

**TOWNSHIP OF MIDDLETOWN
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

December 10, 2024

Present: Mark Bradson, Dave Decker, Doug Gramo, Josh Neidich

Melissa Rheinstadter, Solicitor; Eric Janetka, Township Engineer; Meredith Merino, Director of Planning & Development

A. Call to Order

Chairman Mr. Decker called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

B. Approval of Minutes - November 12, 2024

Mr. Decker brought forth the November meeting minutes for consideration. Mr. Gramo motioned to approve the minutes as drafted; Mr. Bradson seconded the motion and the Commission approved the minutes with a vote of 4-0.

C. OLD BUSINESS

*3-Lot Residential Subdivision/Land Development Plan Review
Holefelder Brothers, Inc.
597 Mt Alverno Road*

Mr. Decker explained that the review of this application had been tabled to tonight's meeting from the November 12 meeting. Gus Houtman was present as the applicant engineer. Property owner John Holdefelder and his wife were also present. Mr. Houtman explained that Hillcrest Townhomes are located to the south and east of the tract. The property currently contains the existing dwelling, a barn located to the northeast, and the existing private driveway just north of Hillcrest Lane. There are several sheds on the property and it contains two retaining walls. The property is partially wooded with stands of mature trees adjacent to Hillcrest Lane, and there is a wooded area to the north of the subject dwelling. A berm is located adjacent to Hillcrest Lane. The property is currently serviced by private water and public sanitary sewer in Hillcrest Lane.

The property is zoned R-1, and the zoning table demonstrates code compliance for lots 1-3. New homes are proposed to be constructed on lots on the east and west of the lot that will contain the existing dwelling. The existing barn is to be removed, as the structure straddles the line of lots 2 and 3. The majority of the existing driveway will be removed, and new driveway accesses will be provided with connections to Hillcrest Lane. The applicant provided responses to address comments which are primarily 'will comply'. Mr. Houtman reviewed the particular comments that would need additional explanation.

Mr. Bradson reiterated that there are three driveways coming out onto Hillcrest, and an existing berm that runs down Hillcrest with pine trees. Other than cutting in for the driveways, Mr. Bradson asked what the plan is for the berm since it's a buffer on Hillcrest. Mr. Houtman responded that the only clearing and grading to occur will be what is required to cut in driveways, and they are proposing to maintain the trees and the berm otherwise. Mr. Bradson suggested adding plantings along the berm to fill in the vegetation buffer. Mr. Houtman responded that they will add additional street tree plantings based on the forthcoming landscape consultant review.

Ms. Rheinstadter addressed the question of the property ownership under the 50-foot Township Right of Way, and explained that the documents show that the Township owns the ROW over the Hillcrest property.

Doug Carlson, 616 Hillcrest stated that there is already an existing driveway on Mt Alverno and asked why it can't be a shared driveway. Mr. Janetka responded that Township roads are governed by the Street Opening ordinance. Properties with sufficient frontage have a right to gain access to the property by entering a Township road. Maintenance is governed by agreements and is a separate issue from the rights to access a Township street. Mr. Houtman responded that if it is the wish of the Hillcrest HOA to abandon maintenance of the sidewalk, then it would go to the three lots to maintain. There may not be any agreements at all.

Mr. Decker acknowledged that it would be the responsibility of the builder to remove existing curb, put in curb aprons, and properly construct the macadam driveway. Mr. Janetka added that this work would be overseen as part of a Street Opening Permit, which is another level of oversight as to quality of installation.

Mr. Decker summarized the potential conditions of approval as follows: 1) Document the barn and contact the Middletown Township Historical Society so that they can take photos prior to demolition; 2) Landscape review should be completed to incorporate a fuller buffer as part of subdivision plan and preservation of existing buffer; 3) Sidewalks should be cut to comply with ADA requirements; and 4) the additional hydrant location must be confirmed by the Township Fire Chief.

Mr. Gramo made a motion to recommend approval of the application with conditions, which was seconded by Mr. Neidich. The Planning Commission voted 3-1 to recommend approval (Mr. Decker opposed).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55.

Respectfully submitted,



Meredith Merino
Director of Planning & Development