Questions: Chagrin West of SOM Neighborhood
3/10/16

Erin Dweik - property owner 33575 & 33505 Chagrin Blvd, full time business student Lakeland Community College and proud Moreland Hills resident

1. What is the best ROI for the Chagrin Road west of SOM neighborhood (CWS) taking into consideration potential Moreland Hills revenue, citizen preference, current homeowner direct impact, environmental issues and tax breaks?

The village will not invest in this project and, therefore, ROI is a concept that does not apply. There will be no tax breaks and all village environmental laws must be followed, as well as those imposed by other governmental entities. Finally, the Master Plan Committee recommended this zoning change after a thorough review of all issues and taking into account resident input.

2. Why is there only one developer involved in this project? Does the developer own the properties currently? Shouldn’t we be considering many different options for mixed use including full commercial possibilities?

The proposed zoning change is a village-initiated change that came out of the master review committee recommendations. The Village is not working with a developer. We know of one developer who is interested in a project in this area but there may be others. The village is considering mixed uses, taking into consideration the specific characteristics of the proposed PD area.

3. What is the opportunity cost of being in a hurry about this project when the zoning is currently residential? Isn’t the first step to attempt zoning to commercial based on majority will of the citizens in referendum voting? Is the tail wagging the dog?

The Master Review Committee spent almost a year studying all large tracts of land in the village that remain undeveloped. They gathered resident input and studied demographic trends. After that process they recommended this change. The zoning amendment will require voter approval.

4. If a residential property has an easement from the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, does this have an impact?
Any existing or potential easement between the WRLC and a resident is not
the business of the village and therefore, we cannot comment on it.

5. If 48 homes are built on 20 acres is that really $3,840,000.00
profit to the developer just from those homes? Is there a SWOT
analysis on the proposed project? Has Moreland Hills done its due
diligence?
The Village’s zoning decisions are guided by the Village’s Comprehensive Land Use
Plan, the Charter, and the Planning and Zoning code. Through its Master Plan
Review Committee and the zoning amendment process set forth in the Charter and
the Planning and Zoning Code, the Village, with the assistance of a land use planning
consultant, has and continues to thoroughly consider reasonable provisions for the
proposed PD district. Calculating potential developer profits and a SWOT analysis
are not part of this process.
Round 2 Questions: Chagrin West of SOM Neighborhood 3/18/16

Erin Dweik - property owner 33575 & 33565 Chagrin Blvd, full-time business student Lakeland Community College and proud Moreland Hills resident

1. How will Moreland Hills offset the $20,000 cost per pupil influx that will occur with the proposed 48 (plus 24) housing development. Currently there are only 2 students (Fisher Family) using Orange Schools out of the entire proposed 20 acres? Is it acceptable for a developer to offer eminent domain prices to current homeowners? Is that egregious behavior?

The Master Plan data indicate that Moreland Hills’ population is more heavily weighted with those in the Mature Families and Retirement age groups than those in the family forming or school aged groups.

Any offer made by a developer or landowner to purchase property is a private matter that does not involve the village.

2. Where is data on the proposed amount of tax revenue that will go to Orange Schools and the Village of Moreland Hills? How do we ensure that the developer will make good on these numbers? What is the role of self-interest and greater good?

As you know, most of Moreland Hills’ revenues come from income taxes. That is impossible to predict. A goal of zoning is to provide landowners with reasonable land use options. It is up to a landowner to decide how to develop its property within the confines of the zoning code based on its own due diligence (i.e., market analysis, return on investment, etc.)

3. What is the cost of increased trash collection, road use, library, police and fire for the influx of residents from the 48 (plus 24) housing units? There are approximately 12 people living on the 20 acres currently. Do property taxes create more revenue than an eco-friendly sustainable commercial enterprise?

The cost of trash collection, police and fire and road maintenance will not increase significantly.

4. What is the impact on the environment of the proposed development? Can we put a dollar value on that? How do we feel as a community about profit trumping our values?

All environmental protection ordinances in the Village must be obeyed.

5. Does Moreland Hills, as a community, have a majority of values that will be honored? Are there other ways to create revenue? Is it possible to make these acres a sustainable and eco-friendly business? Would the voters rather pay more individually than have a new development?
Is profit to one entity more important than the will of the majority of Moreland Hills’ residents? Is there a fiduciary responsibility of leadership to take the necessary time required to consider our options as a community?

The proposed PD zoning change retains the village’s existing requirements with respect to environmental protections, parking, landscaping, and architectural design criteria. It also retains the existing U-1 dwelling house zoning, giving landowners the choice of maintaining their current residential use or using their property in conjunction with other properties for a PD development. The proposed PD zoning change allows for an increased density based upon the unique characteristics of the area at issue, but with mitigating requirements, such as required open space and buffering to neighboring uses. Again, the proposed PD zoning change was recommended by the Master Plan Review Committee. The proposed PD zoning change is following the process required by the Charter and the Planning and Zoning code and will require voter approval. This process takes several months and requires many meetings and two public hearings.
STATEMENT OF RONALD R. JANKE, 105 EASTON LANE WITH RESPECT TO PROPOSED CHAPTER 1159
U-5 CHAGRIN NORTHWEST RESIDENTIAL AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

My wife and I have been residents of Moreland Hills for over 40 years living first on Giles Road and for the last 32 years on Easton Lane. We oppose the Proposed Ordinance that would enact Chapter 1159.

The fatal flaw in the Ordinance is that it would remove from what I understand to be 14 parcels on 40 acres the 2-acre zoning requirement, which is the bedrock residential zoning requirement of the Village. The 2-acre zoning requirement has served us well, both on the property in question and elsewhere in the Village where exists. I wish to cite some those benefits which would be lost under the rezoning proposal.

1. Moreland Hills is defined and distinguished by the term “semi-rural.” Over the years this is the common term that our elected officials and residents have used to describe our Village. This term continues to apply today, and it can be found on the Village website as well as in the most recent Village newsletter. Many elected officials over the years have campaigned for Village Office using this term and promising to retain Moreland Hills' 2-acre zoning requirement. I have heard no one ever campaign promising to pass a law to establish a Planned Unit Development.

2. Our two-acre zoning is what preserves our semi-rural character. When people think of Moreland Hills, it is the large, wooded lots of distinctive homes that they envision.

3. Environmental protection is a primary value in our Village. Our Village has acquired land on Chagrin River Road and SOM Center to preserve green space. We have ordinances that protect the environment. To name a few, these ordinances prohibit the cutting of trees, building too close to a stream or wetland or building on a steep slope. Just four days ago we had a well-publicized Greening of the Hills event.

In contrast, the proposed ordinance would destroy much green space. These 40-acres are approximately 80% green space. The new ordinance would require only 20% green space, and this requirement could be met in part by paved parking and driveways and up to 25% of the required setback along Chagrin Boulevard. No doubt, the ravines would be included in any future open space, as these are unbuildable areas.

In addition to the quantity of green space, the proposed rezoning would destroy the quality of the current green space. It can be expected that trees large and small would be cut down to maximize the buildable area and to improve sight lines. Witness the former Anderson property on Chagrin Boulevard as you drive up the hill to Chagrin Falls to get an idea of the type of clear cutting and regrading that occurs just to put in roads and utilities.
Of particularly great loss would be the forested areas where leaves fall and remain on the ground, each one working as a micro-sponge to absorb rainwater and to reduce storm water runoff. Reducing run-off and erosion protects the streams on the property and downstream leading to the Chagrin River, which is an exceptional stream. Some years ago, the Ohio EPA did a study and found that large residential lots affected stream quality less than dense residential developments or agricultural areas.

In sum, our two-lot zoning keep Moreland Hills environmentally sustainable.

4. The two-acre zoning requirement also keeps Moreland Hills financially sustainable by attracting substantial housing investments. We see this investment when new homes are built on vacant land, including in-fill lots and when existing homes are renovated, enlarged or rebuilt. This building activity maintains our tax base by maintaining and improving the quality of our housing stock and the new homes, most of which are very substantial, increase our tax duplicate. We need to continue to encourage this type of investment.

5. The proposed rezoning would greatly increase the density of housing from 1 residential unit per two acres to 8 residential units per two acres (4 per acre). This density is greater by a third than the Moreland Mews — where you see three lots or homes together on Moreland Mews, imagine a fourth one there as well. This density is much greater than the density of the land to the west on Chagrin Boulevard, where there is a row of town houses, the Senior Center, and the Library, all of which are surrounded by much more open space than is proposed by the rezoning. Likewise, the density of housing to the north of the 40 acres is also far lower than 4 homes per acre. Even the Orange School complex across Chagrin has a building density that is much lower than what is proposed. In sum, the density of buildings on the adjacent properties do not justify the density of housing that is proposed and intrudes on the overall density of the area. Only when compared to the relatively small retail strip to the east and to the smaller Heathermore complex is this area less dense than other properties in Moreland Hills.

6. In addition to this greater density, the zoning proposal would allow up to four units to be attached. Imagine a row of 4 townhouses or a quadplex. Allowing this type of development is an invitation to have an apartment complex developed as part of any PUD, a type of housing not now present in Moreland Hills and which changes our Village’s character.

7. The rezoning cannot be justified as allowing older Moreland Hills residents to “down-size.” Almost all of the older Moreland Hills residents that I know who have moved out of their homes have either moved to a retirement community with on-site home and health care available, like Hamlet, or have moved out of town to be close to family. Most older folks, like the persons on our street, hire landscapers and live comfortably in their homes for many years. For those wanting to downsize in Moreland Hills, we have several streets with smaller home and smaller lots, some of them vacant where one can build a small home. Interestingly, almost no new homes that are built are small, and many smaller homes are enlarged. That tells one something about the market in Moreland Hills. We have lots
that are large enough to allow succeeding generations to add a family room or a garage or a screened in porch; something that the new dense zoning would not accommodate.

Of course, what is being proposed does not insure that any Moreland Hills resident or any senior will move into one of the units. Older folks are looking for one-level homes, not 2 and a half story townhouses.

It should be noted that the type of housing that would be permitted under the rezoning is already available in the adjacent communities of Pepper Pike, Orange, Chagrin Falls, and Solon. We will remain a distinctive community by not adding more of this type of housing.

8. I strongly oppose the commercial buildings and uses that will be permitted under the rezoning. Allowed are restaurants, medical and dental offices, administrative, business and professional offices. None of these facilities are needed in Moreland Hills, in abundance in nearby areas, and even more will be built in the near future on Pinecrest and elsewhere. I understand that a large restaurant is proposed for the former Lee Road Nursery parcel.

Not only is there no need, throughout eastern Cuyahoga County and elsewhere, there is an excess of commercial space. We've seen the Lee Road Nursery site stand vacant for years, and for decades the office building on Chagrin and SOM advertised space for lease. One need only drive west on Chagrin Boulevard to find empty space.

9. It is noted that rezoning will avoid the cost of litigation over the current zoning. I am not so sure, as the only thing that will guarantee no litigation is continued appeasement. Moreover, some things are worth defending even at a cost. The current 2-acre zoning and all the benefits that it brings to Moreland Hills, including to the 40 acres under consideration, are such things.