrewing.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 7, 2016 11:14 AM
To: Kevin M. Todd, AICP
Subject: Liberty Ridge PUD

Kevin-

I hope all is well. I would like to go on record in opposition of the Liberty Ridge PUD proposal. The proposed density is far too high and will place an undue burden on our already stretched school system and infrastructure. We simply cannot afford this additional influx of students with this low AV housing.

Jon Knight
Sent from my iPhone

Jesse Pohlman

From: knight dawn <dawnknight1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, July 1, 2016 10:46 AM
To: Jesse Pohlman
Cc: Dawn Knight
Subject: Liberty Ridge

To Whom It May Concern:

Change can be good; that's why the word progress has such a positive connotation. However, it must be done responsibly. Unfortunately, the change that is happening in Westfield is not being done responsibly. This is why I am writing to you today.

Before you do anything else with the Liberty Ridge neighborhood that is being proposed at 151st and Towne Road, I urge you to consider how you are changing Westfield. Once you build that neighborhood, you can never go back to the way it was before. Therefore, very great care and consideration must be done before making that decision. For whatever reason, that has not happened in the past. We have given developers the green light to build whatever and wherever they want with few restrictions. What we have seen from this is shoddy construction, dense spacing, and broken promises. We do not need developers - they are a dime a dozen. However, they want us. They want to be in Westfield. We can demand quality.

With Liberty Ridge, once again, that quality is not there. There is a lack of green space. It is too dense, and there is nothing unique in the architecture or landscaping. The fact that there is nothing unique should be noted. Westfield is a unique place, with a rich history and a lot of character. We could build neighborhoods that reflect that. But we aren't. Why?

Of even more concern to me (as a parent and teacher in the district), is that there has not been enough done to study the impact of this neighborhood (and others) on our roads and schools. We have to build slowly to give our schools and infrastructure time to adjust as we go. It simply does not make sense to build at this pace. It is not reasonable, and it is unnecessary. So why are we doing it?

Do not approve Liberty Ridge. Instead, take the time to carefully consider how it will impact Westfield's infrastructure and schools. Look at the plan for this area. Look at the unique qualities and character of our city. Then, ask yourselves what legacy you want to leave for our kids and when you do finally decide to develop, demand that developers build unique, high-quality neighborhoods that are not too dense and include green space. Westfield is special. It is in your care. Be a good steward of it.

Sincerely,
Dawn Knight

From: John Daly [mailto:John@GolitkoDaly.com]
Sent: Friday, July 1, 2016 9:19 AM
To: Jesse Pohlman <jpohlman@westfield.in.gov>
Subject: Liberty Ridge Concerns

- Lack of proper open space
- Density does not transition from denser to less dense as development moves North
- Architecture is not innovative or in context with the area
- School Impact Study is needed before another neighborhood is approved
- Road Impact Study is needed as more traffic is added on these rural roads
- Proper buffering is needed for long term rural residents
- Landscaping plan is not sufficient and does not embrace rural feel
- Need for more trail connectivity

JOHN PATRICK DALY, JR.
BOARD CERTIFIED
TRIAL LAWYER
OSHA CONSTRUCTION SAFETY INSTRUCTOR

GOLITKO & DALY
9450 N. MERIDIAN ST.
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46260
PH: (317) 566-9600

WORK INJURY LAWYERS

June 29, 2016

Dear Advisory Plan Commission Members,

A new neighborhood development is being proposed in the New Suburban Southwest (Conservancy Area) called Liberty Ridge.

The plans presented do not meet the 2007 Comprehensive Plan for this area. I would appreciate careful consideration being given to the following areas.

1. Comprehensive Plan 2007: page 41

- Use open space, parks and less intensive land uses as buffers in appropriate circumstances.

Open Space - For this parcel and what surrounds it, 35% open space would be optimal. They are proposing 27%.

2. Comprehensive Plan 2007: page 41

- Encourage a diverse range of home styles in individual subdivisions using innovative architecture of a character appropriate to Westfield.

Architecture – The current home plans presented are all front load garages. Under the Implementation Tools/Zoning Regulations (page 43 2007 Comp Plan), this area calls for "garages that are behind the front line of dwelling or are side-loaded." Ryland architecture that seems more aligned with the 2007 Comprehensive Plan include the Heritage Collection at Village of West Clay or some of the architecture being used on Pebble Brook golf course and Lockhaven in Noblesville. These options within the Ryland product line fit the design and character of the Conservancy area. Four sided architecture is important for this area. In summary, having all architecture one sided with front load garages is not aligned with the 2007 Comprehensive Plan for the New Suburban-Southwest.

3. Comprehensive Plan 2007: pages 42, 43

- Require appropriate transitions and buffers between neighborhoods particularly those of differing character or density. At interfaces between large lot residential property and new suburban development, baseline buffering requirements should be used to preserve the rural environment of those larger parcels.

Buffering – The Conservancy Task Force is currently working on defining buffering minimums for this area. For areas adjoining rural residences, a minimum 50 feet buffer is being proposed. The buffer should be entirely landscaped open space and not an easement within a property. One rural residence to the east would require this buffering.

4. Comprehensive Plan 2007: page 43

Locate roadways and house lots so as to respect natural features and to maximize exposure of lots to open space (directly abutting or across the street). "Single-loaded" streets (with homes on one side only) can be used to maximize open space visibility, thus increasing real estate values and sales, while costing no more than streets in conventional subdivisions (due to savings from narrower lot frontages).

Road Buffering - An area currently being explored regarding road frontages is for homes to either face the road (like the current rural residents do) or to have rear elevations that are very attractive and look similar to the front of the home. The only road frontage is 151st Street and it looks like all homes are rear facing with the berm to hide the rears of homes. This is an area of focus to differentiate within the Conservancy Area from other parts of Westfield. There are solutions to accomplish this: front facing homes, rear elevations that are very attractive with varying setbacks or large open space buffering from the roads.

Neighborhood Entrances and Road Landscaping – The landscaping plan for Liberty Ridge is vague. The Conservancy Task Force's plan is to standardize fencing, hardscape materials, and native Indiana low maintenance plantings. Our goal is for each neighborhood to complement the next and blend seamlessly with the large rural residences. The minimization of berms in the area and maximization of open space along the roadways are goals for this area.

5. Comprehensive Plan 2007: page 40

While it is expected that over time, the few remaining large agricultural tracts in this area will be converted to residential development or other uses, this development should be context-sensitive. As development moves south from SR 32, north from 146th Street, and west from Ditch Road, the density should decrease and open space should increase.

Density - There are challenges with this parcel regarding the adjoining development to the south and southeast. For this area, it states that density should decrease as development moves north of 146th Street and south of SR32 and west of Ditch Road. As Liberty Ridge is currently platted, the density and lot sizes appear to be the same throughout the neighborhood. The density needs to decrease moving north within the neighborhood.

6. Comprehensive Plan 2007: page 42

"Encourage development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, trails, paths, and any combination thereof) designed to accommodate pedestrians in new development. These facilities should be designed to improve connectivity."

Trails and Connectivity: The current Liberty Ridge plan has the required paths along the roadways but no trails throughout the neighborhood. As each neighborhood develops, having trail connectivity throughout this beautiful area is an asset to all who live in the Conservancy.

In summary, the Liberty Ridge neighborhood, as currently presented, is not meeting the 2007 Comprehensive Plan for this area of Westfield. As a member of the Conservancy Task Force Group, I would be happy to spend time with the petitioner to work through these issues. Each new neighborhood presented is a fresh opportunity to keep improving the great city of Westfield. I would sincerely appreciate your careful consideration of the details for this new neighborhood and would encourage you to honor the vision put forth by hundreds when authoring the 2007 Comprehensive Plan.

Best Regards,

Kristen Burkman
1924 W 161st Street
Westfield, IN 46074

7/1//2016

Advisory Plan Commission

Westfield IN 46074

My wife and I, Sandy have lived at 15630 Towne Rd. since 1980. Since that time we have seen many changes. Some are good, others not.

We continue to see building plans like Liberty Ridge which are built on tiny lots, cookie cutter style homes, and very little if any buffering to protect us from these new developments..

What will be the affect on the local schools and roads?

We support our rural life lifestyle and landscape and want to maintain it.

Sincerely

Richard Levins

Jesse Pohlman

From: Acorn Woodworks <acornw@frontier.com>
Sent: Friday, July 1, 2016 11:22 AM
To: Jesse Pohlman
Subject: Liberty Ridge Development

Jesse Pohlman-

My wife and I are 36 year residents of Westfield. Our children graduated public schools and both my wife and I have worked in Westfield, volunteered for schools, library, and community events as well as run businesses here in Westfield, employing Westfield residents.

We currently live at 16116 Ditch Road, and originally lived in town at Poplar and Jersey. There, we planted the only Poplar tree on Poplar street (1980), which is now the tallest tree in the area. We are avid supporters of the Conservancy Plan for our unique area of the Township.

We have attended hundreds of public meetings over the years in a sincere citizens effort to see proper and sustainable growth in the area. We have served on 3 different Master Plan Groups over the years, the latest being approved (after much debate) in 2007.

We have also seen hundreds leave the community since the growth did not suit their plans for long term residency as development after development have been approved. Fine, capable, independent family people that spent years doing their best to help the community, only to be silenced by overwhelming forces. Their voices will not be heard, their letters will not be written. Their silence can speak for them if you acknowledge those facts in your decisions.

The Liberty Ridge (sic) development takes this area well over the edge of density as conceived in the Master Plan. Open space will be sacrificed to the commercial gods that must rule in these marginal efforts. Landscaping will also be minimal and argued over -"How many feet apart will those 3' shrubs be?" "How high that earth mound." When neither could ever be adequate.

The Master Plan encouraged development contiguous to the Town (City) so as to not over stretch infrastructure. Liberty Ridge is far from that ideal.

Local roads already are overloaded both with construction equipment and then residential and service traffic. The new highway improvements will be overloaded in a matter of months. On a recent weekday, I counted an average of 16 dump trucks per hour, starting at 6:00 am and going until after 6:00 pm. Almost 200 trucks. In one day. This - or something like it - happens everyday. Who will pay for the roads? What will be destroyed when these roads are expanded?

Schools will be overloaded also, as yet another "starter" community will attract young families. The schools need some stability to maintain their ability to produce educated young people at the rate they do currently.

Yet another neighborhood will 'turn its back' to the rural roads that serve it. Long held rural properties will be devalued and isolated from these new neighbors, destroying much of the character that made this area desirable. "Loved to death" as some would say.

Finally, should you visit the area, you may notice there is no discernible "ridge". This is a final insult to our collective intelligence and shows how little thought and effort has gone into this lackluster attempt.

Please send the developer back to do more work. Better yet, send him on his way.

We deserve, we demand, the best. We are in a position to demand the best and still not 'lose out' on responsible growth. This is not a contest.

-

David R Sochar
Cynthia R Sochar
16116 Ditch Road

Jesse Pohlman

From: Jalene <JaleneCampbell@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, July 1, 2016 5:57 PM
To: Jesse Pohlman
Subject: Liberty Ridge

Mr. Pohlman,

My name is Jalene Smith. I am a resident of Westfield, a teacher in the district, and have kids who will be students in the district (first one starts kindergarten this year!). I am concerned about the speed with which Westfield is adding neighborhoods. I am concerned with the impact on the schools and the look and feel of our city. I believe Westfield has a chance to be unique. In fact, we moved here because we didn't like how other suburbs like Fishers feel crowded and generic. We like that you can take a drive through "the country," that there is open land. Westfield is pretty. We also like that there is one high school, which is a reasonable size. I am concerned for the future of our school district both professionally and as a parent. We have a VERY good thing going right now, and I do not want to see us lose our small town feel by not considering how our decisions now will impact the future of our schools and our city. When the high school staff met with the new superintendent, everyone said that Westfield was special because despite our growth over the last 15 years, we still feel like a small school/ small town. Please consider this when deciding whether to approve neighborhoods like Liberty Ridge. Let's make Westfield beautiful and unique - not a sea of houses. I love MANY of the things happening in Westfield. I love the revitalization of downtown, the restaurants, etc. I just think we need to be careful with how much and how fast we grow our population. I would like to see a road and school impact study before we approve more neighborhoods.

Thank you for your time,
Jalene and Parker Smith

Jesse Pohlman

From: Karen H <khymbaugh@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, July 1, 2016 8:27 PM
To: Jesse Pohlman
Cc: Kevin M. Todd, AICP; Karen Hymbaugh
Subject: Please help preserve the rural nature of Westfield

Dear Mr Pohlman,

I am writing to you about the uncontrolled development in Westfield. Specifically today, I am writing to you about Liberty Ridge. This will directly impact me where I have a mini farm on W 159th Street. I have worked my whole life to buy and move to this farm. When I bought it, it was a beautiful rural country home. Today, it is being surrounded by development everywhere. Large houses are being stacked on small postage stamp yards, the rural country roads can't handle the traffic, I have large construction trucks going 60- 65 miles an hour on my 35 MPH street. I am raising mini-cows which I planned to show, enter into local parades, and to use as therapy pets in nursing homes. I wanted to give back to the community but people who want a rural environment are being pushed out for overpopulated suburbs. These are special, very rare cows in the US and we are trying to breed an even more rare specific breed (Riggitt Galloway) that would be he first in the US.

I have been working for the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) for more than 30 years. I have travelled and lived in more than 50 countries. I can tell you, this type of growth will turn Westfield into one of the least attractive places to live within 2 - 5 years. I have seen it many, many times. I can tell you about the Mumbai slums -- we are headed there with more crime, traffic, and health problems.

This new development should not impede on the rural lifestyle that the current inhabitants have invested in. The architecture planned is not in the best interest of our special area and lifestyle. The density of homes is becoming similar to inner city Indianapolis.

I beg you to please reconsider what you are doing to support such dense population growth. If it s about money, then please reconsider for the future of your children and our families. You really must reconsider what is happening in Liberty Ridge and the surrounding area.

Please see the picture below of one of my sweet gentle cows and I can tell you this way of life will be lost with all the noise, over population, and pollution. I invite you anytime to come and talk to me about what is at stake in all this dense development.

Sincerely,
Karen Hymbaugh
2929 W 159th Street
Westfield, Indiana 46074
phone (404) 729-6060



Jesse Pohlman

From: staffordhouse92@att.net
Sent: Saturday, July 2, 2016 6:37 AM
To: Jesse Pohlman
Subject: Liberty Ridge development

To the Westfield Planning Advisory Board and City Council:

We moved to Westfield and bought our residence on Towne Road because we wanted home with trees, open spaces, and a rural feel to it. We expected that the Comprehensive Plan would drive development in the future. That was three years ago and apparently we were wrong.

Development is well and good, but please ensure that the desires of those community members who spent time and effort defining how Westfield would grow are as reflected by the Comprehensive Plan. It is a good plan and many of us who moved here recently believed our government would respect the guidance it provides when making decisions that effect us all.

With your action, please ensure that we and the others who live in the Liberty Ridge/Pulte dominated development zone, will continue to have the environment we thought Westfield offers. Liberty Ridge and the ones that follow need to adhere to the Comprehensive Plan in design, space requirements, and concept. We trust that you will not let us down.

Sincerely,
Cynthia and Steve Stafford
15736 Towne Road
Westfield, IN 46074

Jesse Pohlman

From: Erin McKinney <skeeter.mckinney@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, July 1, 2016 10:07 PM
To: Jesse Pohlman
Subject: Letter of Concern

City of Westfield,

I am writing to voice my concern with all the new construction that is happening in the city, mainly the addition of new neighborhoods. I moved to the area 11 years ago when I started teaching in the Westfield Schools. My family and I love the area and we aren't against development, however, I am concerned about the impact all these neighborhoods going up might have. We have seen several wooded areas torn down and I worry Westfield is starting to lose the look we once loved. As a teacher in the schools can we even keep up with this much growth so fast. I already worry, as many of the schools seem to be growing faster than we can keep up with. WHS has added on twice in the past 10 years and there are still teachers with out classrooms and students packed in the hallways. I just want to make sure the proper research and studies are being done to see what affect all this growth will have on the community. I have a daughter who we want to grow up in this community. One of the reasons I feel in love with the community was the fact that it still was able to offer a small community feel. I fear we are losing that in the schools and in the community. I don't want to watch this city try and turn in to Carmel and pack 5,000 students in to a school building because we have to.

Maybe it would be better spent to try and focus on Grand Park and the growth it can bring? What businesses can move into the area that will help benefit the schools and the city? Please don't just keep building homes and neighborhoods because we can. I am all for growth that is done in a manageable and thought out way, but I don't think that is what is happening currently. Let's work together to keep the great parts of Westfield available for our community and children. Protect some of the beautiful land, make sure our roads can handle all this growth and make sure we aren't making decisions that will set the school system up for failure.

Thanks,

Erin McKinney

From: Cook <cookhouse3841@comcast.net>
Date: July 5, 2016 at 10:43:11 AM EDT
To: ktodd@westfield.in.gov
Subject: Liberty Ridge

Hi Kevin,

I am writing to express our concern regarding the Liberty Ridge subdivision that is being proposed at tonight's meeting. A few areas of concern would be the density of homes being proposed, the quality of materials that Ryland is offering, the impact of another high density subdivision on our already crowded schools and the buffering to protect the long term residents in our area. I would certainly hope ALL these areas would be addressed before another subdivision is approved.

Sincerely,

Derek & Cherie Cook
1740 W 161st St

We are writing to go on record that we are against the Liberty Ridge neighborhood as it is currently planned, as it doesn't follow the Comprehensive Plan for this area.

When we bought our land on 166th Street and built a house on the 3.5 acres, a lot of thought and research went into this location. We wanted neighbors that desired the rural lifestyle as we did. We wanted an area of Westfield that could promise this precious green space to remain. We looked in all areas of Westfield and chose this portion, knowing that it was zoned for 3 plus acre lots and was truly rural. We loved that our neighbors wanted the same as us: mini farms, animals, and open space. We read the Comprehensive Plan approved in 2007 for this area and felt confident that our leaders would uphold the promises in this plan, so we bought our property. We built our home (we looked to the comprehensive plan to follow architectural guidelines so we could do our part in following it since we were a new fixture in the landscape of this area), planted our 20x50 fruit and vegetable garden, and this past year built a barn with plans for chickens and goats. These plans that we have started for our property fit right in to this area of Westfield. It disappoints us that this plan is not being considered as the developments that are plotted are considered.

The plan states that the housing developments density should be less dense as the development moves north. This is not reflected in Liberty Ridge's plan. According to the Comprehensive Plan, Liberty Ridge lacks appropriate open space. This is very concerning to us. If you spend anytime at our house or anyone's in this area you will see deer, coyote, and fox walk through our property and graze on the wild mulberries and apple trees. Tearing down more trees and putting houses on green space goes against the Comprehensive Plan and honestly is not being good stewards of our land and what it provides us all.

Something important to us as rural residents is that the natural landscape be preserved. We have planted many trees on our land to add to what was already here. When I look at the plans for Liberty Ridge and other neighborhoods that may come up in the future, the landscaping plan is not sufficient and does not embrace the rural feel. Road buffering and current property owner buffering is also not sufficient.

We are concerned with the roads, as they will be impacted if more traffic goes through this area. A road impact study must be done before we allow more traffic on these roads. The current condition of our these rural roads are not ready for more traffic. Let's also consider the bikers that come from all areas of Indiana to bike our rural roads. It will be a shame when they cannot use our rural roads to train any longer because we have put in so many neighborhoods that the traffic is too heavy and the roads become unsafe for them. The attraction of our rural community is a reason people love Westfield and we continue to win awards such as "Best Places to live in Indiana".

Finally, we have two children that attend Westfield Washington Schools and have since 2007, ironically the year that many community members and leaders signed and agreed to the Comprehensive Plan for this area. When we considered moving from a Westfield subdivision to a rural area, we looked in Sheridan, Zionsville, Noblesville, and Tipton. It seemed easier to find land in those towns, and in some of those areas, cheaper as well. But we love Westfield and their schools. They truly are world class and it is a family atmosphere. Going forward, if we continue to add more houses we will need to do a school impact study. People move to Westfield because of our schools and the small student to teacher ratio. Do we want to risk this by adding more neighborhoods without understanding the impact on our schools?

Thank you for your time and I hope we can trust that our leaders will stick to the Comprehensive Plan for Liberty Ridge and all development in this area going forward.

Sincerely,
Sarah and Gary Watkins
2191 W 166th Street