

Latest Daylesford Project Plans Call for 102 Units

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ARCWheeler released a new site design for the Transit Oriented Development it wants to build on a 13 acre tract in Daylesford. The developer reduced the number of units from 152 to 102, in part because of pressure from the Daylesford Neighborhood Association, a group that formed to oppose the Daylesford project.

This is not the first time ARCWheeler has reduced the proposed number of units at this neighborhood associations request. According to the new site design, three single-family homes would be constructed along Longcourse Lane to replace the three currently there. Along Pennsylvania Avenue, the six houses currently there would be replaced by five new single-family homes and onepocket park, complete with a water feature. ARCWheeler principal Roger Friedman estimated that these homes would sell for \$1.5 million. On the property currently occupied by Duffys Catering, there will be 48 condos, as well as a number of small retail establishments. Forty-six townhouses will go up along the current Kent Lane.



The roadways serving the condos and the townhouses would let vehicles in and out at a single curb cut on Route 30. No traffic would have a way to enter and exit the development from Longcourse Lane or Pennsylvania Avenue, thereby keeping additional traffic from the surrounding neighborhood. ARCWheeler has determined that the development would generate additional property tax revenues of \$71,000 for Tredyffrin Township and \$185,000 for Chester County. Using criteria provided by the Tredyffrin/Easttown school district, the developer also found that even if 12 students reside in the development, the district would gain \$598,000. If 24 students reside there, the district will gain \$450,000. ARCWheeler does not expect more than 24 children, since it plans to market most of the units to aging baby boomers and upwardly mobile, childless young couples. The condos, or garden flats, might go for between \$400,000 and \$650,000, and the town homes might go for \$1.2 million. The town homes will have elevators and first floor master bedrooms.

Since neighbors of the proposed development are most concerned about increased traffic, ARCWheeler hired two different consultants to estimate traffic impacts. According to a chart provided by ARCWheeler, the 102-unit version of the development would generate 121 peak hour trips per day, down from the 144 trips the 152-unit development would have generated. In order for the developer to go forward with the Daylesford project, the Tredyffrin Board of Supervisors must change the zoning on the 13-acre tract on which the development would be built. The tract is now occupied by one catering business zoned C-1 light commercial and 14 single-family homes zoned R-1 light residential.

ARCWheeler owns the catering business property, and has agreements with all of the homeowners requiring them to sell if the zoning change is approved. If the board of supervisors does not approve the zoning change, ARCWheeler plans to use the Duffys property for 34,000 square feet of retail space with 3,000 square feet of bank space, or another restaurant/catering venue. Both uses are allowed by the current zoning. ARCWheeler's traffic studies have determined that the retail/bank use would generate 186 peak hour trips, and the restaurant/catering use would generate 295 peak hour trips.

In addition, a current easement allows traffic to enter and exit the Duffys property through an adjacent office parking lot that empties onto Pennsylvania Ave. If the Duffys property remains a restaurant use, the easement will still be in place.

If the Daylesford project is approved, ARCWheeler will give Tredyffrin \$500,000 to improve the Lancaster Avenue streetscape near the entrance to the development. It will also give SEPTA \$250,000 to improve the Daylesford Train Station, which it envisions as the transit hub for the development. Friedman said that, by concentrating development near existing infrastructure, the Daylesford project will further the Tredyffrin's and Chester County's smart growth goals. He said it will help keep current open space free from development. Friedman admitted that the Daylesford project would not prevent subdivisions (a phenomenon which cuts down on privately-owned open space) but said it could help Tredyffrin get money from Chester County to protect open space. He explained that, as part of Landscapes, Chester County's pro smart growth land use plan, Tredyffrin can get open space preservation funding from the county if it rezones to allow for smart growth developments.

This is the first I've ever heard that there's a tradeoff like that, Township Manager Mimi Gleason said when asked about Friedman's statement. David Ward, the assistant director of the Chester County Planning Commission, which oversees Landscapes, said that such a tradeoff is not part of the program. When townships elect to participate in Landscapes, he explained, they sign onto the Vision Partnership Program. This means they are promising to abide by the principles of Landscapes. Once a township decides to comply, Landscapes can provide funds to help it rewrite ordinances that will facilitate smart growth. Landscapes can also provide money for open space preservation. But, Ward explained, that funding is totally independent of changing a local [zoning] ordinance. I think [the developer you were speaking with] is mixing apples and oranges, he said. Frank Kiser, the Daylesford Neighborhood Association spokesman, could not be reached for comment.

The Daylesford project first went before the Tredyffrin Planning Commission in December, and was then sent to a subcommittee made up of commission members, ARCWheeler representatives and Daylesford neighbors. The revised plan may go before the planning commission again in June. Once the planning commission approves it, it can go on to the board of supervisors.