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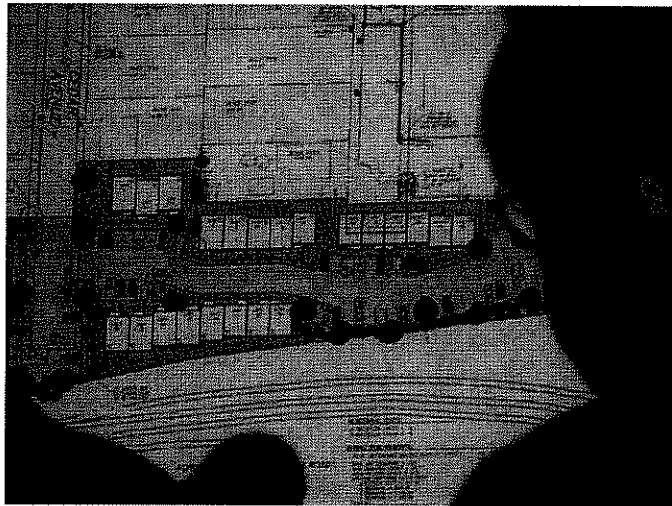
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CEDAR CROSSING PLAN BREEZES TO OK



Planner Paul Szymanski testifies on behalf of the developer about the proposed project at Thursday night's zoning board meeting.

A 36-unit affordable housing project envisioned alongside a rail yard on Red Bank's West Side sailed to unanimous approval by the borough zoning board in less than two hours last night.

The board had called a special meeting for the purpose of hearing the proposal because the non-profit developer, Red Bank Bank Affordable Housing Corp., was under the gun to enhance its chances of obtaining construction funding from a program administered by Monmouth County.

Despite deficiencies — such as a 13-space parking shortage and complete absence of recreation space — that have ensnared other applications, board members praised the plan for advancing the goal of home ownership for low-and-moderate income families who are otherwise priced out of town.

"It's nice that finally somebody's doing something for the people and not for their pocket," said board member Chris Ferrigine.

REGIS PHILBIN April 2

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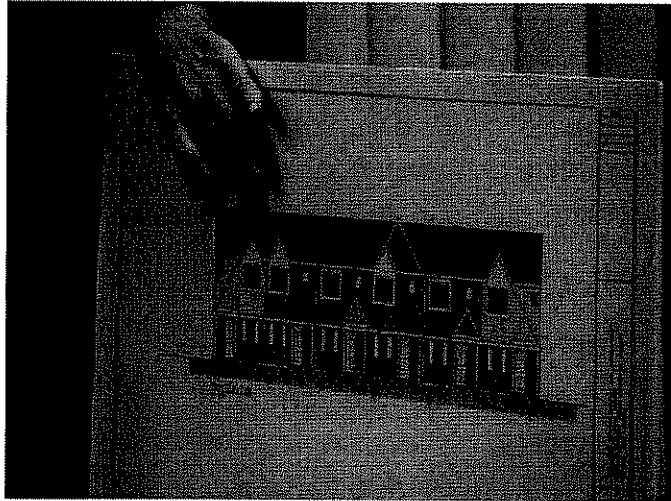
03.06 - Teddy Bear Tea at Navesink CC REGISTER NOW. On April 6, The Friends of the Monmouth Museum present a special event for kids 3 to 8 years of age, hosted at Navesink Country Club in Middletown with activities including a Teddy Bear Parade (led by 'a famous bear'), gourmet treats, 'a lesson on manners, etiquette and polite conversation' plus gift baskets and more. Click for phone/email contact info.

03.06 - Hidden Valor: Female Soldiers of the American Civil War In commemoration of the Civil War Sesquicentennial, historian Glenn LeBoeuf visits the Monmouth County Library's Eastern Branch for a presentation on the unknown number of women who disguised their gender to follow their husbands and relatives into battle — 'the strange stories of concealment, service in battle and discovery of these patriots without petticoats.'

03.06 - EYESIGHTS Photography Show at the Guild The Guild of Creative Art hosts the 8th annual Open Juried Photography Exhibition for its members (with a concurrent display of 'Small Treasures' by associate members). Juror awards will be presented (by guest judge Andrew Darlow) at 4p during the reception, and the exhibit continues through March 30 during regular gallery hours.

03.06 - Rockitt Live The kids of the classic rock conservatory (a program offered by the Count Basie Theatre Performing Arts Academy and directed by Bruce Gallipani) bring their best stuff to the big stage, in the climactic showcase event of the winter session.

03.06 - Teen Arts for Peace: A Juried Exhibition In conjunction with the Preview Party for the John/Yoko GIVE PEACE A CHANCE exhibit, The Monmouth Museum presents a display of artworks created by young Monmouth County artists 'with the theme of PEACE, reflecting and honoring the lifetime work of John



A rendering of the project.

"It's a wonderful project," said board member Karen Waldman, who called the variances sought "negligible."

The plan, known as Cedar Crossing, encompasses an irregularly shaped two-acre parcel alongside the Conrail freight line touching on Cedar, Catherine and River streets. It will consist of 18 two-bedroom units and 18 three-bedroom units, each with a handicapped bathroom on the first floor.

The townhouse-style homes are to be 1,100 and 1,200 square feet in area, slightly under the zoning requirement, which, along with the parking and open-space shortfalls, was one reason the plan needed board approval.

The builder hopes to be able to offer the homes at prices of \$85,000 to \$145,000, said Rev. Terrence K. Porter, president of the development entity's board. Rentals will be prohibited, and the units will sell with deed restrictions limiting price markups, he said. Porter is the pastor of the Pilgrim Baptist Church on Shrewsbury Avenue.

The site was acquired by the borough in 2007 using \$2.45 million in state Department of Community Affairs funding. The borough later designated its housing authority, which manages two federally subsidize rental complexes, to oversee the project, though a homeowners' association will be formed to pay for snow removal and maintenance.

After last night's approval, Porter said that, even with free land and the approvals in hand, the project faces significant hurdles if it is to beat the state deadline for completion by 2012. Foremost among those is obtaining \$3.6 million in construction funding, or an average \$100,000 per home.

Porter said the zoning board's quick approval was critical to keeping the project ahead of schedule. The project's board, which includes former Mayor Ed McKenna, wants to be first in line for funding from a Monmouth County program called CHOICE, he said. But barring full funding for the project coming from that source, "we certainly anticipate going to banks and tapping Red Bank's money for affordable-housing set-asides," he said.

"Working-class families are challenged in their ability to live here," he said. "We're creating opportunities for families to live in a wonderful community like Red Bank yet still live within their means."

William Poku of Bank Street, a longtime advocate for affordable housing, called Cedar Crossing "a great project, and a great step forward for Red Bank."

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Posted on January 9, 2009 at 6:51 am, filed under Government, Housing, Public Facilities, Real Estate. Bookmark the permalink. Follow any comments here with the RSS feed for this post. Trackbacks are closed, but you can post a comment. Email this story.



03.07 - Little Silver Planning Board
Time: 7:00 pm

03.07 - Tinton Falls Board of Education Workshop
Time: 7:00 pm

03.07 - Red Bank Planning Board
Time: 7:00 pm

03.07 - Little Silver Borough Council
Time: 7:30 pm

03.07 - Middletown Township Committee Workshop
Time: 8:00 pm

03.08 - Red Bank Environmental Commission
Time: 7:00 pm

03.08 - Rumson Borough Council
Time: 7:30 pm

03.08 - Tinton Falls Shade Tree Commission
Time: 7:30 pm

03.08 - Rumson—Fair Haven Regional Board of Education
Time: 7:30 pm

03.09 - Red Bank Construction Board of Appeals
Time: 4:00 pm

03.09 - Fair Haven Planning Board
Time: 7:00 pm

03.09 - Tinton Falls Planning Board
Time: 7:30 pm

03.10 - Middletown Landmarks Commission
Time: 7:30 pm

03.10 - Middletown Sewerage Authority
Time: 7:30 pm

03.10 - Red Bank Shade Tree Committee
Time: 7:30 pm

03.12 - Shrewsbury Shade Tree Commission
Time: 9:00 am

03.14 - Red Bank Borough Council
Time: 6:30 pm

03.14 - Fair Haven Borough Council
Time: 7:00 pm

03.14 - Tinton Falls Open Space Committee
Time: 7:30 pm

03.14 - Tinton Falls Historic Commission
Time: 7:30 pm

03.15 - Red Bank Green Team
Time: 6:30 pm

03.15 - Sea Bright Borough Council
Time: 7:30 pm

03.15 - Tinton Falls Borough Council
Time: 7:30 pm

03.15 - Little Silver Board of Health
Time: 7:30 pm