



The Arcus Group, Inc.
A R C H I T E C T S

January 5, 2009

Kim Wenger, City Planner
City of North Olmsted
Planning & Design Commission
5200 Dover Center Road
North Olmsted, Ohio 44070
Email: wengerk@north-olmsted.com

Re: **Biddulph Trail**
Cluster Development
Butternut Ridge Road
North Olmsted, Ohio

Ms. Wenger,

The developer, Ron DeLorenzo, of the Biddulph Trail Cluster Development has been working with a team of professional designing and redesigning the Cluster Development for approximately a year and a half. The team has worked through each and every concern and condition that the commissions and neighbors have presented us. Mr. DeLorenzo has had a **major expense** throughout this year and a half while working with each committee. Has the City of North Olmsted been leading us down the wrong path? Do the committee members have any idea as to what the Council would approve? Does Council listen to the committee members the City of North Olmsted appointed? Is there ever communication between Council and the committees towards the direction of their vote? Is the City of North Olmsted just out to waste everyone's time and expense(s)?

The committees (Planning and Design Commission, Landmarks Commission, etc.) within the City of North Olmsted are set up as an advisory board to Council. The committees are appointed by the City to guide any potential developer(s) towards a project which the City of North Olmsted will be content with and will meet the codes and ordinances set by the City. Each committee which the Biddulph Trails Cluster Development have been in front of, have voted in favor of the Biddulph Trails Cluster Development. I would like to acknowledge that the Landmarks Commission ruled on April 14, 2008, voted 7 to 1 for the Certificate of Appropriateness for both the development and rezoning of this property to Residential Cluster District. The Planning and Design Commission ruling on June 11, 2008 voted 5 to 2 in favor of the Cluster Development. A statement within the minutes stated that:

"Mr. Lasko Moved, seconded by Mr. Bohlmann, to approve the development proposal for COMS07-0026: Biddulph Trail, finding that the development meets the spirit and intent of the Residential Cluster District provided various conditions are met. Furthermore, the Commission

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recommends Council approve the request to rezone to Residential Cluster District as described in the report of findings and recommendations”.

Additional comments were made after or during the ruling and they are:

“Mr. Rerko commented...The applicants have gone out of their way to fit into the neighborhood and from Butternut Ridge the development will not impact the historic district as the current home will be preserved and the site will blend into the neighborhood . Ms. Williamson agreed with Mr. Rerko. Mr. Lasko also agreed and believed that both by the analysis of the Landmarks Commission as well as the Planning & Design Commissions findings under Chapter 1136 the conclusion is the right one based upon the facts presented. Ms. Meredith recommended there be no further architectural or landscaping changes made to the plans as professionals from both commissions and the applicant experts have gone to great lengths to ensure that the plan fits into the historical district. Modifications to the plans would have a detrimental impact to the site”

The Planning & Design Commission voted again on September 24, 2008 for the properties rezoning, 4 to 2 (Mr. Malone was not present and did vote yes on the previous vote).

Quite a few committee members as well as other officials within the City of North Olmsted have been in favor of this Cluster Development. We have received many comments from those people that this project is very good for the City and it is exactly what the City of North Olmsted needs. One of the many comments made is from the September 24,2008 Planning & Design Commission and states:

“Mr. Lasko commended... The proposed development follows the master plan and residential cluster district requirements taking into account the concerns and aesthetics of the historical district as well as balancing the concerns of the city and all its residents to keep the city vibrant, attractive and moving forward.”

On December 9, 2008, the BZD Commission voted 3 to 0 to reject the same proposal that was presented to the advisory boards preceding them. I question as to what they were basing their votes on and as to what has changed since the Planning & Design Commission rulings on June 11 and September 24, 2008. The Biddulph Trail Cluster Development is good for the City of North Olmsted as confirmed by City Official and the commissions preceding them. I feel that the Council Members voting to reject this Cluster Development and Rezoning of the Biddulph Trail Cluster Development are not interested in what is good for the City of North Olmsted but have turned this into a political issue.

It is our request to have each Member of Council list the reasons for voting the development and rezoning down for this project.

On a side note, as a previous member of the City of North Olmsted Architectural Review Board during the later part of the 1990s and a resident for eight years, I understand and feel the frustration and

dismay of the committee members on the boards preceding Council. This total disregard of the findings of the advisory boards to Council is the main reason for my resignation from the ARB. Time and time again, the issues reviewed and ruled upon during my appointment, were not acknowledged or followed by Council, no matter how strongly the committees felt about the recommendations. Some things obviously never change. It is a wonder why anyone would want to volunteer their time and efforts for the City of North Olmsted. Political issues always prevail over what is appropriate or good for the City of North Olmsted.

I would appreciate it that this letter be read during the Council Meeting on January 6, 2006 prior to the vote of the development and rezoning for Biddulph Trail Cluster Development. Feel free to contact me if you have any comments and/ or questions.

Sincerely,



The Arcus Group, Inc.

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