

Lewes may get a few neighbors

Town-size development attracts no opposition at hearing

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Sussex County Planning and Zoning Commission members made no decision on a proposal for almost 600 homes near Five Points after a Thursday, April 6, hearing on the project.

But they spoke of the project as if it already got approval, discussing conditions that may be imposed on developers Craig Hudson and Michael Lynn.

About 20 acres of the 200 at the site just east of Route 1 are zoned commercial. The rest is agricultural-residential. The land is currently vacant.

Hudson's and Lynn's group, Olde Towne Pointe LLC, applied

to change the zoning to mostly medium-density residential and about 10 acres of business district.

The Villages of Five Points would have 110 town houses, 144 apartments and 72 condominium units, along with 260 single-family houses.

Office buildings and stores would surround a town center, where residents could walk to get groceries or go to the bank, Lynn said. It would resemble Georgetown's Circle, according to plans.

DART Transit and Delaware River and Bay Authority buses will stop in the development, Lynn said, and a soccer field would be open to the public.

Developers promised favorable rates for first-time homebuyers and discounts on bus passes.

No one opposed the project, although some people mentioned concerns with storm drainage and buffer zones.

The Citizens Coalition — a coastal Sussex land-use watchdog group — voiced admiration for the developers' planning.

Coalition representative Mable Granke pointed out what she said were positive aspects of the project, including the soccer field, reforestation plans, bike and pedestrian routes, bus funding and housing variety.

In a letter to DelDOT, the Citizens Coalition also presented

ideas aimed at improving the area's intersections. Such proposals include:

- Turning Orchard Road into a three-lane street from New Road to Savannah Road.
 - Creating three intersections at the project.
 - Making the intersection of Old Orchard Road and New Road a three-way stop for safe turning.
 - Putting a traffic signal at the Savannah and Old Orchard roads' intersection.
 - Reconfiguring the Wescoats Corner intersection and installing a traffic light.
- "We have discussed concerns

See CITIZENS page 5

Citizens Coalition calls project an example for developers to follow

Continued from page 4

and offered suggestions to try to make this ... development work," the letter said. "We see this project as an opportunity to

set an example of a cooperative effort in Coastal Sussex that could set a precedent for future development."

Other letters supporting the project included ones from real

estate agents and County Bank, which plans to set up a branch in the town center.

County Council will hear the requests on Tuesday, May 9, at 1:30 p.m.