

**TOWNSHIP OF RIVER VALE  
JOINT PLANNING BOARD  
January 16, 2019  
7:30 p.m.  
REORGANIZATION & REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES**

**ADEQUATE NOTICE STATEMENT:**

In accordance with the provisions set forth in the Open Public Meetings Law, notification of this meeting has been sent to all officially appointed Township newspapers and notice is posted at the River Vale Municipal Office.

**The Planning Board saluted the flag.**

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**ROLL CALL:**

**Members Present:**

Robert Adamo	
Michael Beukas	
Mark Bromberg	Councilman
Robert Fortsch	Vice-Chairman
Glen Jasionowski	Class I-Mayor
Scott Lippert	Chairman
Gregory Lowe	
John Puccio	
Susan Vaccaro	Secretary (Alt. #1)
Peter Wayne	

**Also Present:**

Marc E. Leibman, Esq.	Board Attorney
Christopher Statile	Board Engineer
Maria Haag	Land Use Administrator

**Absent:** None

The meeting was held at the Holdrum Middle School.

**REORGANIZATION MEETING**

**Swearing in of New Board Members:**

- Mark Bromberg - Class III
- Robert Fortsch - Class IV
- John Puccio - Class IV
- Peter Wayne - Class II

(RVPB 1/16/19 Reorg & Reg Minutes)

The Members were sworn in and took their Oaths of Office.

**Election of Officers:**

**Election of Chairman:**

Board Attorney Leibman requested a nomination for Chairman. Mr. Fortsch nominated **Scott Lippert as Chairman**, with second by Councilman Bromberg. There were no further nominations. On roll call vote, all members voted yes on the nomination. Chairman Lippert extended thanks to the Board.

**Election of Vice-Chairman:**

Chairman Lippert requested a nomination for Vice-Chairman. Chairman Lippert nominated **Robert Fortsch as Vice-Chairman**, with second by Councilman Bromberg. There were no further nominations. On roll call vote, all members voted yes on the nomination. Vice-Chairman Fortsch thanked the Board.

**Election of Secretary:**

Chairman Lippert requested a nomination for Secretary. Mr. Adamo nominated **Susan Vaccaro as Secretary**, with second by Mayor Jasnionowski. There were no further nominations. Ms. Vaccaro thanked the Board.

**Appointment of Board Professionals:**

A motion to appoint the following Board Professionals for 2019 was made by Chairman Lippert, seconded by Mayor Jasionowski and carried on roll call vote:

**Marc Leibman, Esq., Board Attorney**  
**Christopher Statile, Board Engineer**

**Approval of the By-Laws:**

A motion for approval of the By-Laws for 2019, was made by Chairman Lippert, seconded by Vice-Chairman Fortsch and carried unanimously.

**Approval of 2019 Meeting Dates:**

Approved at the last meeting, 12/20/18.

**REGULAR MEETING**

**APPLICATIONS:**

1. **The Fairways at Edgewood, LLC - Block 1201, Lots 5 & 6 - Application for Major Site Plan Approval and Major Subdivision Approval - Carried from 12/20/18;**

(RVPB 1/16/19 Reorg & Reg Minutes)

An announcement was made by Chairman Lippert as to proper procedures for the hearing. This is a quasi-judicial proceeding, like a courtroom proceeding, and all parties will conduct themselves as such.

The Attorneys put in their appearances on the record:

Jameson P. Van Eck, Esq., Attorney for the Objector,  
River Vale at Holiday Farms Condominium; and

Peter Wolfson, Esq., Attorney for the Applicant;

Mr. Wolfson presented an overview of the application for development of what is currently the Edgewood Country Club. He reviewed the history of affordable housing and how the pressure on municipalities has increased. The Township of River Vale passed an ordinance rezoning the property to address its Fair Share Plan. Residential/Golf Course Development is an allowable conditional use in the zone. Mr. Wolfson named their expert witnesses, who will be offering testimony in support of the application.

Chairman Lippert stated the Board received a letter dated 1/15/19 from Mr. Van Eck as to objections and would allow him to be heard solely on the jurisdictional issues. Mr. Leibman asked Mr. Van Eck if there were any other additions to the 14-page letter. He wanted to mark this letter and his 12/20/18 letter as exhibits. Mr. Leibman advised they were part of the record. Mr. Van Eck said the traffic analysis and storm water management analysis were not on file at the Borough Hall 10 days in advance of the hearing, and he objected on the record as to any testimony as to such. Mr. Leibman stated they were in fact on file 10 days in advance. Mr. Van Eck said he specifically requested them by name, and they were not yet provided. Ms. Haag stated all of the items are on file, but at the time they were not yet seen by the Board.

Mr. Van Eck addressed his objections as to applicant's notice. He went through the legal requirements for notice, per the MLUL, citing case law. In response, Mr. Wolfson stated their notice was adequate, they object to the objections, and they are ready to proceed at that risk.

Steve Santola, Executive VP and General Counsel, Woodmont Properties was sworn in. He would not be testifying as to storm water management or traffic, as that would be left to the experts. He passed out a colorized booklet, which was marked Exhibit A1 and described by him.

The booklet contained proposed renderings of Fairways at Edgewater as well as other residential communities they constructed, such as The Enclave at Montvale and Saddle River Grand in Saddle River.

Mr. Santola continued. The Edgewood Country Club has fallen on hard times, as has happened to many golf clubs, such as High Mountain Golf Club in Franklin Lakes and Apple Ridge Country Club in Mahwah, who resorted to housing developments. Membership at Edgewood dropped from 350+ to low 200's. They could not afford to operate and update and had to make cuts. A bankruptcy petition was ready to be filed while different suitors came to possibly buy the club. Other developers planned to build on this entire site of 27 holes and shut down the club. They are not proposing that. Instead, they figured they could develop a golf club like Hilton Head, creating a mixed-use country-club environment, with a clubhouse pool, fitness center, and golf course, which would keep residents from moving miles away from friends, family, doctors, etc. 18 of the 27 holes would be preserved, and the remaining nine holes would be developed. They engaged a recreational planner from Arizona who came up with a very imaginative design. Hence, the result is what you see on the site development page. The ordinance came back with five pages of landscaping which they carefully followed. Their landscape architect will testify as to this. Renderings were also done, showing buffers. The density is a modest five (5) units per acre, where across at Holiday Farms is 11 units per acre. It fits nicely on corner of two county roads. They will be doing significant intersection improvements. There will be extensive testimony. The townhome buildings were shown to be of very high quality and top of market, selling for \$800,000-\$1,000,000. Unit Owners will be members of the club, enabling it to hopefully live forever. There will not be more than three bedrooms total. Questions of this witness from Board Members would follow.

Mr. Van Eck questioned Mr. Santola, asking for the names of the owners. Mr. Santola responded the golf course is owned by Eric Witmond and Bruce Schonbraun, who took over in 2015 when the club was on the verge of bankruptcy. He asked if the owner was willing to have a deed restriction that 18 holes cannot be developed. River Vale at Holiday Farms would ask for this. As for the separate lot for affordable housing who would own that. Mr. Santola stated Woodmont Properties owns it and would keep the obligation. The third lot would be given over to the

condominium association. There were no further questions by Mr. Van Eck.

The matter was opened to the public for questions of Mr. Santola. The following residents came forward:

James Towey, 5 Piermont Avenue, River Vale, asked for the likely increase in population. Mr. Santola stated they have a demographics expert who would testify later in the proceedings. Mr. Lippert stated this is not an appropriate question for this witness. Mr. Leibman stepped in to explain the appropriate questioning protocols and how questions need to be limited only to the testimony offered and the appropriate experts, such as engineer, planner, etc. Mr. Lippert stated they will get answers to all your questions. They cannot jump ahead to the end.

Susan Laskin, 742 Beechcrest Drive, River Vale, asked if applicant would insure the community will address the needs of empty nesters, such as master bedroom suites on the first level. Mr. Santola stated there are two options, and there is also the option of an elevator. She asked about square footage, and the response was averaging 3,000 sf., capped at three bedrooms. There will be architectural testimony on these details.

John Vedral, 128 Terbel Parkway, River Vale, asked why not build just a one bedroom if for empty nesters. The response was the goal is to create a beautiful home. The other bedrooms may be offices, guest rooms and dens. There is no age restrictions. This is a specific ordinance in place calling for a golf course community.

Lorraine Waldes, 797 Westwood Avenue, River Vale, asked how they came up with the term empty nesters. Mr. Santola responded it started with buyers at the other communities and analyzing the real estate market as to who is buying townhomes. It is actually just a term. Where will the people moving out of their homes move to if they do not want to shovel, mow lawns, etc., and many people do not want to move out to say, Monroe or down the shore, but would want to live here. So, they designed this community specifically. There absolutely will be families, but they are marketing towards the empty nesters, and what you market to you attract. There will be testimony that there is more than enough room to accommodate. The school enrollment has declined.

(RVPB 1/16/19 Reorg & Reg Minutes)

Stephanie Muska, 867 Rivervale Road, River Vale, asked about the other developments in larger communities and if they did demographics study. Mr. Lippert stated there will be extensive demographic testimony.

Lawrence Friedhoff, 525 Rivervale Road, asked to what extent they guarantee that the project will be built and successful in light of the downward market. Is there a bond. Mr. Leibman explained the applicant enters into a Developers agreement with the municipality with extensive bonding to protect the Borough.

Barbara Aborafia, Kent Road, Hillsdale, asked where the entrances and exits are. Mr. Santola responded on Rivervale Road. She asked to see the plans. They are displayed and will be at Borough Hall after being marked. Mr. Leibman advised they would request these be put on line on the Borough website.

Bill Wolff, 600 Sunnywood Terrace, River Vale, asked for clarification about the financial issues of the golf course, and Mr. Santola spoke to the significant upgrades needed.

Richard Sica, 667 Handweg Drive, asked if the affordable housing component will be rentals or condos, and the response was rentals. He asked about the income requirements and how tenant selection will be made. It is dictated by the State COAH, with a list and lottery, and an Affordable Housing Commissioner is appointed in the town.

Lisa Futterman, 36 Holiday Court, River Vale, asked about the well-received developments in other towns, where in Saddle River it is 68, and in Montvale it is 40. They are much smaller properties, it was explained. Five units per acre is not significant and plays out well with a significant road pattern. They started higher with the number of units, and they scaled it down.

Margaret Martinez, 50 Holiday Court, River Vale, asked where the affordable housing exit will be, and the response was opposite the Holiday Farms Condominium entrance.

Questions from the Board ensued. Mr. Adamo asked for clarification about the three subdivided lots. Mr. Santola stated the ordinance states the townhomes to be on one lot, because the DCA requires the townhomes to be located on their own lot to get approval, financing, insurance, etc. Owners would have to be members to use the clubhouse.

There would be people driving, walking, and using golf carts and bikes between the two lots.

Mayor Jasionowski outlined questions received from the public and to start, asked if there was any consideration of pushing back further towards the golf course. Mr. Santola responded they did consider this; however, they wanted to preserve the best 18 holes, and this area is flat and fits well into the access, and did not require any significant relocation of the existing club facilities. The Mayor asked why put the entrance directly across from Holiday Farms. The response was it just aligns most effectively, and you will hear testimony about traffic. If someone buys a townhouse, will it be mandatory to join the club, the Mayor asked. Mr. Santola explained no, it would be an incentive, but they are still looking at it.

Mr. Fortsch asked if Edgewood would remain a private club, and the response was yes. There is no membership committee. Mr. Fortsch commented this is a Florida design, and golf is not that big here. Not many people are playing golf, and he asked how many members they anticipate. They are thinking around 200, Mr. Santola stated. He agreed that by offering something not offered elsewhere, it is an incentive. Mr. Statile asked for an analysis, and they would provide. Mr. Adamo asked if they planned for a golf course designer, and the response was no. Mr. Adamo asked if they could give testimony as to the new 18-hole course with a smaller driving range, and is it being retrofitted correctly. Mr. Santola noted what you see covered over is the nine holes of the 27 being eliminated.

Mr. Van Eck had two follow-up questions. Does the ordinance call for a permit for the separate lot for the affordable housing component. Mr. Santola felt the intent was they would be on their own lot. Was consideration given to include affordable within the townhouse community. Mr. Santola stated it is not an easy thing to do and requires greater expense and leaving it with the HOA would be a terrible mistake.

There were no further questions of Mr. Santola.

Kathy Galvin, Partner Engineering, 611 Industrial Way West, Eatontown, NJ, Project Engineer and Planner was sworn in, qualified and accepted. Ms. Galvin described the project, known as the "Edgewood Country Club Project" and addressed Chris Statile's report of 12/17/18. The

(RVPB 1/16/19 Reorg & Reg Minutes)

engineering plans are dated 8/31/2018. The site consists of 160 acres, and applicant proposes to create three lots as follows:

Lot "A" - 115.65 Acres - Club House and Golf Course;

Lot "B" - 43.09 Acres - 193 Townhome Units and  
32 Quadplex Units;

Lot "C" - 1.31 Acres - 24 Affordable Housing Rentals;

160 acres are in River Vale, and 26.6 acres are in Hillsdale. The entire project, which is the subject of this application, is contained in the Township of River Vale. It is surrounded by residential development, and a small neighboring pool abuts the property. The site is located on the corner of Rivervale Road and Piermont Road. Golf course access is on Piermont. The brooks are governed by the Wetlands Acts and the State.

Ms. Galvin marked the exhibits. Exhibit A2 is the Aerial Conceptual Overlay, also contained in the booklet marked A1. Exhibit A3 is the development portion of A2. She discussed the access point for the country club will be expanded to include the townhouse project. The access drive will be widened. The existing maintenance road will be used as an emergency access to the site. They would install sidewalks up to Mark Lane and the bike path. There are residential design guidelines per the ordinance, which included views from the townhouses. Signage was discussed and is to be approved. If a variance is required, they would modify the existing signs. Details of the signs were given. Parking is provided in the driveways, garages, and perpendicular spaces proposed along the roadway. Parallel parking is prohibited. Calculations were done per the RSIS. 787 parking spaces + 149 visitor spaces are proposed for the site. Parking for the affordable units will be in a separate area. They are getting credit for 3.5 spaces per unit for the two-car garages and double-wide driveways. The parking spaces required are based on the number of bedrooms. The quad units have difference parking requirements as to the number of spaces. There is an overage of 193 spaces which is necessary to serve the clubhouse facility. The RSIS requires 18' long spaces. They are proposing a 2' landscape strip per Mr. Statile's concern.

Ms. Galvin continued and reviewed the zoning table. She touched briefly on height, which would have further discussion. Improvements to sidewalks and fencing was addressed next. The existing walkway is 7' wide. Piermont road will be widened, and the bike path would be

reconstructed. The existing post and rail fence will be eliminated where it conflicts with the widening of Piermont. A new fence is proposed, eliminating any chain link fence. Mr. Statile requested curbing, and they are concerned about the effect on the trees. This will be further discussed. There are drainage improvements. There is a golf course safety zone based on a 100' radius of the existing tee. The safety zone separates the townhouse lot from the golf course lot. Ms. Galvin elaborated on the safety zone. The project is subject to the RSIS and consistent except for the requirement of sidewalks on both sides of the streets when a project is located within two (2) miles from a school. Mr. Statile is in agreement with their proposal. If they had to be put in, it would increase the impervious area. Applicant respectfully requests this exception without a payment in lieu.

The Board took a recess from 9:40-9:55pm and reconvened with a roll call. All members were present.

Ms. Galvin continued under oath. She discussed sight distances--to be added at the intersection for review by the County and Mr. Statile, and discussed by the traffic engineer in more detail. The trash enclosure will be enclosed with white vinyl fencing. They will install additional landscaping for better screening. The existing fence along the adjoining property owner will be replaced with a solid wood fence to improve the buffer. They agree with Mr. Statile's comments as to sidewalks around the pump house. New maintenance facilities are proposed. The intersection of Rivervale and Piermont will be widened per the County. This will be discussed in further detail by the traffic engineer. The grading and drainage plan goals were discussed. As for earthwork calculations, they will be provided to Mr. Statile. Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan is being provided. They are requesting a submission waiver from providing a steep slope analysis as there are not many slopes. Mr. Statile requested an analysis and pressure test of the sewer, and that the existing sanitary sewer at the country club be rerouted to the new system. They feel the modifications internally should satisfy any grease trap issues that have occurred in the past.

Ms. Galvin stated two variances are required. One variance is needed for a replacement fence along Piermont and Rivervale Road to allow 5' proposed vs. 3 allowed. They feel the 5' is an improvement over a 6' chain link fence and will be an aesthetic improvement and benefit to community and development. A second variance is needed for

signage for a second monument sign for the golf course in a residential development where one monument sign is permitted. Since there are dedicated entrances, two signs are needed. There is a de minimis exception for sidewalks on one side due to their proximity to the schools as stated above.

She feels she addressed the site engineering comments in Mr. Statile's letter. He lists approvals from other agencies, and the applicant agrees to obtain same and submit copies to the Town.

Mr. Lippert asked if Mr. Statile wanted to address any open items. Mr. Statile stated there are a number of items that need to be addressed which he could set forth now or after. Mr. Adamo asked if she could address the letter. Mr. Leibman advised it seems the applicant's engineer and Mr. Statile have been meeting, and there will be a new set of plans. Perhaps Mr. Statile could send his report in Word and Ms. Galvin can mark it up. Mr. Statile was sworn in. Mr. Lippert stated they would defer on Mr. Statile commenting further for now so they could proceed with questions from the public.

The matter was opened to the public for questions of Ms. Galvin.

Elijah Miller, 536 Rivervale Road, River Vale, asked why the sign was so large. Ms. Galvin addressed the question stating so the site is seen. Mr. Miller asked why not have one sign at the entrance and one at the exit at Rivervale Road and why can't they have an entrance on the Hillsdale side. Ms. Galvin responded they will reconsider the proposed signage, and as for an entrance on Hillsdale side, there are environmental constraints.

Mala Lawrence, 25 Holiday Court, River Vale, asked what the height requirement was for the affordable housing, and is 50' allowed. Mr. Statile and Ms. Galvin stated the height limitation is 50'. Mr. Lawrence stated a block fence vs. a see-through fence to cover the trash enclosure would be better. Ms. Galvin stated it is visually a solid fence. He questioned how 225 homes got approved, and asked if the entrance to the affordable homes is connected to the townhouses. Ms. Galvin responded no. He asked if they will be putting in additional trees as buffers, and the response was yes, testimony will be given by the landscape architect.

(RVPB 1/16/19 Reorg & Reg Minutes)

Charles Garrison, Piermont Ave, River Vale, asked if Lot B was landlocked. Ms. Galvin stated there is no access to the residents now and there will be an easement. Mr. Wolfson stated easements would be a condition of approval. Mr. Lippert stated there will be easements. Mr. Garrison asked for the names of the brooks and had questions saved for stormwater. He asked about soil removal. There would be none, but material would be brought in for the grading to work.

Kira Mckeown, 466 White Birch Drive, River Vale, asked what studies were done on the brooks. Ms. Galvin stated in 2015 a flood hazard verification was done for Holdrum and Rivervale Brook. It is valid for five years. FEMA maps were issued prior to 2015. Mr. Statile said they are two years out from adoption, but are being used by the DEP. They are not encroaching on the riparian buffer. Ms. Mckeown asked where it was shown and had questions about fencing and soil testing and what areas had steep slopes. Mr. Statile also addressed the questions stating they are by the sand areas, but the site is generally flat. Ms. Galvin showed the topographic map.

Lisa Quinn, 7 Holiday Court, River Vale, asked about the sidewalk remaining during construction. A large portion along Piermont will be replaced. She asked about the entrance on Piermont, and the traffic engineer will address that question.

Alex Biener, 512 Piermont Avenue, River Vale, was concerned about safety and had traffic questions which would be addressed by traffic engineer, but did say he would like to see a traffic light at the intersection Piermont and Rivervale Road.

There were no further questions. Due to the lateness of the hour, the application was completed for the evening at 10:50 pm. **Mr. Leibman advised the matter would be continued at the 2/28/19 Special Meeting at the Community Center, 628 Rivervale Road, at 7:30, with no further notice.** The applicant waived any time requirements. It was noted there is also a regular meeting of the Board on 2/20/19, with another application scheduled. Mr. Leibman recommended one special session per month for this application, and if there is a light agenda for the regular meetings, they may be heard as well. Mr. Wolfson asked if they could also schedule two dates in March. Ms. Haag commented the Community Center is also reserved for a 3/28/19 special meeting for this application. Mr. Wolfson

(RVPB 1/16/19 Reorg & Reg Minutes)

asked if they could also be heard at the Board's regular meeting on 3/20/19, and Ms. Haag would check if the Community Center is available. Mr. Van Eck asked if a copy of the transcript would be provided to the Board, which was agreed to.

**MINUTES:** A motion for approval of the Minutes of 12/20/17 was made by Chairman Lippert, seconded by Vice-Chairman Fortsch, and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

**RESOLUTION:**

1. **Spence, 102 Choi Court, Block 1510, Lot 22 - Fence** - Board Attorney Leibman gave an overview. A motion for approval was made by Chairman Lippert, seconded by Mr. Wayne and carried unanimously.

**DISCUSSION:** None

**PAYMENT OF INVOICES:** None

**NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday, February 20, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:** On motion made, seconded and carried, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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**MARY R. VERDUCCI, PARALEGAL**  
**Recording Secretary**