

Minutes
Natural Features Protection Review Board
October 23, 2024
Regular Meeting

Held at City Hall, Commission Chambers

4:00 p.m.

A. Call to Order: Director Martin called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

B. Members absent: None

C. Adoption of Agenda

Motion to adopt the agenda made by Director Fuller, supported by Director Lettow, motion passed unanimously.

C. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the July 23rd, 2024, NFP Review Board Meeting made by Director Basset, supported by Director Hollander, passed unanimously.

D. General Citizen Comments

There were no general citizen comments, either in person or by phone.

E. Board Comments

No comments

F. New Business

1. **Initial Discussion: Discussion of NFP Site Plan for the Friendship Village Campus Repositioning IL & Skilled Additions project located at 1400 and 1402 N Drake Road**



Nolan opened discussion on the Friendship Village, Senior Living campus, planned unit development at 1400 & 1402 properties only, applicants will be discussing what processes they have been through and talk about the Natural Features plans they have so far. They have already been through pre-site plan review and are in the Site plan process. This is for NFP to ask questions and discuss the project with the developers, rare species review, protected trees and Woodland area is pretty large on the 1402 address, then their hope is to come back to next meeting with more plans. They have been to City Commission and Planning Commission and public noticing.

Rachel Hughes-Nilsson presented an overview of the project in Phase I:

- Installation of the Construction of a new independent IL living facility with a parking garage underneath and Skilled Nursing addition, putting in a New Maintenance Building, altering loop road, and adding more parking at these buildings.
- Detailing the Woodlands, the trees and the Natural Features Inventory.
- MSU Scientists were out twice to the site and found no evidence of the 3 plants on site. The Woodlands site was taken on by Davey Resource Group.
- Impact will be on the least amount of woodlands, there is an existing trail with a lot of Memorial trees and Benches that are sacred to the residents and will not be touched. The North side will be altered and everything South will be left.
- There is a 132 ft wide natural buffer is required as part of the Deed along the property line between Westwood residence and the building that cannot be altered. We will be removing what is allowable for the site on 1402. Trees will not be pulled Out on the 1400 site.
- All the protected trees were tested for the risk and health factors, a tree risk assessment by someone who is licensed. Looking for Health issues and Architectural issues and the trees were graded on those standards.
- Landscape plan that has been through pre-site plan for along the parking lots is part of the new code that was adopted this summer.

Questions?:

Mitch Lettow: Thank you to Rachel and we know the housing and Senior Housing are in big demand and this a desirable area and the Challenge that is being put forth. Wants to know the dynamic between this process and the residents, were they part of this plan?

Randy, Development Manager of the Senior Campus with LCS, commented that they had listening sessions and presentation regularly, and when walking around to familiarize himself with the grounds the residents commented on how important some of the trees and benches were that were dedicated to love ones. It is not legally protected but they will put on plans as protected. Ongoing conversations are for the open areas and what is a good fit for the areas.

Mitch Lettow: On the plans they have a triangle hash texture and many do not indicate there are trees, is that part of the second-growth shrubbery vegetation?

Rachel: That is more for the contractor since we are still in the schematic development stage so we are still really early in our plans.

Mitch Lettow: There is a mix of tree protection standard and Woodland on the Independent Housing in the C-shaped portion of how many tree removals will be needed, what is the percentage of Woodland being removed?

Rachel: It's around 7 or 8%.

Nolan: Staff did discuss with Rachel the distinction between the Woodland Standards and the protected tree standards.

Director Fuller: Questions about the rare plants found on site, who were they planted by?

Rachel: Residents gardens that were planted around their homes but not in the wooded area itself and will not be altered. We are also creating courtyards for residents to sit outside and if some of these needed to be replanted we could move there.

Murgia: Can you speak alittle about storm water and how that will be managed?

Rachel: Civil Engineer Andy is not in attendance but from my knowledge there is an existing trail that leads up through a large existing retention Basin area, we are adding another on and it will be sized for phase one. We will have additional screening with the residents, this part was in discussion with the Planning Commission and the City Commission to whether or not a retention basin would be allowable and it was an amendment to the approval because the language that talks about the buffer and what's allowed was vague.

Mitch Lettow: Are the basins designed as lined basins with an overflow?

Rachel: Not designed yet but working on the schematic, the intent for infiltration to happen. The residents have questioned if a water feature will ever be possible on the site and that is being worked through and have an overflow.

Mitch Lettow: One way to tie in the Natural Area features is that the residents appreciate the site's function.

Director Fuller: There were a couple of non-native species on the landscape plan and with the NFP they are required to be native? Are those good zoning trees?

Rachel: The plan is to have sign lines at a drive with an upright branching pattern so everyone is safe.

Director Fuller: The understanding is that NFP and Landscaping plan should all be native species.

Nolan: He will check the plan and code and give an update.

Rachel: Questioning further that on any plantings around a patio area or similar have to be native whether or not it's related to Woodlands plant protected trees?

Nolan: NFP board can approve a planting list even if there are non-natives on the list, the preliminary review of some of the non-natives on the zoning list did not come up as invasive so they could potentially be non-native and non-invasive species. For final approval, the board could suggest alternatives or if NFP is ok with the species as they are in the plan.

Rachel: For instance, perennials and grasses, ornamental grasses are easy to do native and trees are fairly easy to do native unless there is specific. The issue is the shrubs to plant native, they are large and at entry ways they makes it difficult.

Martin: There is a preference for native species but if something better fits the needs there is a prohibited planting species list. The case can be made for why and what you want to plant and use. Native species to fit there needs?

Murgia: No, but in the past we have worked with people with the native culture bars and it's usually giving the same value.

Rachel: Vendors for some of the plants are hard to find on the east side for Cultivars, lead plant and New Jersey tea. Deer are very friendly and will want to feed or taste what's on the land.

Nolan: Will need full approval from NFP and Site plan when schematics are finished. We can do a conditional if it is a timing issue.

Rachel: The trail that you see around the outside of the building, is a fire land that is required by emergency services. It is going to be a 12ft road with grass pavers on either side, taking out the line of trees but will put more in. Still working on the plans.

Nolan: There was discussion from the water engineer to access the road which will be used as a fire lane only or non-motorized path for the residents.

Hollander: What stage of plan development do you anticipate you will be at a month from now?

Rachel: They want to start next summer, just finished the schematic and the Architects are not scheduled to be finished until next Fall but they want to have site plan review with 90% CD's and Civil at the end of January. Do not anticipate many changes, will wait to see what the non-native/native plants are all discussed. Prior to submitting to Planning and City Commissions meetings, residents were invited to an on-site meeting.

Public Comments:

Unfinished Business

None

Staff Reports and Update

IK 2035 Meeting on the Go as a trial run with the board members

Communications and Announcements

None

Adjourn Meeting

Director Martin adjourned the meeting at 6:14 p.m.

