

Thursday, Oct. 11, 2007

Ledger-Sentinel

Oswego Village Board news-briefs...

OK plans, rezoning for Rt. 34-Orchard Rd.

By John Etheredge

The Oswego Village Board approved a rezoning request and preliminary development plans for a shopping center on the village's west side in a split 5-1 ballot Monday evening.

This week's board vote for the proposed 19 acre Xander Crossing shopping center came two weeks after the board, in another split ballot, passed the annexation agreement for the project as proposed by HRM Properties of Montgomery.

Prior to Monday's board vote, board member Brad Rock said he would like to see a sidewalk included in the plans that would allow residents of the Riverwood Farms Subdivision immediately west of the center site to walk to the center.

Rock acknowledged that some Riverwood Farms residents have told village officials they do not want a sidewalk connecting their subdivision with the shopping center.

In the absence of a sidewalk, however, Rock said subdivision residents will either have to drive or walk along Route 34 to reach the center.

Village president Brian LeClercq noted the project plans call for the installation of a sidewalk in the public right-of-way adjoining the center on the south side of Route 34 and the west side of Orchard Road.

Dan Kramer, a Yorkville attorney representing HRM, said his client proposed the sidewalk in part based upon their previous experience at another shopping center the firm developed in the village, Mason Square at Route 34 and Douglas Road.

Kramer said residents of the Heritage Subdivision adjoining Mason Square soon wore a dirt path between the subdivision and the shopping center, prompting his clients to install a sidewalk.

"I'm in favor of having a sidewalk," Rock said. "(Village) trustees need to look at the big picture sometimes. The residents look at it as how it affects them, but I have to tell you at some point they'll want to get over there by walking."

Board member Terry Michels cast the lone negative ballot on the preliminary developments plans. Michels also voted against the annexation agreement for the project Sept. 24.

Michels said he did not agree with a board decision to waive a requirement for the developer to bury overhead electric lines on the project site along the south side of Route 34.

In addition, Michels noted that two banks are expected to locate on outlots in the project.

"I believe we have seven banks out there in that area (along Orchard Road) now and we'll be adding some more," Michels said. "They will provide no sales tax revenues for the city, (and) provide no tax funding for the schools. How many more banks do we need before we've had enough?"

Prior to the board's vote, LeClercq noted that the village will require the developer to bury all electrical lines on the center site, with the exception of those adjoining Route 34.