

Village Planning Board Secretary Sandy VanRiper

From: David Stevenson <dgstevenson@optonline.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2019 12:58 PM
To: Rick Ramsdell; Village Planning Board Secretary Sandy VanRiper
Subject: A few thoughts

To Rick Ramsdell and the Planning Board,

As you and the Planning Board begin to review the revised Elmwood application, I want to make a few quick comments:

The Village Board's resolution, which was a contentious 3-2 split vote, was merely a procedural decision to allow Elmwood to advance to the next stage of review with the invocation of the Senior Housing Permit. The actual review of the project, decisions about appropriateness, and final approval/disapproval are still left to the Planning Board. You are under no directive from the Village Board to rubber stamp the project.

Even under the Senior Housing Permit, the Planning Board must still consider the adverse impact that a project will have on the existing community and established neighborhood. My feeling is that what amounts to a B1 usage on an RS lot (the 8 Elm Street access road cutting right through a residential block of long-established homes) should be disallowed because it is so out of character with the surroundings and will negatively impact the neighbors.

As I mentioned earlier, the Senior Housing permit still has some stipulations, such as impervious surface coverage percentage for lots. I gave you the Zoning Code passage that applies to this. Elmwood's plan to pave the vast majority of the 8 Elm Street lot is clearly higher than the allowed surface area by a substantial margin.

Please keep in mind that as part of the Comprehensive Plan process we are reviewing the ratio of single family houses to multi-family dwellings. At the last Comp Plan meeting, it was revealed that the current ratio in the Village is 70% multi-family to only 30% single homes, to which Alan Sorensen was incredulous that it had become so out of whack. He, and several of the Board members agreed that it needed to be corrected. Approving the Elmwood apartments will only exacerbate the problem.

Last, this project should not be reviewed through the lens of having to allow *something/anything* to proceed after all these years. It should still be considered on its own merits and if it fails the acceptability test, the proper decision should be rendered. It is not the function of the Planning Board to act as a planner to come up with something that can go in there, especially if excessive changes to the existing Zoning Code are needed (the unfortunate Local Law #2). We should not lower our standards simply because some time has passed on a difficult-to-develop lot. That sets a very poor precedent for the Village's future.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

David Stevenson