

Rochester Township Planning and Zoning Commission
Meeting Minutes
August 14, 2022

Members Present: Chair Arthur Handelman, Colin Patterson, Brad Lewis, Laura Laudon, Jamie ~~Niesen~~ *NEISEN*

TCPA Staff: Roger Ihrke

Applicant: Bill Tointen and Ian Keith,
Chair Handelman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

The meeting minutes from the June 14, 2022, meeting were approved. Colin Patterson made a motion to approve the minutes and Arthur Handelman seconded the motion.

The meeting minutes from the July 12, 2022, meeting were approved. Brad Lewis made a motion to approve the minutes. Laura Laudon seconded the motion.

The meeting began with discussion about the Woodland Valley Estates Final Plat, dated July 27, 2022.

The final plat consists of 63.91 acres being subdivided into 6 family residential lots and 4 out lots. The property was rezoned by the Rochester Township Board on January 13, 2022, from A-3 Agricultural District to R-1 Low Density Residential District.

The owner and applicant are Woodland Valley Estates, Inc.

Mr. Ihrke stated the staff reviewed this and that we have the corrected copies in front of us. Mr. Ihrke stated there are 3 well agreements which have already been recorded and that there were no issues.

The township engineer has approved the grading and erosion plan. The culvert was also approved.

Mr. Ihrke stated that the language for the wildlife corridor was approved today (August 10, 2022) by the township attorney.

Mr. Ihrke recommended that we approve the plat.

Mr. Handelman had concerns about standing water in recent developments and wanted to make sure those areas drain.

Mr. Ihrke stated some ponds are meant to retain water. Mr. Tointen explained that 3 ponds will be built up front right away before the roads. There will be a permanent one close to Dr. Folgeson's property. Mr. Tointen stated there's a dual pond at the present time, but one will be removed.

Mr. Ian Keith who owns Woodland Valley Estates stated he's holding back on some of the development given the current economic conditions.

Mr. Ihrke stated that the development agreement includes the preliminary plot which remains for future development. The preliminary plot follows the letter of the law.

Mr. Keith stated 6 lots will be developed for now and 9 lots will be developed in the future. Those who have purchased lots could begin building by October 1.

Colin Patterson made a motion to approve the plat. Chair Arthur Handelman seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous.

The next item of business was the proposed subdivision of Millie Meadows Estate Third.

The details are outlined in the TCPA document dated August 3, 2022.

The proposal is for 17 lots being changed from potential suburban to suburban development.

Mr. Ihrke stated that lots are served by community septic systems. There are two lots that are 1.5 to 2 acres in size. The rest of the lots are over 2 acres.

Mr. Ihrke explained to accommodate this type of development, it needs to be approved as a "special district". Lots on the private roads become a special district.

The plan is for 17 lots. Lots 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are larger than 2 acres. Lot 9 is a "tough building site" and requires a special drain field.

It was asked why township should deviate from the standard of 3.5 acres. Mr. Ihrke replied that the lot sizes are comparable to Millie Meadows.

The discussion continued with some members stating they aren't in favor of private roads as there isn't a discount on the property value. The property owners are paying the same as if a public road.

Another member felt there should be a written, rationale why the variance from 3.5 acres makes sense.

What is the benefit to dropping down on lot size?

Mr. Ihrke explained that 3.5 acres is a guideline and at 2.0 acres it becomes the ordinance.

It was also mentioned that most developers like 2 acre lots to sell. They are easiest to sell. Potential buyers feel 4 or 5 acres is hard to maintain.

Some members expressed concern that the consumer doesn't understand private roads need snow plowing, maintenance, etc. at the homeowners expense.

Others mentioned that they would like to know what other benefits this plan has for the township. A member mentioned that in Mayowood Estates, the developer put in a million-dollar road. Others mentioned that Woodland Valley Estates (also known as the Keith property) has a huge wildlife corridor. Other members mentioned that this new phase doesn't have access to the "older" areas with parks, etc.

After much discussion, Brad Lewis made a motion to table this plan. Arthur Handelman seconded it. Meeting was adjourned. Next meeting Sept 20, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Laudon

Janie Neuse (Acting Chair)