

**Public Hearing
April 17, 2006
Diggs-Monroe S. Washington Street Overlook
Adams County Housing Corporation
Flexible Residential Development**

A public hearing to review the application for a Flexible Residential Development submitted by the Adams County Housing Authority (ACHA) was called to order on Monday, April 17, 2006 at 4: 30 pm by Borough Council President, Ted Streeter. Council members in attendance were Dick Peterson, Robert Miller, Holly Giles, Marty Qually, Bill Monahan and Caroline Streeter. A quorum was present. Others in attendance were Merry Bush, Planning staff; Bea Savage, Zoning and Code Enforcement Officer; Deborah Zepp, stenographer; Darlene Brown, ACHA; Mary Patrick, Jean Green, Mary Alice Nutter and Jean Odom, Third Ward Concerned Neighbors; Jane and David English; James T. Yingst, Esquire, ACHA; Dawn Johnson, Adams County Interfaith Housing Corporation (ACIHC); Ramona Overton, Gettysburg Borough Planning Commission; John Butterfield; Sean Hilliard, Hanover *Evening Sun*; Scot Pitzer, *Gettysburg Times*; Gene Golden, Gettysburg Signs; Chris Kimple, Rep. Steve Maitland's office; Bob Wagner, Roselawn Development Company; and Alisha Sanders.

The hearing was then turned over to Borough Solicitor, Harry Eastman. ACHA is proposing to build four semi-detached single-family dwelling units on Parcel 248, Gettysburg Borough Tax Map 10 located on S. Washington Street. The application was submitted for a Flexible Residential Development (FRD) and is being reviewed as required under Section 1802.2 of the Borough Zoning Ordinance and under Section 708 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). The hearing was advertised as required.

The Borough Planning Commission reviewed the plans for the FRD on February 21, 2006 and recommends Council approval of the application. A copy of the February 21, 2006 Planning Commission minutes was entered into evidence.

The applicant must supply a written statement providing the reasons why, in his or her opinion, a flexible residential development would be in the public interest and would be consistent with the Borough's Community Development Objectives and Comprehensive Plan. The applicant must also request of waiver of the density requirements, in this case a density of 12.8 dwellings per acre rather than the maximum allowed density of 12.5 dwellings per acre. Borough Council has 60 days from the date of the hearing to provide a written decision to the applicant. At this hearing the Council serves as a quasi-judicial body and accepts testimony regarding the application.

Jeff Zigler, the applicant's engineer, presented the plan for the project. The property will be subdivided into four lots, with two duplexes. James Yingst, attorney for the applicant, placed the plan into evidence as Exhibit 1 for the applicant. Mr. Yingst also noted that the plan had been submitted to the Adams County Planning Office for review and approval by the Adams County Planning Commission. It was noted that the site once was a trailer park and was conveyed to ACHA with the condition that it be used for housing for low-moderate income residents. The site will be subdivided into four contiguous lots, each 19.5 feet in width and 151 feet in length. Parcel A will be conveyed back to the Borough for potential widening of the alley. Each lot will have a 16 x 30-foot

house with a 10-foot wide front porch with steps leading down to S. Washington Street. Each unit will have a detached oversized one car garage with an additional parking space provided at the rear of the garage. The fourth sheet of the plan shows the required landscape plan and the fifth sheet shows the utility plan, as well as the stormwater management plan.

Elevation drawings were submitted as evidence. The first page of the drawings show front, side and rear views of the dwelling units; page two—front, side and rear view of garages; page three—first and second floor plans of the dwellings; and page four—floor plans of the garage and basement of the dwellings.

Under the current Zoning Ordinance the project would not meet the required setbacks so the applicants are requesting variances from the ordinance by requesting approval of a FRD. The project proposes 53% coverage per lot while the maximum lot coverage under the zoning ordinance is 70% in the R-2 moderate density residential district. The height requirement for the district has been met. A letter date April 17, 2006 requesting the variances was read into the record and entered into evidence.

David English, 68 W. Middle Street, asked if the widening of the alley would take place at the same time the houses were built. Mr. Zigler replied no. Mr. English said that the proposed units do not have the same setback as the rest of S. Washington Street as the existing homes sit right on the sidewalk. Mr. English asked if the four steps up to the porch could be eliminated so that the house could be entered directly from the street. He expressed concern with ADA requirements. He also asked if it would be possible to treat the foundation so that the block foundation will not be visible from the street.

Henry 'J.R.' Crushong, 40 E. High Street, administrator of housing for ACHA, reported that he had been involved with the land development process right up to the design of the housing. He went onto say that the designs are duplicates of the houses built on 4th and 5th Streets, known as Chapel Fields. Mr. Crushong said that ACHA will lower the buildings if possible. That will be determined by what is found when construction begins.

Mr. Crushong said that brick will be used to surface the foundations on the S. Washington Street elevation. The foundations along the sides and rear will remain masonry block but if the budget allows they may consider covering the remaining block with brick. Setbacks will remain as shown on the plan. Site distance is a concern for drivers pulling out from Wall Alley. He also noted that ADA compliance is not required for single-family homes. The dwellings will be sold to families with moderate income—the goal is affordable housing.

Bob Wagner, owner of 239 S. Washington Street, asked why Chapel Field style houses are being built on S. Washington Street. Mr. Eastman said that the applicant has already gone through the process for design review and this ordinance [Zoning] does not require design review.

Mary Patrick expressed concern about accessibility for senior citizens.

Harry Eastman asked for the applicants letter explaining how a flexible residential development would be in the interest of the Borough and meets the community development objectives as written in the Comprehensive Plan. The applicant's letter dated April 6, 2006 was read into the record and the original entered into evidence.

Jean Odom expressed her desire to have the archeological dig completed before the start of construction. Mary Alice Nutter described how the Third Ward Concerned

Neighbors was formed in the 1990s to clean up the third ward—getting neighborhood residents to clean their yards, getting the alleys cleaned and eliminating drug hangouts. Members of the group want to preserve the heritage of the African-American community. According to Ms. Nutter, they are members of the last generation who listened to the stories of their elders. Ms. Nutter said that the group would like to create a Museum of African-American History within the Borough. There has been discussion of the purchase of a property owned by Robert Cullison on S. Washington Street for the museum. The Third Ward Concerned Neighbors are willing to pursue grants for the continued archeology of the Diggs-Monroe site. She went on to say that the group supports development of housing on the site but wish to have the archeological dig completed first. Ms. Nutter asked for open and above board communication with the Borough.

Dave English said, “If you’ve read the report by Milner and Associates—the site is historic—the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) is willing to place a historic marker on the site.” He expressed concern about the artifacts found on the site while noting that some may be irrelevant. Some of the artifacts date back from the Civil War period. Mr. English continued saying that the community of Gettysburg is known for its history and African Americans are part of that history. According to Mr. English, PHMC is willing to curate the artifacts, store them and then loan them to the Borough if a suitable place is available for their display.

Harry Eastman said that the archeology of the site is not relevant to the proceedings before Council today.

Bob Wagner asked, “Will Council’s approval of the FRD say to anybody like PHMC that the Borough does not care about African American History?” Gene Golden asked if there is a document that shows that this property was taken for housing?

Bill Monahan said that the Borough is supportive of the African American community and would be supportive of any efforts to obtain grants for continued archeology.

The hearing adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Merry V. Bush
Assistant Borough Secretary