



Date: February 7, 2022
Project: Costilla 10-Plex
Location: 703 E. Costilla St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

To: Pikes Peak Regional Building Department
2880 International Circle
Colorado Springs, CO 80910
Attn: Matthew Alcuran, Planner II

Costilla 10-Plex – Project Statement

Project Description:

This project is the development of a 10 unit apartment complex on a vacant C-6 lot east of downtown Colorado Springs. The proposed apartment is a three-story building with 8,760 SF of residential space. The first floor will consist of 7 covered parking spaces and one accessible dwelling unit. The second and third floors will consist of the remaining nine units and outdoor stair access.

We are requesting conditional use approval to construct a multi-family residential use in a commercial zone. The lot is on the border between commercial, industrial, and residential zones, with a pharmacy to the West (PIP1 Zone), College of Veterinary Technology to the NW (C5 Zone), single family residential to the North (R2 Zone), a single family house to the east (C6 Zone), and door manufacturer to the south (M1 Zone). Due to the eclectic neighboring uses, we feel multi-family is a perfect transitional use for the site.

As a corner lot with two “front” setbacks, the useable lot area is restricted to just 25 feet wide when a multi-family use kicks the property into R-5 requirements. With the addition of Landscape Buffers the useable width of the site is only 15’. While the design has kept the building width at 20 feet, it exceeds the allowable width when residents are provided with outdoor space (balconies and stair access) and the required landscape buffers. We are requesting a variance to allow a reduced front setback per the attached drawing set.

Development Plan Review Criteria:

- The details of the use, site design, building location, orientation and exterior building materials are compatible and harmonious with the surrounding neighborhood, buildings and uses, including not-yet developed uses identified in approved development plans.
 - This is a very eclectic corner bordering 6 different Zoning Types, industrial, commercial and residential use. We feel multi-family residential is a perfect transition from the commercial/industrial uses to the south and west, to the single-family uses to the north and east. The design of the building is also a transition from the commercial/industrial uses (clay and concrete masonry and metal) to the single family uses (fiber cement siding, balconies, and pitched roofs). The flat roof, sloped roof, brick detailing, materials, and balcony railings all take design cues from the adjacent properties.
- The development plan substantially complies with any City adopted plans that are applicable to the site, such as master plans, neighborhood plans, corridor plans, facilities plans, urban renewal plans, or design manuals.
 - Yes, our plan complies with the plans in place for our City and this neighborhood.
- The project meets dimensional standards, such as but not limited to, building setbacks, building height and building area set forth in this chapter, or any applicable FBZ or PUD requirements.
 - Our proposed project meets height, area, density, coverage and landscape requirements of the code. The project meets the side and rear setbacks as well, however we are requesting a non-use variance to reduce the front yard setback from 20’ to 9’. See below for further information.
- The project grading, drainage, flood protection, stormwater quality and stormwater mitigation comply with the City’s Drainage Criteria Manual and the drainage report prepared for the project on file with the City Engineering Department.
 - Yes, the project complies, refer to grading plan and report.
- The project provides off-street parking as required by this chapter, or a combination of off-street or on-street parking as permitted by this chapter.
 - Yes, the project complies, refer to parking calculations attached in the drawings.
- All parking stalls, drive aisles, loading/unloading areas, and waste removal areas meet the location and dimension standards set forth by this chapter.
 - Yes. Refer to attached Site Plan and details.
- The project provides landscaped areas, landscape buffers, and landscape materials as set forth in this chapter and the Landscape Design Manual.
 - Yes. Refer to attached Landscape Plans and Site Plan.
- The project preserves, protects, integrates or mitigates impacts to any identified sensitive or hazardous natural features associated with the site.
 - N/A

9. The building location and site design provide for safe, convenient and ADA-accessible pedestrian, vehicular, bicycle, and applicable transit facilities and circulation.
 - Yes. Accessible parking has been located immediately adjacent to the accessible unit. Our site is located on a City Bike Route and secure bicycle parking has been provided. Our site is also located on a Public bus stop which will remain in place as well.
10. The number, location, dimension and design of driveways to the site substantially comply with the City's Traffic Criteria Manual. To the extent practicable, the project shares driveways and connects to drive aisles of adjoining developments.
 - Yes, the driveways comply with City Standards. There is no opportunity for sharing of drive aisles on this site.
11. The project connects to or extends adequate public utilities to the site. As required by Colorado Springs Utilities, the project will extend the utilities to connect to surrounding properties.
 - Yes.
12. If necessary to address increased impacts on existing roadways and intersections, the project includes roadway and intersection improvements to provide for safe and efficient movement of multi-modal traffic, pedestrians and emergency vehicles in accordance with the City's Traffic Criteria Manual, public safety needs for ingress and egress and a City accepted traffic impact study, if required, prepared for the project.
 - This is a small infill project facing existing infrastructure. No traffic impact study required.
13. Significant off-site impacts reasonably anticipated as a result of the project are mitigated or offset to the extent proportional and practicable. Impacts may include, but are not limited to light odor and noise.
 - This small, residential infill project will have very minor impacts to public health and welfare. No excessive noise or odors are anticipated. All lighting is full cut-off and kept low to the ground to provide for safety for the tenants.

Conditional Use Review Criteria:

1. Surrounding Neighborhood: That the value and qualities of the neighborhood surrounding the conditional use are not substantially injured.
 - This project exists at a confluence of six different zones: C5, C6, M1, R2, OR, and PIP1. R4 and M2 also exist only a block away. Adjacent uses range from single family residential, to commercial, industrial and educational. We believe an appropriate use for this transitional site is multi-family residential. This bridges the divide between commercial/industrial and residential and provides a valuable buffer to the adjacent properties. Multi-family residential is allowed as a Conditional Use in the C6 zone. We believe that the unique nature of this site lends itself well to Multi-family use and this is much more appropriate for the site than many of the outright Permitted uses in the C6 zone (ie. automotive, storage, industrial, etc).
2. Intent of Zoning Code: That the conditional use is consistent with the intent and purpose of this Zoning Code to promote public health, safety and general welfare.
 - We believe that small scale multi-family residential creates little to no negative impact on our City's health, safety or general welfare, and in fact improves these elements over an existing, neglected, vacant lot. In addition one of the primary intents of the zoning code is to "improve housing standards" which this project will most certainly do.
3. Comprehensive Plan: That the conditional use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of the City.
 - Every aspect of this proposed infill project is in line with the Vision of our City's Comprehensive Plan. "a vibrant community that reflects our engaging outdoor setting as pioneers of health and recreation. Our city will be filled with unique places of culture and creative energy, sustainably designed around our natural environment. We will attract and retain residents of all generations with an innovative, diverse economy, and dynamic, well-connected neighborhoods that provide viable housing opportunities for all."
 - The project is designed with engaging architecture, with sustainability at the forefront, and oriented toward the views of Pikes Peak that only our City provides. By providing infill projects near the core of our city we are helping to create more viable housing opportunities for residents of Colorado Springs.

Non-Use Variance Review Request:

1. To allow a 9' front yard setback at El Paso Street where 20' is required.
2. To allow a 17'-10" front yard setback at Costilla Street where 20' is required.

Non-Use Variance Review Criteria:

1. Extraordinary or Exceptional Conditions:
 - a. The physical conditions of the property shall not be conditions general to the neighborhood or surrounding properties.
 - b. The unique physical conditions of the property may be its size, shape, locations, topography, soils; or
 - c. The unique physical conditions of the property may be the size or location of existing structures on the property if such structures are not self-imposed conditions; or
 - d. The unique physical conditions may be certain on-site or off-site environmental features which may positively or negatively affect the property in question, including but not limited to, adjacent land uses, traffic, noise, views and location of significant natural, architectural, or historic features.
 - The primary exceptional condition of this unique site is that it is a 50' wide corner lot within a C6 zone adjacent to a single family residence in a C6 zone (which is not an outright permitted use in C6). Having two front yard setbacks significantly decreases the viability of the site. A 20' front yard setback to the west coupled with a 15' Landscape Buffer to the east (due to the adjacent single family use), reduces the buildable width of this site to only 15' wide.
2. No Reasonable Use:
 - a. The demonstrated extraordinary or exceptional physical conditions of the property must directly relate to the inability to reasonably use the property in conformance with the applicable zoning ordinance regulations.
 - b. The concept of less reasonable use may be considered if a neighborhood standard exists and if it is demonstrated that the property in question has a less reasonable use by comparison with proximate and similar properties in the same zoning district.
 - c. The purchase price of the property, the desire for greater economic return on investment or mere inconvenience do not constitute, by themselves, evidence of no reasonable use.
 - d. Self-imposed conditions such as prior voluntary rezoning, platting, or building in violation of City codes and ordinances do not constitute evidence of no reasonable use.
 - e. Knowledge, ore lack of knowledge, of zoning restrictions and physical site constraints at the time the property is purchased is immaterial to evidence of no reasonable use of the property.
 - These setback and landscape buffer restrictions on this site take a great property with incredible views west to downtown and the mountains, high visibility as one of the entries to downtown from the east, proximity to parks, the creek, a bike route, and public transit, and turn it into an unbuildable lot that will likely remain vacant and underutilized if this variance request is not approved.
3. No Adverse Impact:
 - a. The granting of a variance shall not be detrimental to public health, safety and welfare or injurious to surrounding properties.
 - b. The granting of a variance shall not be inconsistent with any plans adopted by the City.
 - c. The granting of a variance shall not weaken the general purpose of the Zoning Ordinance or its regulations.
 - d. The variance, if granted, shall only be to the extent necessary to afford a reasonable use of property.
 - We believe that small scale multi-family residential creates little to no negative impact on our City's health, safety or general welfare, and in fact improves these elements over an existing, neglected, vacant lot.
 - This proposal is in line with the City's Comprehensive Plan (see above)
 - Not only is Multi-Family residential allowed as a conditional use in the C6 zone, we believe it is much more appropriate on this site than many of the uses allowed outright in the C6 zone. We therefore believe this project will not weaken the Zoning Ordinances. The C6 zone allows 50' high buildings and zero foot setbacks on all sides and 100% coverage. By choosing to provide a multi-family residential project we are proposing a structure that is much more consistent with the neighborhood in size and setbacks, much more compatible with the neighboring uses, and more in line with the intent for this neighborhood than many of the outright permitted uses in the C6 zone.
 - The variance request is solely to provide a viable building on a corner lot near downtown Colorado Springs. We are honoring the Landscape Buffer to protect our only immediate neighbor while adjusting the front yard setbacks in order to more closely match the historic development of this area and fit better into our City that what the current zoning regulations would require. See graphic below for description.



Please feel free to contact me with questions and/or comments on this Project Statement.

Respectfully,
Echo Architecture, LLC
by

Architect