

New Arbour Green sketch plan submitted to Amity Township

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For Journal Register News Service

A developer told the Amity Township Planning Commission on Jan. 11 that his new revised plan for an age targeted community could bring new tax rate-ables to Amity Township.

Bryan Hunsberger, with Telvil Corp., Harleysville, said that although the 72-unit Arbour Green community was approved five years ago when there was still a market for a \$250,000 age restrictive townhouse unit, they had 50 inquiries and zero deposits three years ago in 2009.

The Board of Supervisors agreed in 2009 that Arbour Green could be marketed as age targeted instead of age restricted.

"The price is now south of \$200,000 per unit, but the costs to build exceeds that," said Hunsberger, adding that he is looking for ways to reduce costs and build and then profitably market Arbour Green.

The definition for age restricted housing, according to the Fair Housing Administration, a part of Housing & Urban Development, is that at least 80 percent of the units in such a community must be occupied by one individual age 55 or older.

Age targeted communities are marketed to adults age 55 and older but sales aren't limited to that age group, although there aren't any recreational amenities for children or young adults.

"One problem with age restrictive is that when they want to sell, they limit their market," said Hunsberger. "Age targeted build the same product for older people without kids but they can sell to anyone."

The new sketch plan submission is for 72 age-targeted twins on the same 24 acre site on Old Swede Road, across from Pine Forge Road, and would discourage kids by not including skateboard ramps, basketball nets, or tot lots.

Hunsberger said all main living areas would still be on the first floor with a second bedroom/office/loft or storage options on the second floor, one and two-car garages, patios/decks, two off-street parking spaces, and some with walk-out basements.

"I'm all in favor of getting this to work and getting some taxables into the township," said commission member Terry L. Jones.

The commission accepted the sketch plan for professional review.

It also unanimously approved for township engineer John Weber to formulate general criteria for village commercial zoning in the Amityville area.

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The commission and board of supervisors would then use that criteria for possible VC zoning at Yellow House, Monocacy Station, and Morlatton Village.

Weber said the intent of VC zoning is to have a mix of residential and commercial uses.

“I would like to see someone being able to purchase an existing building and use it for a small bakery, or barber shop, etc.,” said Jones.