

THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF KINGS
PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING
PROPOSED REZONING - 959 SHERMAN BELCHER ROAD
AND ADJACENT PROPERTIES, CENTREVILLE (FILE # 11-27)

A Public Information Meeting was held by Planning Services to discuss an application made to rezone 959 Sherman Belcher Road and adjacent properties in Centreville from Residential One and Two Unit Zone (R2) to Residential Manufactured Housing Zone (RM).

Meeting Date and Time A Public Information Meeting was held on Tuesday, January 31, 2012, at 7:00 PM at the Centreville Hall, Hwy 359.

Attending In Attendance:

Council Members Councillor Dick Killam, District 3 (Hall's Harbour)

CAAC Members Mike Sweeney, Chair
Jim Hoyt
Dick Killam, Councillor

PAC Members Councillor Dick Killam

Staff Ian Watson, Planner

Applicant Tony Fisher

Public Approximately 80 members of the public

Recorder Anne-Marie Waterbury

Welcome and Introductions Mike Sweeney, Area Advisory Committee Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed staff, members of the public, and the applicant.

Mr. Sweeney explained the general purpose of the meeting, made appropriate introductions, and reviewed the agenda and procedures to be followed.

Staff Presentation Ian Watson explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the application received from Tony Fisher to rezone 959 Sherman Belcher Road and two adjacent properties in Centreville from Residential One and Two Unit Zone (R2) to Residential Manufactured Housing Zone (RM).

He emphasized that this meeting is the first stage in the process, and Council has made no decisions regarding the application.

**Staff
Presentation -
con't**

Using a Power Point presentation, Ian reviewed the application policy and process. He explained that, prior to an application's approval, certain policies and reviews must take place: the enabling policy, the criteria review, Urban Residential Objectives, Urban Residential Medium Density Policies, and a staff review of considerations.

The next steps in the approval process were explained: staff review, Area Advisory Committee, Planning Advisory Committee, First Reading, Public Hearing, Second Reading, and an Appeal Period.

Copies of his presentation were available to all present.

**Applicant
Presentation**

Tony Fisher, applicant, welcomed those present, and applauded the interest shown by the members of the community. He stated that he had been working on this proposed development for almost four years, and feels there is a need for a development in this area for those 50 years of age and over.

Prior to the presentation, he read an e-mail he had received from a couple from Ontario, unknown to him, who had attended the previous night's meeting. They were considering moving to Centreville but, after observing the attitudes of many at the meeting, they are no longer doing so. They are sending the letter – which reflects very poorly on our community – to the newspaper, though Mr. Fisher does not know which one. He requested that the meeting be conducted with a degree of decorum.

Mr. Fisher turned the proceedings over to Martin Dowse, of Gold River Homes. Mr. Dowse represents Supreme Homes, a manufacturer of modular and mini-homes in Tracadie, New Brunswick. He showed a visual presentation of the proposed development, which included a map and information about the homes.

The proposed development will be “upscale”, with paved roads and driveways, green spaces and nature/walking trails, and 100 large, landscaped lots. Building density will be three units per acre, and will consist of only new mini and modular homes constructed exclusively by Supreme Homes. The area will be 85% buffered by natural forest. The land is 32 acres in size.

The development will be land-lease, and people will be required to apply to become part of the community. The target demographic is those 50 years of age and over. He believes that there is a need for quality, affordable housing in this area. The homes are energy-efficient and low-maintenance. They are built in a controlled environment, and meet or exceed Canadian building codes.

Copies of the proposed plan, as well as information on Supreme Homes, were available to all present.

**Public
Comments**

Marion Seamone, Ellsworth Estates, representing a group of concerned citizens who are opposed to the proposed development

- Not opposed to development, but rather to the type proposed
- Reviewed types of development allowed by RM zoning as per the Land Use Bylaw
- If property developed under existing zoning, there would be positive local spinoffs
- Concerned re: effects on existing property values
- Need for assessment of access roads, traffic patterns, buffer zones, water supply and sewer services if zoning changed, although this would have to be done no matter what the type of development
- A main concern is loss of community control over how the land is developed

Tony Fisher, Applicant, commented that he has worked long and hard with the Municipality's Planning Department, getting staff input and meeting set requirements. Yes, he could change his plans if the rezoning is approved, but he has no intention of doing so: the proposal as submitted is what he intends to build. He expressed the desire that there were an existing mechanism that assured everyone of this, but none exists. Regarding wetland concerns, a study has been done. Also, it has been determined that the existing sewer system is adequate for the needs of the development.

Ted Davison, Saxon Street

- Expressed lack of sympathy for anyone who spends a lot of money on property without confirmation as to the ability to develop it
- Has seen developments that in no way resemble the initial proposal, as there are no repercussions if the developer fails to do what he says he is going to do; made several suggestions as to how this could be accomplished
- Feels the quality of trailer parks relates directly to their management, and would like to know the applicant's track record to ensure his management style
- Does not believe the proposed development is a positive thing for Centreville

Mr. Fisher responded that he owns several rental properties in Centreville, and his tenants could attest to his management style.

Sherry Selby, Sherman Belcher Road; tenant of Mr. Fisher

- Has been a tenant of Mr. Fisher's for the past year
- In her experience, he addresses any problems immediately
- Has been a very good landlord

**Public
Comments -
con't**

Tammy MacQuarrie, Parkside Estates

- Her property borders the park
- Must lock her doors, as she finds drug paraphernalia in her yard and there is vandalism in the park
- Concerned that proposed trails to the park would lead to an increase in crime; cited lack of police presence

Mr. Fisher responded that trails in the proposed development have been put in as a requirement by the Municipality, and are separate from any existing trails.

David MacDougall, Sherman Belcher Road

- His house is currently for sale, as he is moving for work-related reasons
- Has been told by two real estate companies that, if the proposed development is approved, his property value will decrease by half

Mr. Fisher's response: Research has shown that, in areas where similar parks of the proposed size or larger are located, property values have not been affected. Also, values of the units in question increase as a result of increased costs of materials, labour, etc.

Ted Davison, Saxon Street

- Stated that Scotiabank and CBIC have told him that mini homes on land-lease lots do not appreciate in value

Mr. Fisher named several banks that would like to be involved in the project.

John Dekoe, Parkside Subdivision

- Has knowledge of people who have had problems obtaining insurance for their mini homes
- Concerned that the proposed development would lead to decreased property values, increased crime, and erosion of the community
- Feels denial of the application by Council is in the best interests of the community

Darrell Spurr, Neville Court

- Requested time line for proposed development

Mr. Fisher replied that the plan is for four stages over a four-year period. Actual timeline is difficult to predict, as the second stage would not begin until the first stage was 80% full.

**Public
Comments –
con't**

Marj Taylor, Sherman Belcher Road

- Interested in the proposed order of development

On the development plan, Mr. Fisher demonstrated the areas included in each stage. The first stage would be the building of a road from an entrance on Sherman Belcher Road to Andrew Drive. Two houses owned by him would be moved to allow the construction of the entrance.

In response to her question regarding the County's actions if the water supply is inadequate, Mr. Fisher pointed out that this falls under the Department of the Environment, and an evaluation of the quality and quantity has determined that the water supply on site is adequate. The development will be serviced by four or six wells. There will be no impact on the water supply to Ellsworth Estates.

Darren O'Rourke, Neville Court

- Confirmed with Mr. Fisher the water testing that has been done: pump test, evaluation by engineers, etc

In response to a question regarding ownership of adjacent land, Mr. Fisher stated his understanding that it follows the border of the designated growth area. Ian Watson, Planner, confirmed that land outside the growth area is ineligible for rezoning. Mr. Fisher explained discrepancies in the County's map, such that land shown to be included in his purchase was indeed not, and is zoned Agricultural.

Regarding the need to bring in fill, Mr. Fisher indicated that the site is relatively flat, and little fill will be required.

John Dekoe, Parkside Drive

- Where is the land that is owned by Osborne Ward?

Mr. Fisher indicated the location of the property in question, which is wetland. He approached Mr. Ward re: purchase of the property at the suggestion of the Municipality, as it includes an unused road right-of-way that would allow access to his land from Sherman Belcher Road.

Shane Pimm, Edgewood Estates

- Stressed that, once the door is opened by rezoning, the developer can do anything he wants with the land, and questioned the applicant's credibility
- Stated that the applicant is not subdividing, but rather amalgamating land and becoming a monopoly owner

**Public
Comments –
con't**

Raymond Winkelman, Centreville

- Supports entrepreneurship, “we need people to move projects forward”, and supports development as per the existing zoning.
- Requested that Councillor Killam face the assembly and observe a show of hands of those in favour and those opposed to the proposed development

Debby Gibson, Edgewood Estates

- Expressed concern regarding the effect of the development on property values
- Why is the applicant persisting with his proposal in face of opposition?

Mr. Fisher replied that this is the purpose of the Public Information Meeting – to obtain feedback from the community. Also, Municipal planning staff believes it is a good plan.

Mrs. Gibson: Is there a contract with Martin Dowse to include only Supreme Homes?

Mr. Fisher: At this time there is a verbal agreement with Mr. Dowse' employer: dwellings in the development would be built exclusively by Supreme Homes.

Mrs. Gibson: What kind of businessman invests so much without confirmation of approval to develop?

Mr. Fisher replied that he is able to develop the land under the current zoning, and his initial plans were for R2 development. However, after research and with the encouragement of Municipal planning staff, he determined that this proposal is the best and most cost-effective use of the land.

Ted Davison, Saxon Street

- Did Municipal staff suggest the park?

Ian Watson, Planner, replied that he, personally, was unaware of the conversation.

Mr. Fisher replied that he has had no dealings with Mr. Watson prior to last evening.

Mr. Killam, Councillor, stated that he would ask questions re: Planning Department involvement.

**Public
Comments –
con't**

Bev Cheverie, Centreville

- What are you planning – modular, mini, or mobile homes, and where are you purchasing them?

Mr. Fisher: The plan is for mini and modular homes, supplies exclusively by Supreme Homes. They will be on concrete pads and owned by the residents.

Wayne Balsor, Centreville

- When did the land change from Agricultural to R2 zoning, and why were the adjacent residents not notified, as they were in this case?

Ian Watson replied that he was not familiar with the zoning history of the property, and would look into it.

Pete Lepper, Centreville

- Where can we see a development like this that you have done?

Mr. Fisher replied that he has not done a similar development, but had done multiple semi-detached developments in other areas, which he named.

Tammy MacQuarrie, Centreville

- Have you checked the average house cost in Centreville?

Response from floor: \$156,000 - \$160,000

Justin Bent, Centreville

- Why here? Do you have any experience with mobile homes?

Mr. Fisher replied that he believes the property he owns is the ideal site. Though he has no experience with mobile homes, the development process is the same. He went on to relate the history of one of his developments in Newfoundland, and its significant increase in value.

Mary Lou Davison, Saxon Street

- How would you like to wake up to a trailer park in your back yard? It will devalue property.

David MacDougall, Centreville

- What is the rent?

Mr. Fisher: \$220 per month

**Public
Comments –
con't**

Bev Cheverie, Centreville

- Requested to have her land rezoned for family reasons, but was denied: asked the Planner why?

Ian Watson replied that he did not know, and referred to the application process.

Steve Ross, Centreville

- Stated that he did not want the development to proceed, as it would decrease his property's value.

Fred Folz, Centreville

- Asked to where the two houses were to be moved.

Mr. Fisher: To other property he owns on Sherman Belcher Road.

Mary Lou Davison, Saxon Street

- Asked the Planner if it is true that trailers in New Minas have to be moved because of the new access road.

Ian Watson replied that Granite Road will avoid the trailer park.

Wes Muise, Centreville

- Expressed concerns that his property would be devalued.

Adjournment

There being no further questions or comments from the public, Mike Sweeney thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Anne-Marie Waterbury, Recorder