



City of Colorado Springs

City Hall
107 N. Nevada Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Meeting Minutes - Draft Planning Commission

Thursday, January 16, 2020

8:30 AM

Council Chambers

Trailside at Cottowood Creek

- 6.B. [CPC PUZ 19-00155](#) A zone change pertaining to 15.67 acres, changing the zoning from OC/AO/SS (Office Complex with Airport Overlay and Streamside Overlay) and PBC/AO/SS (Planned Business Center with Airport Overlay and Streamside Overlay); to PUD/AO/SS (Planned Unit Development with Airport Overlay and Streamside Overlay) for small-lot residential development with a maximum density of 3.6 dwelling units per acre and 35-foot maximum building height, located at the southwest corner of Woodmen Road and Austin Bluffs Parkway.

(QUASI-JUDICIAL)

Presenter:

Tasha Brackin, Senior Planner, Planning & Community Development

Staff presentation:

Ms. Tasha Brackin, City Planning, presented a PowerPoint with the scope and intent of this project.

Todd Frisbie, City Traffic Engineer, spoke to the traffic concerns and the study that was conducted in 2018.

Applicant Presentation:

Andrea Barlow, N.E.S., presented a PowerPoint with the scope and intent of this project.

Questions:

Commissioner Raughton commented that this project was not singled out by City Council and that they had been consistent with their concern regarding the conversion of commercial properties to residential and the impact on the overall tax base. Commissioner Raughton then asked if they had spoken with the school district since the school district did not anticipate additional residential units in the area.

Ms. Barlow explained the school district's comment was fairly standard in that

anything that is master planned for non-residential use is something they do not anticipate as residential, and therefore, they have a process by which they then can get fees in lieu of school and provisions. Ms. Barlow said the school district has asked them to pay the school fees.

Supporters:

Kevin Butcher, on behalf of David C. Cook

- Area not conducive for commercial buildings
 - Not good visibility, so would have to raise the site
 - Commercial buildings need big, flat floor plates and even bigger, flatter parking lots
- Grading would be too close to the creek
- David C. Cook is still the declarant under the commercial covenants on this entire site, so for residential to happen, it had to be approved by Cook, which Cook did approve after study

Opponents:

Andrea Johnson, lives in Newport Heights

- Main concern is traffic
- Does not think the traffic study is accurate
- Wildlife habitat along Cottonwood Creek

Robert Rosenthal, resident in Newport Heights

- 106 concerned citizens signed an iPetition voicing concerns about high density, single-family home developments on both sides of Cottonwood Creek
- Make fewer homes
- Keep open space
- Allow native wildlife to keep their homes

Questions of Staff:

Commissioner Rickett asked Mr. Frisbie if he took into consideration that this was a gated access and so the left in or right in could be backed up because of the gate access.

Mr. Frisbie said they requested the gate to be pushed back into the site so that it will limit backups from happening onto Woodmen Road. Commissioner Rickett said the plans look like only three cars could back up at that point.

Mr. Frisbie said in the peak hour, it would be about 30 vehicles accessing the gate and that is a car every two minutes. Ms. Brackin verified the distance from deck to deck was 120 feet which could stack up to four or five cars, and Mr. Frisbie said that would be unlikely to happen.

Rebuttal:

Ms. Barlow spoke to the concerns about the wildlife corridor and said they have retained approximately half the size, about nine acres of the 15 plus acre site, as open, natural space and about three and a half acres of that will be dedicated to the City. Ms. Barlow said they had made great efforts to retain as much open space as feasible, while at the same time create a feasible development. Ms. Barlow commented that the space is not open space, but private property.

Ms. Barlow clarified the sidewalk connection that was referenced would actually be a gravel trail. Ms. Barlow said if they did not provide a formal trail, informal trails will develop. Great efforts were made with Wentworth to get them to provide an easement through their property to connect to the trails that are being proposed and the trail connection.

Ms. Barlow added that the higher density and smaller lots are completely consistent with PlanCOS and this is what the City wants to see.

Mr. Mike Rocha, SM Rocha, LLC, addressed the increase of traffic on Woodmen Road and stated the 2018 traffic study done by them accounted for growth and traffic volume along the woodman corridor. Mr. Rocha also mentioned that some of the City's transportation plans for roadway connections (or regional connections) have a very high likelihood to help minimize some of the traffic volume being introduced to Woodmen. Some of those connections mentioned were Powers to I-25, the Briargate extension to the east, and future Marksheffel extensions north.

DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF PLANNING COMMISSION:

Commissioner McDonald referenced the Willow Creek community that is also along Woodmen Road. Commissioner McDonald thought it important to recognize the Willow Creek community faced many of the same challenges as this project with retaining walls and elevations, but turned out to be a great community. The only thing the owners wished they had was a gated community. With the new requirements with PlanCOS and the different housing needs with the density, Commissioner McDonald said she thought this project was going to turn out great, and she would be voting in favor of this project.

Commissioner Wilson stated the last time this project was before the Planning Commission, she voted against it. The biggest concerns at that time were access and density, which to some degree, there are still concerns. Commissioner Wilson said given the fact that the existing zoning would allow for even greater density and the section cuts were showing more of a buffer between the residential and Woodmen Road, she was convinced this was a

good project and would be voting in support.

Commissioner Rickett said he voted in support for this project in the past and was going to vote in support again. Commissioner Rickett believed the additional information provided would be helpful for City Council. One of the good things brought forward was the OC (Office Complex) and PBC (Planned Business Center) both allow for residential, so changing the type of residential on this property is more conducive than what it is zoned for currently. Commissioner Rickett agreed that to develop this into a commercial site would be extremely expensive and risky.

Commissioner Raughton commented he was pleased the developer chose to use a private drive and not a city street for the interior development. Commissioner Raughton said it was a good precedent for complex sites like this where we find ourselves with an infill situation.

Motion by Commissioner Raughton, seconded by Commissioner Rickett, to recommend approval to City Council the zone change of 15.67 acres from OC/AO/SS (Office complex with Airport Overlay and Streamside Overlay) and PBC/AO/SS (Planned Business Center with Airport Overlay and Streamside Overlay) to PUD/AO/SS (Planned Unit Development with Airport Overlay and Streamside Overlay), based upon the findings that the change of zone request complies with the review criteria for establishment of a PUD zone as set forth in City Code Section 7.3.603 and the zone change criteria as set forth in Section 7.5.603.B.

The motion passed by a vote of 7:0:2:0

Aye: 7 - Commissioner Raughton, Chair Graham, Commissioner McDonald, Commissioner Eubanks, Commissioner Almy, Commissioner Rickett and Commissioner Wilson

Absent: 2 - Vice Chair Hente and Commissioner McMurray

- 6.C. [CPC CP 08-00142-A8 MJ19](#) A Concept Plan Amendment changing the land use designation of the 15.67 acre property from commercial and medical office to single-family residential, located at the southwest corner of Woodmen Road and Austin Bluffs Parkway.

(QUASI-JUDICIAL)

Presenter:

Tasha Brackin, Senior Planner, Planning & Community Development

See Item 6.B. (CPC PUZ 19-00155)

Motion by Commissioner Raughton, seconded by Commissioner Rickett, to recommend approval to City Council the Concept Plan Amendment, based upon the findings that the amended Concept Plan complies with the review criteria for approving a Concept Plan as set forth in City Code Section 7.5.501(E).

The motion passed by a vote of 7:0:2:0

Aye: 7 - Commissioner Raughton, Chair Graham, Commissioner McDonald, Commissioner Eubanks, Commissioner Almy, Commissioner Rickett and Commissioner Wilson

Absent: 2 - Vice Chair Hente and Commissioner McMurray

- 6.D.** [CPC PUD 19-00156](#) The Trailside at Cottonwood Creek PUD Development Plan proposing 56 single-family lots on 15.67 acres with a maximum building height of 35-feet, located at the southwest corner of Woodmen Road and Austin Bluffs Parkway.

(Quasi-judicial)

Presenter:

Tasha Brackin, Senior Planner, Planning & Community Development

See Item 6.B. (CPC PUZ 19-00155)

Motion by Commissioner Raughton, seconded by Commissioner Almy, to recommend approval to City Council the development plan for Trailside at Cottonwood Creek, based upon the findings that the development plan meets the review criteria for PUD development plans as set forth in City Code Section 7.3.606, and the development plan review criteria as set forth in Section 7.5.502E.

The motion passed by a vote of 7:0:2:0

Aye: 7 - Commissioner Raughton, Chair Graham, Commissioner McDonald, Commissioner Eubanks, Commissioner Almy, Commissioner Rickett and Commissioner Wilson

Absent: 2 - Vice Chair Hente and Commissioner McMurray