

Meeting held 7-24-19 at Greater Groves Clubhouse

To Discuss Apartments on Ruby Red

I will attempt to transcribe what went on as best I can, I will of course need to summarize a lot of the discussion.

The meeting was attended by concerned residents from both Greater Groves and Westchester.

Presentation and questions by Steve Smith with Provident Housing Solutions and Commissioner for district one Tim Sullivan.

I want to apologize at the beginning that due to crosstalk I was not able to make out some of the questions and answers.

Mr. Smith's presentation was that the area needs workforce housing because single family homes have become unaffordable for many. He stated that 1000 families a day are moving to this region.

Mr. Smith stated that the lot in question was currently zoned commercial and something more offensive to the neighbors could possibly go in there. He said he felt that what he was proposing would be in our neighborhood's (Greater and Westchester) best interests.

Mr. Smith said he understood what the concerns were for traffic issues and would address these with the DOT prior to building, and that a traffic study would have to be done before any approval could be obtained from the county.

Mr. Smith opened the floor to questions.

Resident - What does the state say about certificate of need, and then stated all the apartment complexes that are already here, and new ones already being built.

Mr. Smith - The county government says there is still a large need for workforce housing in the four corners area.

Resident - I have been affiliated with apartments in this area and they are full of undesirable people. This will bring more crime, and cause horrendous issues for traffic speeding down Dorchester St. in Westchester.

Mr. Smith - These will not be low income, but working people like first responders nurses etc.

Resident - This will push all our property values down at rents of 700, 800 and 900 this will draw low income and section 8 residents. We will be right next door to a complex like _____ across the road.

Mr. Smith - But what if you got a trucking company in there. It is zoned commercial so you could get some noisy business, this would be better for your communities.

Resident - Why this small lot in the middle of two residential communities?

Mr. Smith - In meetings with Lake County I was told that from a planning standpoint that apartments would be the best use of the land. It is felt that Commercial should be along the

main road, then multi-family, then single family homes. This land is more reasonably priced than most land in the area.

Resident - This is not beneficial to anyone living in either Greater Groves or Westchester. There are certainly other places you can build these, and the planning board has not yet heard from 700-800 residents yet.

Resident - Where I grew up they built apartments for "civil service workers", basically the type of residents that you are claiming these apartments would be for. There was no guarantee they would stay that way and they turned into a "project". We had to tear down a high school that had been there for a very long time because it became a slum.

Mr. Smith - We can guarantee for 30 years that it would remain work force housing and not be low income. We certify the construction for 50 years, that the property will not deteriorate. This would be in place because of state funding supplied to build. HUD Our mission is not to make money, but help the community.

Resident - Then don't do this if you want to help our communities.

Resident - We have many concerns, what can you say about these apartments that will benefit our residents?

Mr. Smith - I attended a conference with Lake County officials and was told by many business owners in this area that they cannot get employees because of the cost of housing. Businesses included South Lake Hospital, Lowes and area restaurants. Having adequate employees to serve you would be a benefit to you.

Resident - I don't see an issue with adequate employees in this area. We are doing fine in this area. Again, what is the benefit to us and what is the benefit to you.

Mr. Smith - I get zero benefit from this, we are a non profit business. Businesses in this area cannot get workers in this area based on research workforce Florida has done.

Resident - You said this will benefit us, the homeowners, this will not benefit the homeowners.

Resident - This is basically a HUD (Housing and Urban Development) housing.

Mr. Smith - Yes, it would be run under HUD rules.

Resident - Many complexes offer a police officer a free apartment, to manage the issues within their communities. What are your plans for police coverage in these apartments. We are not the same as the City of Clermont with a comprehensive police force, we have two sheriff's deputies at a time policing all of Lake in the four corners area.

Mr. Smith - We built a beautiful complex up behind Citrus Towers (Woodwinds) and they are beautiful. The residents around them have no complaints about them.

Resident - There must be other places you can build apartments, not right in the middle of two residential neighborhoods. You are not paying attention to what the communities want.

Mr. Smith - I thought there was a police substation here.

Resident - They have a location in one of the apartment complexes, but that is just a spot to write reports, not like the station up on 50.

Mr. Sullivan - I will address the police presence with the sheriff, although I only approve the spending, not how it is allotted.

Resident - If a major incident happens in this area the police are called in from all over including as far away as Groveland. We do not have adequate coverage at this time.

Mr. Smith - But the hospital will be expanding and will need more affordable housing for it's employees.

Resident - In England there is specific housing for civil servants, first responders, health care etc. Can you specify this would only be for these professions, and they have to prove they have these jobs to live here.

Mr. Smith - We cannot discriminate.

Resident - But you can be specific who the apartments are for.

Mr. Smith - Not under HUD rules, and HUD would be funding.

Resident - Why not elderly housing, there is a need for that .

Mr. Smith - Would this make a difference?

Residents - Yes

Mr. Smith - Seniors do need housing as well.

Resident - We have a big issue with traffic, and had 3 major accidents at the intersection of 27 and Greater Groves Blvd just recently. There is also the issue with more traffic going through Westchester.

Mr. Smith - We could stipulate that this could not go ahead without a direct turn off 27 onto Ruby Red from the northbound lanes..

Resident - Build that before you build anything else.

Resident - What is the timeline?

Mr. Smith - 2-3 years at best.

Resident - Will there be a traffic study, will it include Westchester?

Mr. Smith - I don't know if it would include Westchester.

Resident - Well it needs to.

Mr. Sullivan - There are several steps that need to happen before any of this can go forward. A zoning change would be first and could take a minimum of a year, this would include a traffic study. I understand there are a lot of traffic issues that are safety issues. 27 is a strategic intermodal thoroughfare and the DOT does not like to interfere with the travel on this road if possible. I understand it is a safety issue and there are different funds for this. I can have my staff find out about the green left turn arrows going out onto 27 as this seems to be a safety issue.

Mr. Sullivan - The sheriff's budget is out of my control as to how it is spent. We provide money to the sheriff, but how he spends it is at his discretion. It is my understanding that there is a plan to add another shift to this area and I understand you want more traffic

enforcement in this area. Transportation planning is done 30 years out, but is reviewed each year so I could have some input there.

Mr. Sullivan - I give Mr. Smith credit for having these meetings prior to showing up at the planning board. I have had people show up with plans to build and already spent money and also have someone with petitions to stop them at the same time.

Resident - There is a need for senior housing in this area, but HUD can at anytime, demand that 10 - 20 % be lower income. They can do this at anytime and you can't stop it. With senior housing you don't get 80 year olds breaking into houses and cars.

Mr. Smith - I know you don't want section 8 in your back yard. This would be work force housing, and we can evict anyone who is a problem.

Resident - I work at 2 senior housing systems in Lakeland, and they are full. We need more facilities in this area, this would be a benefit to our community if apartments must be built.

Mr. Smith - I know there are less issues with a senior facility.

Resident - Did you consider a veterans services facility in place of apartments?

Mr. Smith - I have no authority to build that kind of facility.

Resident - Is the property purchased yet?

Mr. Smith - No, I wanted feedback first, and I am getting strong opinions.

Resident - I am still waiting to hear what is the benefit to Greater Groves and Westchester.

Mr. Smith - It could stop something commercial that you would not like from going in there.

Resident - We would prefer commercial.

Mr. Smith - The benefit is you would be helping your fellow man.

Resident - We do not want this. It is of absolutely no benefit to Greater Groves or Westchester.

Mr. Smith - Well it may not be a direct benefit to you.

Resident -If you build this complex and have 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments there will be children. The schools in this area are already full. How can you just add more with no new facilities.

Mr. Sullivan - There would be school impact fees, but this would come into play during the approval process. The county commissioners can vote no on this project.

Resident - Your plan calls for 2 parking spaces for each apartment. In the 3 bedroom apartments there could be 3 couples sharing, this could be 6 cars, where are the overflow cars going to park. What happens when the teens all get their cars, when boyfriends and girlfriend visit, the overflow will be blocking the streets.

Mr. Smith - We can put no parking signs on Ruby Red.

Resident - Did property values go down when you built the apartments up by Citrus Tower?

Mr. Smith - All the studies show we need new construction, and no, property values are still going up. The church in that area has grown. I understand the traffic issues, but not the crime issues.

Resident - There is plenty of land on 474 that is not in the middle of two neighborhoods. There are many apartments being built on 192 that can fill workers needs.

Mr. Smith - Most of the apartments are too expensive, these would be less expensive.

Resident - Why not build single family houses.

Mr. Smith - Prices are too high a 3-2 house now costs 252,000 to build and people can't afford them. HUD would not subsidize single family homes. Costs have skyrocketed in the last year.

Resident - Why here and not somewhere else?

Mr. Smith - Because the hospital is here. (the ER)

Resident - There are plenty of other places.

Mr. Sullivan - Mr. Smith is just trying to keep you informed and doing a benefit analysis to see if doing this project is worth it. There are certain pots of money from the state that can support this type of building. We are just trying at this point to see if this project is viable. Assisted living is the fastest growing housing in Lake County, but that is private sector building.

Resident - Why not have the county purchase the land and make a park out of it ?

Mr. Sullivan - I'm here to listen to the options.

Resident - What is the cost of that lot.

Resident - Greater Construction sold it to South Lake Hospital for \$1.00, they are in turn selling for \$675,000.00

Mr. Smith - This land is cheaper than other land around here.

Resident - Was there a clause when Greater Construction gave the land to the hospital that it had to be used for a medical facility?

Mr. Smith - No, there are no deed restrictions.

Mr. Smith - We also have to check availability of utilities, and certify they can handle the additional apartments.

Resident - Utilities Inc. is already maxed out.

Resident - What alternatives do we have ?

Mr. Sullivan - Attend public meetings with the commissioners and you can have input at planning and zoning meetings.

Resident - What would you recommend for us to fight this ? (Directed at Mr. Sullivan)

Mr. Sullivan - Petitions of verifiable signatures is effective.

Resident - So bring a petition and meet with you ?

Mr. Sullivan - Make arrangements to meet with all the commissioners, again, someone bringing a verified petition is effective.

Resident - From our standpoint this project is of no benefit to our communities.

Mr. Sullivan - There is a huge need for workforce housing. 1100 people are moving here every week. We already have 10,000 more houses planned in the SW area of Lake County.

Resident - The schools are impacted immediately, but new schools take years to be built.

Mr. Sullivan - That is determined by the state.

Mr. Smith - I understand senior housing would not need schools, and there would be less traffic.

Resident - Who builds and manages these apartments ?

Mr. Smith - We do not build them ourselves, we would hire a company, they would be managed by Carteret management. (I will post their information at the end of the notes.)

Mr. Smith - These apartments could not be flipped to a different use for 30 years, and under HUD they could not go bankrupt.

Resident - Isn't your other project Woodwinds? And wasn't that housing for low income and homeless

?

Mr. Smith - This project will not be low income. My mind is not made up about exactly what will be happening. I understand there is less concern for a senior project.

This was the end of the questions and answers.

Mr. Sullivan was shown maps of what our concerns were for traffic. If this has to happen we need Green left turn arrows at the lights, and a direct entrance on to Ruby Red.

The board from Westchester has said they will arrange the petitions and have them drawn up as they can work with their management company on this. After the petitions to stop this are drawn up, we will need volunteers to take to every property to be signed.

Carteret Management About Us

Founded in 1971 by Harry R. Chadwick, Jr., Carteret Management Corporation is a service-oriented, privately held and family operated corporation with 40 years experience in managing apartments throughout Florida in the private sector and under Sections 236, 202 and 8 of the National Housing Act. The Carteret approach to property management is one that promotes accountability and oversight to ensure effective adherence to stringent standards and compliance with HUD regulations and guidelines. We take a proactive, hands-

on approach to property management to achieve a common objective with our for-profit and nonprofit organizations: to provide safe, comfortable, and attractive residential communities that meet the continuing needs of residents.

Carteret has been a long time partner with HUD in providing affordable housing to low income citizens. Indeed, its Owner, James Chadwick, enjoys a unique relationship with HUD in that for over 25 years he was a principal of RGR, Inc., a housing consultant firm that worked with nonprofit organizations to develop and construct affordable housing for low-income households financed through HUD. As a result of this partnership and our management experience, we are closely familiar with all of HUD's financial and property management requirements, including reporting, fees, auditing, record maintenance, replacement reserve and special escrow procedures, bid/contract approvals, and cost allocation authorization.

Along with its extensive HUD experience, Carteret is an approved management agent through the Florida Housing Finance Corporation for handling Low Income Housing Tax Credit programs. Carteret is fully equipped to handle the responsibilities of tax credit management, from lease up of new construction to oversight of acquisition/rehab projects, as well as the ongoing compliance burdens associated with tax credits. Additionally, Carteret is a registered Real Estate Company through the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation.

Currently the Carteret portfolio is comprised of 22 properties (2,750 units), six of which have been under Carteret's management since their inception. The success of our property and asset management work is demonstrated in the solid financial footing and excellent physical condition of these properties.