

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN  
PLANNING COMMISSION - VIRTUAL MEETING ON ZOOM  
May 26, 2021  
MINUTES**

**Prior to the start of the meeting, the public was given instructions on how to take part in the meeting.**

Chairperson Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Jahr, Cullin, Kelley, Atchinson, Budd and Thompson.

**Excused:** None.

**Staff:** Director Power, Director Best and Secretary Harman.

**Planning Representatives:** None.

**Applicant(s) in Attendance:** Phillip Kuntzman of Upland Homes, Inc.

**Audience:** Two (2).

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion Jahr, Atchinson second to approve the agenda of May 26, 2021 as presented.

**Roll Call:**

**Yeas:** Cullin, Kelley, Atchinson, Budd, Jahr and Thompson.

**Nays:** None.

**Absent:** None.

**Motion Carried.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion Jahr, Budd second to approve the regular meeting minutes of May 12, 2021 as presented.

**Roll Call:**

**Yeas:** Atchinson, Budd, Kelley, Cullin, Jahr and Thompson.

**Nays:** None.

**Absent:** None.

**Motion Carried.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**ITEM #1: 20-016 – UPLAND HOMES COUNTRY WALK – SITE PLAN AMENDMENT.**

**THE APPLICANT, UPLAND HOMES, IS REQUESTING AN AMENDMENT TO THE APPROVED COUNTRY WALK SITE PLAN FOR REVISED SINGLE-FAMILY ARCHITECTURAL ELEVATIONS.**

**LOCATION: THE UNFINISHED COUNTRY WALK SUBDIVISION IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS REQUEST. THE DEVELOPMENT IS LOCATED ON THE EAST SIDE OF MARTINSVILLE ROAD, NORTH OF SAVAGE ROAD.**

Director Power gave the presentation and displayed the proposed architectural elevations. The applicant, Upland Homes, is requesting architectural approval for an additional home model titled "2100" with three proposed elevations "A, B and C". The development has a Planned Residential Development (PRD) agreement that was approved in 2002 and amended in 2005 but has since expired. In July of 2015, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was executed between Van Buren Township, the Country Walk Three Homeowners Association and Blue Country Walk, LLC which outlined the responsibilities of the parties with respect to the completion of the development and required compliance with the PRD that had expired. Director Power presented his staff review letter recommending the Planning Commission approve the site plan amendment to the Country Walk development for the addition of the proposed elevations, plans 2100 A, B and C, to be built by Upland Homes based on the following Conditions:

1. Township Planning staff shall review each application for a new single-family home in the Country Walk development in order to determine that the new home meets the required setbacks and that the elevation meets the Township's "substantially different" architectural design standards set forth in the PRD agreement.
2. Township Planning staff will evaluate all plot plan submittals for these home models to ensure they meet the minimum required 10' side yard setback.

Phillip Kuntzman of Upland Homes, Inc. gave a brief presentation. The applicant wanted to bring in another colonial home elevation to add variation to the remaining 15-16 lots within the development. This colonial home elevation is a little smaller than what currently exists and homes are selling very well in Country Walk.

Commissioner inquired if there were any color changes for the new home elevations. Mr. Kuntzman informed that they have to stay within earth tones according to the master deed. There is a chart and they try to vary colors according to the surround homes. Commissioner recently drove through Country Walk and commented that it was nice to see most of the development filled up.

No comments from the audience.

**Motion Kelley, Jahr second to grant the applicant, Upland Homes, Inc., an amendment to the approved Country Walk site plan for revised single-family architectural elevations, based on the analysis and subject to the conditions in the staff review letter dated 5-20-21.**

**Roll Call:**

**Yeas: Budd, Atchinson, Kelley, Cullin, Jahr and Thompson.**

**Nays: None.**

**Absent: None.**

**Motion Carried. (Letter Attached)**

**GENERAL DISCUSSION:**

Director Power will keep the Commission informed as to the June 9, 2021 agenda.

Director Power displayed the up-to-date version of the planning, zoning and future land use interactive maps on the Township website. The planning map displays the status of different developments within the Township and by clicking on the diamond for each development provides access to the plans. Director Power also provided updates on residential developments within the Township. Victoria Estates Phase III is under construction with a lot of permits already approved, there will be up to 67 housing units. Cobblestone Creek Phase III consists of 69 detached single-family homes and will have a preconstruction meeting within the next few weeks. The property on Huron River Drive that received conditional rezoning is still on hold. The applicant is working on adjusting and refining the plan and there is no formal application at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion Budd, Cullin second to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m. Motion Carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Harman  
Recording Secretary



## MEMO

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TO: Van Buren Township Planning Commission  
FROM: Dan Power- Director of Planning and Economic Development  
RE: SPR 20-016 Site Plan Amendment for Upland Homes regarding New Architectural Elevations in Country Walk Subdivision  
DATE: May 20, 2021

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The applicant, Upland Homes, is requesting architectural approval for an additional home model titled "2100". Included in the submittal are three variations of the proposed elevation for this model ("A", "B", and "C"). The proposed model will be built in the Country Walk development. The development has a Planned Residential Development (PRD) agreement that was approved in 2002 and amended in 2005 but has since expired. Before it expired, several homes were completed in Country Walk. In July of 2015, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was executed between Van Buren Township, the Country Walk Three Homeowners Association, and Blue Country Walk, LLC which outlined the responsibilities of the parties with respect to the completion of the development and required compliance with that PRD which had expired.

The proposed plans are subject to the PRD agreement, MOU, and the standards of the Zoning Ordinance, specifically section 5.115 which addresses architectural details in PRDs.

The following is staff's review of the architectural plan based on the conditions in the MOU and PRD agreement. I offer the following comments:

### Comments

#### 1. **Site Plan**

The setbacks, as described in the approved site plan for the Country Walk development, depict a front and rear setback of 25' and a required side yard setback of 10'. The lot sizes in the development vary in width from 75' to 61' and in depth from 120' to 125'.

The proposed model dimensions of 44'-8" wide by 41'-8" deep at the furthest extents of the home will fit on any lot greater than 64'-8" wide. Staff will review each application's plot plan to ensure the model will fit within the required 10' side yard setbacks.

## **2. Floor Area**

The PRD agreement requires that the square footage of homes for the 536 units in the subdivision will average at least 1,750 square feet. The proposed model will have a floor area, not including the garage of basement, of 2,100 square feet. The minimum required floor area will therefore be met.

## **3. Façade Elevations**

The Zoning Ordinance and the PRD agreement have specific requirements to ensure that the Township's "Substantially Different" architectural design standard is met. Section j(ix) of the PRD agreement specifically requires that the "Substantially Different" requirement be met by varying the following (2) criteria:

- Roof pitch by varying three or more vertical units in twelve from one another (i.e. 6/12, 9/12, 12/12, etc.)
- Location of major design features relative to main mass by varying the location of at least two major design features that include, but are not limited to dormers, gables, garages (i.e. front-entry versus side-entry), and porches.

The Zoning Ordinance requires that this substantially different requirement be maintained from neighboring lots within three (3) lots of the proposed parcel and within three (3) lots of the property across the street. Based on my review of the three variations of the proposed model, I offer the following comments:

### **Roof Pitch**

The design of these elevations' roof pitches should be compared to those of the other previously approved elevations. The proposed roof pitch is generally 6/12 for the main gable roof, 8/12 over window rakes and garages, and 5/12 over porches. Roof pitch alone may not distinguish the proposed elevation types from one another. Therefore, the location of major design feature criteria may have to be used in place of the roof pitch requirement.

### **Location of Major Design Features**

The applicant has shown in the past that they understand the substantially different requirement and can meet it through the prior submission of combinations of home styles and elevations. With this request, the applicant has demonstrated that they can continue to meet this requirement. I have reviewed the proposed elevations in relation to all other previously approved elevations by this builder in the development. See the attached set of previously approved home models attached to this packet. The 2159 and 2320 models and the proposed model have several similarities including the location of the main entry door relative to the mass of the structure and the use of a Colonial floor plan. However, the proposed model variations are wider than the other Colonial models. The width as well as other attributes of the proposed model are adequate to demonstrate substantial difference between the proposed model variations and all models that were previously

	Roof style	Roof pitch	# of windows (front)	Door relation to mass	Design feature and relation to mass	Materials observations
<b>2100 (A)</b>	Gable	6/12 (main)	3	Opposite garage	1. Rake on center upper window 2. Short porch roof	1. Horizontal siding on garage 2. Full vertical brick banding on garage sides
<b>2100 (B)</b>	Gable	6/12 (main)	3	Opposite garage	1. Double rake on upper windows 2. Medium-length porch roof	1. Extended horizontal siding on garage 2. Limited vertical brick banding on garage sides
<b>2100 (C)</b>	Gable	6/12 (main)	3	Opposite garage	1. Double rake on upper windows 2. Full-length porch roof	1. Full brick garage

approved.

The applicant proposes elevation styles for the “2100” model. The new elevations will add to the diversity of the models available. Staff will still review each individual application for a building permit to ensure that this requirement has been met. A table of observations from the proposed models is shown on the following page.

#### **4. Building Materials**

Section i(1) of the PRD agreement requires that all 416 detached units feature brick to the belt on the front and side elevations and requires that on specific lots brick will be required on the rear elevation as well. The proposed elevation meets this requirement with the significant application of brick on all sides.

#### **5. Side-Entry Garages**

The PRD agreement requires that at least 30% of the single-family detached units have side-entry garages and specifically indicates which lots are required to have side entry garages. The language in the PRD Amendment states:

“6.1.11. Side entry garages are required on at least 30% of single-family detached units. The following 125 single-family detached units will have side-entry garages: 1-4, 15, 16, 34, 36, 47-49, 58-60, 66-68, 70, 75, 76, 82, 86, 92, 93, 96-110, 115, 117, 120, 121, 128, 130, 135-137, 149-51, 153, 159, 164, 165, 171, 173, 177, 178, 185-87, 192-95, 198, 200, 204, 213, 218, 225-228, 235, 237, 240, 244, 247-250, 253, 254, 260, 261, 266, 274, 286-88, 294, 295, 297, 303, 305, 308, 311-13, 317-21, 323, 324, 326, 327, 330, 363, 368, 369, 381, 390, 398, 400, 406, 407, 411, 413-16.”

The proposed elevations all includes a side-entry garage, so it can contribute to the requirement of 30% of detached units in the PRD having side-entry garages.

## Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the site plan amendment to the Country Walk development for the addition of the proposed elevations, Plans 2100 A, B, and C, to be built by Upland Homes based on the following condition:

1. Township Planning Staff shall review each application for a new single-family home in the Country Walk development in order to determine that the new home meets the required setbacks and that the elevation meets the Township's "Substantially Different" architectural design standards set forth in the PRD agreement.
2. Township Planning Staff will evaluate all plot plan submittals for these home models to ensure they meet the minimum required 10' side yard setback.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dan Power".

Dan Power, AICP  
Planning and Economic Development Director  
Public Services Department  
Charter Township of Van Buren

CC: Matthew Best, M.S. - Public Services Director, Van Buren Charter Township