

**Mount Olive Planning Board
Summary Minutes
February 8, 2024**

Meeting opened at 7:00 pm with Pledge of Allegiance followed by roll call:

ATTENDANCE:

Planning Board Members:

Present:

Mr. Scapicchio, Mr. Schaechter, Mayor Nicastro, Ms. Mott, Ms. Natafalusy, Mr. Nelsen, Mr. Batsch, Ms. Shanaphy, Mr. Weiss

Excused:

Mr. Mania, Mr. Galop

Board Professionals:

Chuck McGroarty, P.P., AICP; Mike Vreeland, P.E.; James Bryce, Esq.; Mary Strain, PB Secretary

MINUTES

Minutes of January 11, 2024 – approved.

Motion:	Mr. Schaechter	
Second:	Ms. Mott	
Roll Call:	Mr. Scapicchio	Yes
	Mr. Schaechter	Yes
	Ms. Mott	Yes
	Ms. Natafalusy	Yes
	Mr. Nelsen	Yes
	Mr. Batsch	Yes
	Ms. Shanaphy	Yes
	Mr. Weiss	Yes

RESOLUTIONS

Authorizing the Award of non-fair and open contract for professional services to M2 Associates, Inc., for hydrogeologic consulting services - approved.

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT DISCUSSION

SDK Village Green, LLC

Potential Zone Modification

100 Route 46

Block 102, Lot 4

Mr. Weiss explained that representatives from SDK Village Green were present that evening to discuss a potential zone modification to the Township's Master Plan.

Appearing for SDK Village Green, LLC: Dinesh Khosal and Puneet Khosal, Owners of SDK Village Green; Nicole Russo, SDK Village Green Property Manager

Mayor Nicastro explained that the meeting and reexamination of the Master Plan was to create affordable housing for seniors who would like to sell their homes in Mount Olive Township, but still be able to afford to live in Mount Olive Township. He and Mr. Khosal discussed the concept idea for a mixed use at SDK Village Green shopping center to create affordable units for seniors. Currently, Mount Olive Township only has one other senior facility.

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Dinesh Khosal addressed the Planning Board Members and thanked them for working with SDK Village Green in the past. Mr. Khosal explained that the community has current and growing needs due to the demographic shifts of the nation. He noted the ever expanding needs for the aging or senior citizens of the community. He went on to explain that seniors want to stay in their communities. They do not want to move and leave behind friendships and their roots. He told the Board Members that in 1981 he took a course regarding aging for sociology. He was invited to do a speech on aging and talked about living in place in the community where we have built our friendships and networks. Mobility and prosperity are virtues in this country. Children grow up and move away and we still have our friends and neighbors. He decided that if an opportunity arises he would create a living community for seniors to stay where they have lived for many years and to live in place. In order to make that happen SDK Village Green reached out to the Township and Mayor Nicastro to have a discussion expressing that they would like to build age restricted economically viable units in anticipation that there would be a positive response. Mr. Khosal presented a concept plan to the Board Members. He explained that this plan is envisioned by SDK Village Green for 2026. This project will be an exclusively age restricted project with smaller units and micro units. It will be fully ADA compliant. They would honor the Fair Housing Law. Mr. Khosal also explained that they want to create a mini downtown on the 9 acres site along with the age restricted housing. It would be a downtown where the citizens could come and enjoy its charm and intimacy. Currently, what you see is all paved areas with a few trees and bushes, but in the proposed plans there would be over 30,000 square feet of green spaces. It will have a beautiful water fountain with public meeting spaces and a clock tower. The entrance from Route 46 would be totally enhanced. Mr. Khosal noted that his hopes were that the zoning for the property could be changed so this project could be accomplished.

Puneet Khosal presented a Concept Plan consisting of various phased slides for the project. He pointed out the vacant retail area where the Home Goods store had been. They were proposing a water fountain in the front of that area with landscaping for public space. The vacant retail space is where they propose to build the apartments. Mr. Khosal presented Phase #2 and Phase #3. He explained that the medical services above the bank will be brought down to the first floor. The idea was to keep medical services available for the tenants. Mr. Khosal presented Slide #4 which showed an overlay of the indoor space. He described some of their ideas for the indoor space. He indicated that plan would become more functional as they move forward. He further described the plans for the various retail spaces and open green spaces they would provide for the property. The retail spaces are proposed to be smaller shops. There will be a private courtyard for people living there. The project will be developed into phases. He explained the phases as proposed. There will be a variety of configurations of different units for the tenants. There already exists 2 pools, a gym and walking trails that will be available for use of the future tenants. The building proposed will be three floors high. He summarized that this is a great opportunity to reimagine the space and meet the growing needs of demographic shifts and the population.

Mr. Schaechter asked about the proposed number of units. Mr. Khosal explained that there is enough water and sewer available for 120 units but they are proposing between 90 to 105 units at the most. Parking was questioned. Mr. Khosal noted that they are reducing the parking for the retail/commercial space, so there will be parking available for the apartment units. He also mentioned possible underground parking.

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There were concerns regarding elevations and heights. Mr. Khosal said they would have a better plan if the Board agrees that this project could be completed. The plan is still evolving. The types of units were discussed. Mr. Khosal said, at this time they were thinking about all one bedroom units and some micro units. Affordable housing and senior housing was discussed. Mr. McGroarty explained the percentages required for affordable housing and age restricted units.

Mr. Weiss asked about the pricing for the units. Mr. Khosal said that pricing will depend on market conditions. Mr. Khosal noted that the ability to fill up the units quickly would give them the opportunity to keep the pricing economically viable for people. He further explained that in their existing apartments everything is determined by market and the rents change week by week. Mr. Weiss indicated that he did not want to see people wishing to downsize be priced out of the market. Mr. Khosal said they will work very hard with the Township to maintain affordable pricing on the units. The units will only be rental units and not for sale.

The mixed use with retail was discussed.

Mr. Weiss opened the meeting to the public. Irene Segonis of Budd Lake asked if the 90 to 105 units would be just Phase #1 or the whole project. Mr. Khosal responded the whole project. Ms. Segonis explained that she is in a senior club and many of the seniors do come from the Village Green. Mount Olive has a large community of seniors and this would be great. Mr. Weiss thanked Ms. Segonis and closed the meeting to the public.

Mr. Weiss asked about the zone change for the property. Mr. McGroarty explained that there are different possibilities for the project. It could be considered a conditional use in the C1 Zone. He offered to develop a couple of options for the Board to consider. Rezoning just the Village Green site could raise problems. He mentioned an overlay zone which could create opportunities for affordable housing. Mr. Bryce indicated that future legislation currently being considered would make rezoning properties, overlay zoning, and notice requirements a lot more efficient and cost effective. Mr. Bryce further explained some of the concerns with rezoning this property and some restrictions involved with the future legislation being considered. Mr. McGroarty further explained some restrictions involved for the Township with the pending legislation and noted that there are elements in the legislation that could favor an approach such as this.

Mr. Khosal mentioned that they hoped to start working on the actual plans as soon as possible. He expressed that time is of the essence. If the project cannot start to move forward, they will have to consider renting out the retail space to another retail tenant for economic reasons. The present projection for the project timeframe is 24 to 26 months.

Mr. Weiss opened the meeting to the public. Maria Semarco of First Street explained that her home is very close to the Village Green and wanted to know how affordable this would be to her. An opportunity to move to a community such as this in her own town would be ideal. Mr. Khosal responded that they are committed to making this an affordable senior community. Mr. McGroarty briefly explained to Ms. Semarco about the affordable housing program in the Township.

Barbara Buchard of Flanders asked if all the units will be affordable housing. Mr. Bryce responded that only a percentage will be considered affordable housing. Ms. Buchard also asked if citizens of Mount Olive will get a priority. Mr. McGroarty replied that Mount Olive residents could not get

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priority and explained that the affordable housing program includes all of Morris County. There will be independent administrative agencies involved.

Ms. Buchard asked about the underground parking. Mr. Schaechter explained that the project is only in the concept stage. Mr. Weiss closed the meeting to the public.

Mr. Khosal thanked the Board Members.

With no further business the Board adjourned at 8:20 pm.