

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Docket Number: 1605-ODP-08, 1605-SPP-07, 1605-DDP-17

Petitioner: Pulte Homes of Indiana, LLC by Weihe Engineers, Inc.

Request: Petitioner requests approval of a Primary Plat, Overall Development Plan and Detailed Development Plan for 86 Townhouse Dwellings to be known as the Retreat on the Monon

Enclosed Attachments:

1. Spillane Letter (05/02/16)
2. Helm Letter (05/02/16)

ADVISORY PLAN COMMISSION

May 2, 2016

Comments relative to: 1605-SPP-07, 1605-ODP-08 & 1605-DDP-17 [PUBLIC HEARING]
Retreat on the Monon by Jerry and Molly Spillane, 1020 Lair Ct. Westfield

The proposed plan is not in the best interests of the City of Westfield and should not be approved as submitted.

1. A grade crossing of the Monon trail is proposed. The city of Westfield installed a culvert under 161st street to allow the construction of a tunnel which would allow pedestrians on the Monon to safely cross 161st street. The location of the proposed grade crossing makes future completion of the tunnel significantly more expensive or impossible. It has been suggested that the grade crossing (Barringer Drive) could be temporarily rerouted to allow construction. However, since the previously installed culvert ends at the existing street, a rerouting north toward 161st street would interfere with the tunnel construction. Likewise, the close proximity of proposed buildings to the south makes rerouting to the south along the trail not possible. Maintaining traffic on this grade crossing means that the tunnel would have to be completed in sections resulting in a significant increase in costs. With residents living in the new development, shutting down access across the Monon during construction would be difficult. Given that the costs of the tunnel project are looking to be higher than expected, it is likely that approval of this development plan at this time would result in the tunnel never being constructed.

The Monon is one of the crown jewels of the City of Westfield. Traffic on 161st street is heavy at present and with the likely development of 161st street as a major arterial, there will not be a good way to allow a Monon crossing of 161st street in the future without a significant increase in cost if this project is approved as proposed. Leaving 161st street as an obstruction to the Monon devalues this important feature of the city and is not in the best interest of the citizens of Westfield. The commission should not approve this development plan until the solution of how to safely cross 161st street is resolved.

2. In addition to the issue of making a future 161st street crossing more difficult, there is also a safety issue with any additional grade crossing of the Monon. The proposed grade crossing of the Monon creates a serious safety hazard to pedestrians and cyclists on the Monon. Without the ability to make left turns into or out of the proposed development on 161st street, there will be significant traffic on this proposed crossing. This is likely to be highest during the evening commute as persons returning home from

Hwy 31 will likely choose to use this crossing. 161st street already presents a serious hazard with an accident waiting to happen. The proposed grade crossing is quite close to 161st street and could easily be incorporated into a tunnel or bridge plan to ensure the safety of persons using the Monon. It is recommended above that this development plan not be approved until decisions on to cross 161st street are reached. It is further recommended that the plan to cross 161st street incorporate this proposed grade crossing to allow traffic to and from this development to maintain the safety of Monon users.

3. There is no drainage plan included with this submittal to the commission. However, direct discharge from Parcel F to the creek on the south side of this property is proposed. This discharge point is immediately upstream of an existing flood area (within Farr Hills) and overflow of the creek is presently a common occurrence. The proposed plan does include a retention basin to be constructed on Parcel E. However, it is our understanding that the developer will construct on Parcel F before beginning Parcel E. This will likely result in increased flooding of residential areas after Parcel F construction starts and before the retention basin is complete. The commission is urged to not allow construction on Parcel F until after the retention basin is complete. This assumes that no construction would be allowed until a drainage plan is approved that demonstrates that the complete development does not increase the rate of drainage flow into the existing floodway. This commission should insure that the public can see an appropriate means of drainage before any approvals on this development plan.
4. Construction on Parcel F prior to Parcel E will result in significant traffic problems for current residents of Viking Meadows entering or leaving the subdivision using 161st street. If Parcel F is constructed first, there will be no left turns entering or leaving along 161st street from the proposed development and no other access available until Parcel E is completed. The result is that the entrance to Viking Meadows from 161st street will effectively act as a roundabout for autos driving west on 161st street who need to turn left into the proposed subdivision. Although a roundabout is available at Oakridge, drivers will find it more convenient to use the closer entrance at Viking Meadows instead. If access to and from 161st street to Parcel F is required before construction can be initiated, then residents will have a means to return home without blocking access to 161st street for Viking Meadow residents. The commission should require this sequence.

Kevin M. Todd, AICP

From: David Helm <david.helm@fedex.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2016 11:34 AM
To: Kevin M. Todd, AICP
Cc: David Helm
Subject: Retreat on the Monon

Mr. Todd

I wanted to write to express my concern with the impact that this development will have on Viking Meadows. As a community two issues stand out as major concerns to the residents of our Neighborhood.

1) Buffer trees to shield our neighborhood from the townhomes (see picture below)

We would like trees to be added (preferably not removed from the current landscape plan) to an elevated area on our side of the development because it would shield us faster than being at the lowest grade of the development. With the amount of trees being removed in this development it would be nice to see some additional plantings. I have talked to Mr. Compton about this, I am sure others have as well. We don't think this would be a problem as Pulte is still the developer/declarant of Viking Meadows.

2) Safety of Pedestrians trying to cross 161st street.

We hear of many near miss accidents with pedestrians at this location and quite a few fender benders. I feel that the City of Westfield needs to address this situation by Finishing the tunnel under 161st. This development will add a lot of stress to this area with another road crossing the Monon and adding additional traffic patterns. In addition to the different traffic patterns that will be added to a busy area an approximate 172 additional cars will just make this situation worse.

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