

**PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
SEPT. 7, 2006**

**CALLED TO ORDER:**

**Chairman, Mr. Balzer called the meeting to order at 5:05 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Balzer, Ms. Stalter, Mr. Whyte, Mr. Hymer, Mr. Finn.**

**OTHERS PRESENT: Connie Swisher, Zoning Inspector, Tracy Hatmaker, Township Administrator, Pam Sayre, Brown Township Trustee, Mike Reese, Deputy Chief of Staff City of Columbus Mayor Colemans Office**

**Old Business: Mr. Hatmaker thanked the Board for their work on the Big Darby Accord. He mentioned the Board asked to meet with representatives from Town Center Partners, Brown Township and the City of Columbus are present. Franklin County representatives were not able to make today's meeting.**

**Mr. Balzer, Chairman, asked Tracy for the latest news on the adoption of the Darby Accord in other jurisdictions.**

**Mr. Hatmaker, Hilliard is having a meeting Oct. 2, 2006 on the Accord. Grove City really has nothing in the planning area of the Accord, Hilliard does it has a growth area that relates back to the contract. I would like to have the City representative comment on that. 25,000 acres is total green space, 7,000 of that are already green. Pleasant, Brown and Prairie is over 90% of the entire area.**

**Mr. Whyte, asked about the high density development and what type of development will be in Brown and what type will be in Prairie in comparison?**

**Mr. Hatmaker, stated the Town Center will have to be quality development. Density does not automatically mean low income and low quality. That is why the Town Center planning effort is so important. There has to be an urban design element to the Town Center Plan to**

**ensure that there is a quality design to it. The kind of quality you find at Easton. That is an urban setting but it represents quality.**

**Mr. Whyte expressed concerns with the plans use of the term mixed incomes.**

**Ms. Swisher, reminded the Board that the first phase of the Town Center is going to set the precedent and it should be an example of architectural design and high quality development.**

**Mr. Hatmaker, stated the policy would work towards a minimum of 20% affordable housing. In Franklin County that goes up to \$160,000.00 per unit. That is comparable to our Westpoint Subdivision.**

**Ms. Stalter, expressed her concerns regarding comments made by the representatives from Franklin County at the last meeting about Hilliard Schools being better school system than Southwestern so a better quality home built north of the railroad tracks. She does not want lower quality homes built south of the railroad tracks.**

**Ms. Swisher stated again the importance of the master plan. Reminding the Board of what Tim Richardson stated at the last meeting. The very first phase will set the tone for the rest of development. This project will not only affect Franklin County development within the watershed but it will also set precedent for jurisdictions north and south of Franklin County when they start to development near the creek.**

**Mr. Hatmaker stated it could be different products it is all a market thing.**

**Ms. Swisher asked if there was discussion on 2-4 family or higher density development closer to the commercial. A product that would be more desirable for the empty nesters.**

**Mr. Hatmaker said a higher density of luxury apartments of higher value per square foot.**

**Ms. Sayre stated they wanted some of the commercial in Brown Township.**

**Mr. Hatmaker stated the point is the developers want high value added here. They've got 5,000 units maybe 8,000 and that is where they will make the biggest dollar is with the quality of the product.**

**Mr. Hymer, questioned the mix of uses that will be distributed between Brown and Prairie Township and whether or not there will be a difference made in what is built.**

**Ms. Swisher stated that most people driving the area don't realize there are two different Townships, it's just a line on a map. With the type of development you want in both Townships there shouldn't be a visual difference. You want it to all flow together very nicely. That's why the quality of the master plan is so important and why we keep putting so much emphasis on it.**

**Mr. Whyte asked where the new schools would be built?**

**Ms. Sayre: Explained that several sites were looked at for future schools. Two sites initially proposed in the Town Center area and were then removed.**

**Mr. Hatmaker explained that the development community would like to see the land use and zoning issues worked out up-front which could include school sites.**

**Ms. Swisher stated it is not an uncommon thing for developers to be required to provide land for schools for when they develop high density.**

**Mr. Finn asked what 1 mil. In property tax add to how a \$100,000.00 house?**

**Mr. Hatmaker explained assessed value and straight mil on 100,000.00**

**Ms. Stalter stated it could increase \$110.00 to the taxes per year.**

**Mr. Whyte, asked about suitable soils in Prairie Township for the treatment systems.**

**Mr. Hatmaker explained that there are ways to deal with the bad soils. When you cluster development then every lot doesn't have to have good**

soils only the area for the waste water treatment system. Recently a group of experts from OSU, the development community and conservation groups met to review the waste water treatment regulations that are being prepared by OEPA and the focus of their comments to OEPA was wetness in the spray field. Instead of a leach field you have a spray field. There is this issue of 3' depth of tiles and drainage experts (Soil Scientists) have recommended 2'. So your concerns have been discussed in detail Tom Schockley with the Franklin County Sanitary Engineers Office sat in on all these meetings. He is optimistic that these soils will work with our soils.

Mr. Whyte asked about new being golf courses proposed on the plan.

Mr. Hatmaker explained the only two golf courses on the map are existing golf courses.

Mr. Kennedy, Stated he felt this plan was the best case scenario for Prairie Township. If we didn't have this plan in place we would more than likely have little waste water treatment plants spring up where ever the developers put them and more situations like Westpoint where residents are paying double in utility rates. Without this plan we wouldn't be sitting here today talking about what's going to happen in the Town Center. Columbus would just come in annex it. We have a tremendous say in how the Town Center develops with this plan.

Mr. Whyte, asked as the Zoning Commission what do we have to do?

Mr. Hatmaker, provide leadership in adopting conservation development in the region.

Ms. Swisher, We have already worked on the three conservation zoning districts so now we need to modify them to meet the Darby Accord and since we will now have services available in that we will have to amend the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Reese, Columbus City Council has adopted the plan and the MOU that goes with the plan because it's good for the environment. It's good for property owners and developer interests. Once the City knew they had limitation with capacity on central sewer they decided not to build the huge sewer line, they decided where to focus sewer. This worked in

**the Rickenbacker area. Service without annexation and it worked they want to extend this to Prairie and Brown Township's. Without this plan you never would have the Town Center concept. It's environmentally sound and will create new revenue. It's a real opportunity for all jurisdictions. Columbus will have opportunity to grow up in the eastern pockets. Columbus has given Hilliard a growth corridor and schools have been discussed since the City has such a high student population. This is a good plan between the City and nine other jurisdictions. Property owners didn't have as many options as they do now with this plan. The last thing I would like to mention is the progress made with OEPA and the technical group looking at the guidelines for the alternative waste water systems.**

**New Business: None**

**Announcements: Ms. Swisher informed the Board that the Trustee's will hold a public hearing on rezoning application 175-RZ-06 175 Norton Rd. at their regular scheduled meeting on Wed. Sept. 13, 2006.**

**Next Meeting: Tuesday Sept. 26, 2006 4:00 p.m.**

**Adjournment: Chairman, Mr. Balzer adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.**