Village of Chester Planning Board

From: Karen McGovern <kmclarita@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 23, 2015 6:45 PM
To: vchesterplbrd@frontier.com
Cc: Karen McGovern
Subject: October 27 Meeting re: Elmwood Apartment proposed complex

To the Village of Chester Board:
Due to medical reasons, I am unable to attend the forthcoming meeting on October 27.
As a resident of Elm Street (19 Elm), I respectfully request that this email be read into the official record of public hearing (#2) on the evening of 10-27-15.
I am Karen McGovern, owner of 19 Elm Street, and I thank you for considering my email in the evening's discussion.

My concerns are threefold:

1. **ZONING, PROPERTY VALUES, and TAXES**

Any apartment complex (whether it contains 5 or 30 units) must change or challenge the existing zoning rules of Chester Village. Although the Village Board has yet to conclude about the exact nature of the proposed apartment complex, I contend that "Elmwood Apartments" belongs in a commercial/business zone since it neither meets the zoning nor the construction regulations of Elm Street (specifically) or for the Village of Chester (generally). It is my hope that Chester Village's Zoning Board will find that the Elmwood Apartments proposal is, in fact, **a commercial endeavor that will not benefit the** home owners of the Village. As such, it does not belong on Elm Street. A commercial property (w/multiple units) *will ONLY generate revenue for the OWNER of the complex while it degrades quality of life for all of Chester's Villager tax payers rather than contributing to our common good and well-being.*

A large new population of people will also place a new burden on local schools. As such, **Village of Chester taxes will surely increase while our property values will decrease.** That is a lose-lose situation.

2. **TRAFFIC, SAFETY, and PUBLIC UTILITIES**

Should the Elmwood Apartment complex be approved, there will be an increase in street traffic. Elm Street and Main is a blind corner; when there is late afternoon traffic, including school buses, a new apartment complex may endanger the safety and/or lives of both motorists and pedestrians. Residents on Elm can also anticipate the added financial burden on all shared public utilities since water, sewage, and local schools will be adversely affected. As such, the cost of living for current Village residents will increase while our quality of life will be denigrated. Trash, waste and recycled materials that such a large housing complex will produce could push Chester to capacity and beyond. There are also some unanswered questions about safety, the proposed parking lot for the apartment complex,

and the exact impact and nature of the parking lot's lighting since it is still unclear exactly how many new residents would dwell in the proposed apartments and how many vehicles they will own/use.

3. **ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION and QUALITY of LIFE**

Additional housing units will have an ineluctably negative impact on the environment. The inevitable loss of natural habitats, trees, and common green spaces will make Elm St. less attractive; more, the loss of green space can have ill health effects on the people of Elm while forcing the relocation of scores of local birds and other fauna when their habitat is bulldozed to make room for a large parking lot. Run off will likely become another serious and hazardous problem, especially during winter, when ice and melting snow seep onto Elm. With such a large complex, the safety of all current home owners on Elm will be put in jeopardy. We will most likely lose the privacy we value, as the quality of life for all Elm Street residents will be degraded, and a community of friendly but respectful and private home owners will be fractured by the impact of a new, large group of individuals whom are more accustomed to apartment living. There is a life style difference, including an economic one between single family homes and apartment complexes. If more than one or two apartment dwellers is careless about trash, if they fail to follow recycling or parking regulations, or if they lack respect for other Village codes and regulations, conflict is bound to ensue.

A closing thought:
Parks and green spaces improve quality of life and serve as an element to build and sustain community.
The TRUST for PUBLIC LAND has assessed that "70% of the US population live on 5% of its land mass";
that is not good for the health of people or for our precious natural resources and environment.
Perhaps the best new Real Estate investments for the Village of Chester should INCLUDE larger PUBLIC PARK SPACES and ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS rather than degradation of the beautiful green spaces we enjoy now. Green businesses will be attracted to Chester if we do more to preserve and protect the
green spaces we have rather than destroying and neglecting them.

W/sincere thanks,
Karen McGovern
19 Elm Street
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