

Zoning

Sylvania Township trustees have approved the rezoning of a 40-acre property on Central Avenue for a proposed 214-unit apartment complex.

The issue had raised concerns from area residents about the increase in traffic on what was described as a busy and dangerous stretch of Central, as well as the effect of the project on an area already prone to flooding.

Redwood Development Co., of Cleveland, was granted a change in zoning from agricultural to a residential planned unit development for most of the property. A portion of the land along Central which had been zoned for commercial use is now commercial planned unit development.

Redwood officials said there are no plans for any commercial use along that area.

The apartments, between Centennial and Crissey roads, have been described as luxury and are expected to rent for about \$1,300 per month.

They are meant for people 55 years old and older and are designed with no steps, either in the units or as a means of entering or leaving them. All with wide doorways and two-car garages.

The change in zoning has been recommended for approval, unanimously by the Lucas County Plan Commission, and by a 3-2 vote by the Sylvania Township Zoning Commission.

The trustees' approval was by a 2-1 vote. John Crandall and Neal Mahoney voted in favor of the change, while Chairman John Jennewine voted against it.

During the discussion of the matter, Mr. Jennewine had noted the real concerns residents had brought to meeting concerning the project.

He noted concerns about traffic on Central Avenue saying that there had been five fatal accidents over six years within a mile of the proposed entrance to the development. He also said that the apartments are planned for "the heart of our worst flooding."

Mr. Jennewine added that Redwood Development appeared to be a fine company which build good projects and managed them well, but concerns were valid.

George Oravec, an engineer representing Redwood, noted that the development will have five aerated ponds which will act as water retention ponds when rains hit the area.

He said Lucas County Engineers' office has agreed that the development will not add to flooding problems in the area. In addition to the ponds, he said, the 40-acre site will be graded in such a way the slope will keep water in the development and collect some from neighboring ground.

He contended that rather than adding to flooding problems in the area, the apartment complex will act to alleviate it.

As to the traffic on Central Avenue, Mr. Oravec said the builder has agreed to establish a right-turn deceleration lane for east-bound traffic and they will also establish a left-turn lane into the development for west-bound traffic.

Another concern of residents is the possibility of apartment dwellers using Marci Drive into their neighborhood as a cut-through adding traffic in that residential area.

Mr. Oravec said the entrance/exit to Marci Drive is necessitated as a secondary means to the apartments for emergency vehicles. He said the developer is willing to post it as one-way street for only emergency use or to put up a type of barrier which would discourage motorists, but allow an emergency vehicle to enter without damage.

Developers intend to begin construction likely by the end of summer and said it is possible that all three phases of building can be completed as soon as nine months later.