

May 11, 2022

William Gray
Senior Planner
Community Planning - City of Colorado Springs

RE: Spectrum Loop Zone Change and Concept Plan– 1st Review Public Comment Response
File No.: CPC A 21-00154, CPC A 21-00155, CPC ZC 22-00027, CPC CP 22-00028

Dear Mr. Gray:

Thank you for forwarding the public comments received during the initial review of the Spectrum Loop Zone Change and Concept Plan. We have given consideration to these comments and would like to supply more details to address some of the concerns and misconceptions about the proposed project. We would be grateful if you could send this letter to the individuals who commented on the application. These public comments focus on the following concerns:

Resources

Some of the comments focused on concerns that the new development will stress school, park, and water resources.

Colorado Public Schools, in this case District #20, is provided an opportunity to comment on all development proposals. The School District has the option of requesting land for new school facilities or fees for future school facilities. In this case, the school district has not yet provided comments, however, Planning and Community Development Staff have provided a fee estimate of \$143,152.00 for this project. In recent project proposals, the school district has stated that the district has capacity for additional students. The schools listed in the Project Statement are the closest schools to the proposed development. School District #20 provides an elementary school approximately 2 miles north or 3.75 miles southeast of the subject property, and a middle school and a high school approximately 3.75 miles southeast of the subject property.

The Concept Plan provides amenity space for residents, primarily consisting of a pool with clubhouse and associated amenities, as well as open space areas throughout the development. City of Colorado Springs Parks is also provided an opportunity to comment on all development proposals. Parks has commented on the proposal, indicating an interest in receiving payment of fees estimated at \$417,650, as there is a future neighborhood park within a half mile or less from this site. These fees could be used to support existing and develop set aside parkland areas near the proposed project.

Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) will provide water service to the property. CSU has provided comments in support of project approval.

Emergency Service

Some comments questioned if Fire and Police Department(s) were consulted, and what concerns they had regarding the development.

The Applicant met with the Fire Department prior to submission of the Concept Plan to understand and integrate access requirements. The development is not able to have a secondary access point positioned along Voyager Parkway because of proximity to the future Powers Blvd off-ramp. Therefore, having both points of connection located along Spectrum Loop was discussed as the preferred approach to site access. The application has been reviewed by the Police and Fire Department(s). The Fire Department responded with no exceptions with the concept plan as submitted, and the Police Department responded with no comments or recommendations.

Environment

The was a concern related to the provision of adequate light and air for adjacent residential uses, a concern about drainage, indicating the Voyager routinely floods south of the proposed development, and a comment about the provision of the Skyline Regional Trail.

Colorado Spring code requires building and landscape setbacks in an effort to assure that adequate light and air are provided to existing development. The Concept Plan provides a 15' wide buffer along the east property line, which will be landscaped as required by code, and single-story garages have been located adjacent to this buffer to provide additional buffering and space between taller buildings and the single-family uses. Further, the apartment building on the east side of the property has been lowered to three-stories to transition density and building height on the site. Site topography falls from northeast to southwest, and buildings are in a progression of height from east to west, from one-story, to three-stories, to 4-story with basements along the south and west sides. The single-family homes adjacent to the development are primarily north/south oriented, which limits light and air flow from the west.

The Project will conform to the City of Colorado Springs Storm Drainage Criteria. The Project will provide a water quality and detention extended detention basin for treatment and storage of developed runoff prior to discharging developed flows from the Site. Additionally, a Preliminary Drainage Plan has been prepared for the proposed development, which accounts for the required 100-year 2.55 inches per hour rainfall amount per the City Criteria and any amount above that will be released through an overflow path.

One comment indicated the Skyline Regional Trail is shown as a sidewalk around the perimeter of the property. *The Skyline Trail is shown schematically along the west boundary of the property, adjacent to Voyager Parkway, and is called out as a 10-foot urban trail.*

Use

Some comments indicated that apartments or townhomes may be an appropriate use, but not at the proposed density or height, and that four-story apartments would destroy the character of the neighborhood. One comment suggested the property should be used for a park, school or grocery store.

The proposed use is for market rate multi-family dwellings with up to 37 DU/AC. While there are other multi- and single-family residential projects underway, there is market demand for additional residential units in this area. The Applicant seeks to utilize the property in a manner that is beneficial to the broader community by meeting housing demand. School District #20 has indicated they want payment of fees in lieu of land for future school facilities.

While this property is adjacent to a lower density residential neighborhood, it is part of the North Gate commercial/office area with its proximity to Voyager Parkway and Northgate Boulevard. This development is a transition of use from lower density residential to developed and undeveloped areas zoned for commercial/office/high-rise uses.

Parking, Transit, and Traffic

Most of the comments focused on traffic, with a few comments related to parking, and one comment about a lack of transit in the area.

Parking and Transit

One commenter requested an explanation of the parking calculation based on current City Code and one comment expressed concern that cars will park on adjacent streets. There was one comment that there is inadequate transit in the area with the closest station 2.5 miles away.

Section 7.4.203 of the Colorado Code bases parking requirements on the number of bedrooms per unit. Because the exact unit mix and number of bedrooms are not known at this time, it is not possible to calculate the parking requirement for the project. This information will be provided with the Development Plan submittal. These parking requirements are established to provide adequate parking for all land use types. It is the intent of the developer to meet parking requirements with a combination of tuck under and detached garaged and designated surface parking.

There is a bus route on Voyager Parkway, but the closest bus stop is at the Pikes Peak Community College located at Cypress Semi Drive, which is just over 2 miles south of the subject property.

Traffic

General comments and questions related to traffic impacts of the proposed development focused on trip generation, traffic counts, congestion and potential for accidents.

The trip generation is based on the national governing ITE Trip Generation Manual which has substantial data points for similar uses. It is common for the peak hour to generate approximately 10 percent of the daily trips which with this land use the peak hour is expected to generate approximately 8.6 percent of the daily trips. Residential uses are much lower trip generators than retail uses and lower trip generators than office uses. It is expected that 1,500 project trips per day will utilize Voyager Parkway at Spectrum Loop. Voyager Parkway is a major arterial roadway that can support approximately 55,000 vehicles per day. The project is only contributing to approximately 2.7 percent of the capacity of Voyager Parkway (1,500 / 55,000). Evaluating the peak hour of the adjacent street traffic is typical in traffic engineering practices due to that hour being the timeframe that triggers the need for roadway infrastructure improvements.

Traffic Study

Topics of concern related to the traffic study include signal timing at Spectrum and North Gate, posted speed limit on Voyager, school zone near Voyager and Stout, comparison land use references, various measurements and calculations, Spectrum E/W from development to Diamond Rock, shortage of the westbound left turn at Voyager and Spectrum, left turn at Voyager and Spectrum, vehicle queues at Spectrum Loop and Voyager Parkway, and vehicle queues into the straight lane on westbound Spectrum loop at Voyager.

The recent update to the traffic study incorporated existing City signal timings as requested. The traffic study provides recommendations to convert the northbound, southbound, and westbound left turn phasing from permissive only to protective-permissive with optimized signal timings. The protective-permissive left turn phasing on the westbound Spectrum Loop approach along with providing additional green along Spectrum Loop will significantly reduce existing vehicle queues in the left turn lane.

The speed limit of 40 mph has no impact on the findings of the traffic study. The intersection of Voyager Parkway and Stout Street is outside the scope of the study. However, approximately only 10 percent of project traffic is expected to travel through this intersection.

Traffic generated by a 20,000-sf commercial building was used as a comparison to the traffic generated by the proposed development. This was for the purposes of comparison of a different type of use that could be developed on this property.

The delay at Northbound Left (through) at Northgate and Greyhawk delay was calculated with intersection operational software utilizing the governing Highway Capacity Manual methodologies. The recent update to the traffic study incorporated existing City signal timings as requested. The traffic study provides recommendations to convert the northbound, southbound, and westbound left turn phasing from permissive only to protective-permissive with optimized signal timings. The protective-permissive left turn phasing on the westbound Spectrum Loop approach along with providing additional green along Spectrum Loop will significantly reduce existing vehicle queues in the left turn lane.

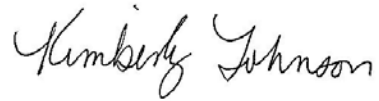
A background traffic growth was applied to the study area intersections based on future traffic projections in the area. A site-specific traffic study will be provided with continued development to the west. These traffic studies will identify potential operational deficiencies and will provide appropriate improvement recommendations if necessary.

The recent update to the traffic study incorporated existing City signal timings as requested. The traffic study provides recommendations to convert the northbound, southbound, and westbound left turn phasing from permissive only to protective-permissive with optimized signal timings. The protective-permissive left turn phasing on the westbound Spectrum Loop approach along with providing additional green along Spectrum Loop will significantly reduce existing vehicle queues in the left turn lane. Of note, the westbound left turn lane is built to the maximum possible length due to the back-to-back left turn lane configuration with the existing retail access to the east.

The traffic study identified the future striping of dual left turn lanes at the intersection of North Gate Boulevard and Voyager Parkway and not the intersection of Spectrum Loop and Voyager Parkway

In addition to providing protective-permissive left turn phasing, the recent traffic study recommends optimized signal timings with additional green time provided on the westbound approach of the intersection of Spectrum Loop at Voyage Parkway.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kimberly Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kimberly Johnson, AICP
Planner