



Columbia Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Recap

Council Chambers, Columbia City Hall
7:00 PM Thursday, July 9, 2020

CALL TO ORDER (Members present: Toohey, Burns, Russell, Carroll, Rushing, Loe, MacMann, Stanton, Jones) (This was the first official meeting for commissioner Jones.)
(Members absent: Carroll)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA (Agenda approved as submitted.)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES ([Minutes from June 18, 2020](#) were approved without amendment.)

SUBDIVISIONS

Case # 112-20

A request by Crockett Engineering (agent) on behalf of SBSR II Properties, LLC (owner) for approval of a 1-lot final plat to be known as "McKee Place Plat No. 1." The subject site is located at the northwest corner of McKee Street and Clark Lane, contains approximately one-acre, and is zoned R-MF (Multi-family Dwelling) district.

(Action: The applicant is seeking approval of a one-lot final minor plat for the purposes of obtaining legal lot status to facilitate development of the subject property. The site is located at the northwest corner of Clark Lane and McKee Street. The applicants intend to build a multi-family structure on the property with up to 8, one-bedroom units. The subject tract was rezoned from R-2 (Two-Family Residential) to R-MF (Multi-family Residential) in August of 2019 for this purpose.

Additional right of way is proposed for dedication along site's frontage to provide 60 feet of half-width for Clark Lane. An additional 5.07 feet of right-of-way is provided along the property's McKee Street frontage. Access to the site will be maintained along McKee Street. As a consequence of these right of way dedications, the parcel's development acreage following dedication will be reduced from approximately 1 acre to 0.74 acres. In addition to right of way dedications, required ten-foot utility easement are being provided on both street frontages. A small area of utility easement will be dedicated near the northwest corner of the property to cover an existing utility found to be outside its existing dedicated easement.

Finally, a 3.5' pedestrian easement is provided along the McKee Street frontage and extending westward on site's Clark Lane frontage for the purpose of constructing a sidewalk outside the street right-of-way. The proposed final plat has been reviewed by staff and it meets all requirements of the Unified Development Code. Staff recommends approval.

MacMann asked staff about community input on this case earlier. Staff indicated that there was little to no input. The reason the sidewalk has to be slightly relocated is due to existing construction or street locations.

The public comment period was opened and no one appeared.

A motion to approve was made and passed unanimously. 8 – 0.)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Case # 127-20

A request by A Civil Group (agent) on behalf of West Rock II, LLC (owners) for approval of a rezoning and development plan to be known as, "The Godfrey PD Plan." The applicant is proposing 4, 4-unit apartment buildings (16 units) with vehicular access onto Green Meadows Road. Their 1.45-acre property is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Green Meadows Drive and Green Meadows Circle.

(Staff announced that a request to table this item had been made due to the fact that a member of the engineering firm had tested positive for COVID-19 and are therefore not available to present tonight. The commissioners indicated that they will still hear testimony at this time and that they will then determine whether to table or not.)

(Action: The applicants are seeking to rezone their property at the northwest corner of Green Meadows Road and Green Meadows Circle, from R-1 (One-family Dwelling) to PD (Planned District) to facilitate the construction of four apartment buildings, each housing four, two-bedroom units. The proposed PD plan depicts these units arranged around a central parking area, with 3 buildings to the west and one to the east. Each building is oriented to face the entry drive and parking area. Each unit includes a one-car garage (16 total spaces) and there are 34 on-site surface parking spaces provided for residents and visitors. The on-site surface parking provided is 15 spaces in excess of those required.

A concept review meeting was held in November 2019 to discuss the development of the subject property (see attached development proposal). At that time staff determined that the use of a planned district was appropriate in this location due to a number of factors, including the unique nature of the location and visual prominence of the property on Green Meadows Road, as well many site factors, like limited access, the shape of the lot, and the location of the property near the entrance to the Green Meadows and Greenbriar-Trail Ridge neighborhoods; both single-family developments. The stated objectives of planned districts are to allow for a mixture of housing types and uses, to provide more-usable open space and amenities, and provide, to the City, amenities or benefits that help achieve the goals of Columbia Imagined which are not otherwise required of the base zoning districts.

During the concept review, the potential project density and maximum number of dwelling units upon the subject site were discussed. It was concluded that a reasonable number of dwelling units would be approximately 12, which equates to a development density of approximately 8-9 dwelling units per acre. These conclusions were offered given the site's proximity to Rock Bridge Christian Church, multiple single-family neighborhoods, and to at least two heavily trafficked intersections. Staff finds that the site is a transitional property providing a demarcation between more intense development generally to the south and east and less intense development to the north and west. Staff agrees that the subject site is a candidate for greater development densities than that of the contextual single-family housing to the north and west; however, also believes the density should be capped and use of the site should be more contextually sensitive through construction of housing forms more compatible with the less intensely developed areas surrounding the site.

The proposed setbacks shown on the PD plan reflect setbacks depicted on Rock Bridge Christian Church Plat 2, with 25' on the Green Meadows Circle frontage, 15' on Green Meadows Road frontage, and 20' provided on the western property boundary. The 20' setback is offered as a buffer between the proposed multi-family units and the church immediately to the west, and also accommodates a 16' sanitary sewer easement serving the western residential units. While these setbacks are being shown on the PD plan, they are not considered consistent with the setbacks which would be required for the type of development now being proposed. The proposed setbacks would permit buildings to be located approximately 18' from a major collector roadway. This is out of character with the area given all other multi-family uses are screened from Green Meadows by means of vegetation or berms and maintain setbacks 25' or greater.

In response to review comments regarding the apparent reversal of the generally applicable setbacks for such development and its orientation, the applicant responded, "they desired to honor the recorded setbacks shown on Plat 2." The recorded setbacks were based on the existing R-1 zoning of the property and access restrictions applicable to single-family development onto Green Meadows Road which is the only development presently permitted on the site. As a point of clarification, since Plat 2 was recorded the requirement that setbacks be shown on final plats has been eliminated from the platting requirements.

The proposed access to the subject site is from Green Meadows Road. This is permitted given the proposed development is multi-family. Staff is supportive of this access arrangement given that the existing single-family neighborhoods are almost exclusively accessed from the east via Green Meadows Circle; particularly for those homes on Greenbriar Drive and Melody Lane. Restricting access to the proposed development to Green Meadows Road will assist in minimizing potential increased traffic impacts from the new development. It should be noted that a proposed driveway to access the site's trash collection dumpster would be accessible from Green Meadows Circle.

The proposed site design would require a design exception from the requirements of Section 29-4.7(f) which states that newly constructed structures shall provide front entrances oriented toward the street from which the property is addressed. The east-facing buildings (abutting the church property) generally face the intersection of Green Meadows Road and Green Meadows Circle; however, the west-facing building faces the internal parking lot and does not meet this requirement. The applicants are seeking relief from this requirement to allow the front entrance to be closest to the parking area, and to avoid the need for construction of sidewalks around the building and outward to connect to the existing public sidewalks.

Staff views the need for this design exception as evidence that the proposed building layout and density of the development exceed the capacity of the property. Fewer structures or a different building form would allow for compliance with this UDC provision. Approval of this exception would result in diminishing the visual quality and sense of arrival into the surrounding neighborhoods which is counter to the Comprehensive Plan's goals and objectives of creating "livable and sustainable" neighborhoods that promote walkability and connectivity. Additionally, it should be restated that the applicant is seeking approval of the PD plan with the setbacks as shown. These setbacks are not consistent with adjoining development and are considered by staff, given the design of the project, to be reversed from what would be typically applied to this property.

Staff believes the requested PD (Planned District) zoning is appropriate for this location due the site's constraints and the opportunity it afford developers to use creative solutions to mitigate contextual impacts. However, the proposed development plan appears to be an effort to maximize density on a high-visibility site that is located along a high-traffic corridor. The PD plan fails to incorporate enhanced amenities, quality open space for its users or the City, and offers little innovation in its design or housing options all of which are core purposes for why a property should be considered for rezoning to a PD district. Furthermore, the proposed setbacks shown on the Plan are contextually out of character with similarly dense developments along the Green Meadows corridor. The setbacks should be reestablished to ensure a proper setback is achieved from Green Meadows Road.

The 2019 concept plan for this site depicts a development pattern more contextually appropriate for this acreage. While the plan does not contain the same level of development intensity as the proposed PD plan, it is believed that the plan better supports the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan by introducing and providing opportunities to construct varied housing types within this location of the City.

Staff recommends **DENIAL** of the zoning change and the associated requested design exception.

MacMann asked about total units. Staff indicated it was 32. MacMann asked about the existence of a traffic study. Staff indicated it was not required so one was not executed. Loe said the staff was not interested in west facing buildings because of some drawbacks. Loe noted that there was no internal sidewalk system that connects the dumpster area and apartments currently and believes the current plan may be in violation. Jones asked about the current zoning. It was noted that it is R-1.

The public comment session was opened.

The first speaker noted that this piece of property splits traffic at the point at which it is situated. He believes that this particular piece will create a traffic problem and that a traffic study probably is warranted. The aesthetics of this are bad. I would not have shown up if this had been better considered. No matter where you put the driveways, it won't work well. The general area has been so heavily developed that there are no other options for the conduct of traffic through the area.

There were no other speakers present.

It was noted that some email comments had been received by the staff earlier in the day and will be incorporated into the hearing minutes. The tabling has been requested until August 6, 2020.

MacMann noted that these were extraordinary times and that the engineering firm was doing something due to the pandemic and wants this tabling not to count against the number of tablings that may be allowed. This is just fair play and due process. Loe asked A Civil Group was the only entity that could bring this case forward. Staff indicated that the applicant could self-represent. This paperwork, however, would have to be redone since the agent has been designated. MacMann just doesn't want someone to get some sort of financial burden due to the pandemic. This is not a situation we have had before. I am asking for no formal action.

A motion to table this case to the August 6, 2020 regular meeting of the P&Z Commission was made and approved unanimously, 8 – 0.)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

(None.)

STAFF COMMENTS

The next meeting will occur on August 6. There is no business scheduled for July 23, so there will be no meeting on that date. However, a worksession will take place on July 23 from 5:30 PM until 7:30 PM.

There will be six items on the agenda for August 6:

- Boone Electric Plat and Design on Rangeline
- 1705 Ballenger Victory Christian Church
- Rezoning on East Texas Avenue near the old Enterprise Rental
- Annexation on Bradbury
- One Fyfer Place Replat
- Rezoning to Planned on Green Meadows. (This is the item tabled at tonight's meeting.)

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Stanton wanted to keep current events on everyone's mind including protests and other items. We all need to work hard at the solution and educate the community, including young people, on how these things can affect your lives. Share your knowledge. Encourage people to vote. Remember that where you live affects how you are policed. Let's get to some solutions.

NEXT MEETING DATE - August 6, 2020 @ 7 pm

ADJOURNMENT
(Time: 7:51 PM)

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