



SUMMARY MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION HELD
APRIL 6, 2021

Planning Commission meeting minutes are not an exact transcript and represent key points and the basis of discussion.

1. **CALLED MEETING TO ORDER**– By T.O. Owens at 6:15 P.M.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

Those present: T.O. Owens, Michael McCarron, Andrew Gay, Patricia Connell, Michael P. Griffith, Doug Magee, Steve Hannan

THOSE ABSENT

None.

ALSO PRESENT: Ryan Stachelski, Director of Community and Economic Development; Rob Smetana, City Planning Manager; Emily Grogg, Sr. Ass't. City Attorney; Jacob Nitchals, Senior Planner; Jenny Wolfschlag, Manager of Development Engineering; Josie Suk, Manager of Dev. Systems and Administrative Services; Stephanie Wallace, Recording Secretary/Administrative Specialist; Tim Knapp

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – March 16, 2021. The minutes stand approved.
5. **GENERAL BUSINESS - CP2021-0002 Three Mile Plan**

MOTION:

It was moved Mr. Magee that CP2021-0002, a Resolution by the Planning Commission for the City of Arvada, Colorado, Adopting the 2014 Arvada Comprehensive Plan as Arvada's Three Mile Plan Pursuant to Section 31-12-105(1)(E), C.R.S., as Amended, be recommended to City Council for approval.

This motion is based on the findings of fact and approval criteria in the Staff Report.

No discussion of the motion

The following votes were cast on the motion:

Those voting Yes: Owens, McCarron, Gay, Connell, Griffith, Magee, Hannan

Those voting No: None

Those absent: None

The motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Owens explained that the motion carried.

6. **REPORTS**

None.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON ISSUES NOT SCHEDULED ON AGENDA**

None.

8. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

A Conditional Use Application For Ralston Commons, Generally Located At The Northwest Corner Of Ralston Road And Garrison Street

Mr. Owens entered into the record the Staff Report dated April 6, 2021, affidavit of mailing, posting log and public comment that was received via email.

Mr. Nitchals noted that there was a defect in the mailing notice. The LDC requires a 500 ft radius, but since this project was an Arvada Urban Renewal Authority (AURA) project they request that all properties within a 2,000 ft radius receive notification. The error was discovered in the Jefferson County property search which is used to generate the address reports. It was discovered after the notice was sent that there were 11 addresses that did not get the notice, but once it was caught those 11 addresses were mailed a notice. To the best of the Staffs' knowledge none of the 11 addresses attempted to contact the City.

Commissioner Michael P Griffith wanted to make it a record that he has no relation to the person with the last name Griffith, who submitted a public comment.

Mr. Nitchals gave a brief overview of the project. He stated that the applicants of this project are requesting a Conditional Use for a project that includes residential and commercial land uses on a 7.2 acre piece of land within the MX-U zone district. The proposed development includes 185 multi-family units in two buildings, 27 for sale townhome units in 3 buildings and approximately 5,500 square feet of commercial space in two buildings. These will all be arranged around a plaza that can accommodate food trucks and other programming. Staff presented the case with a recommendation of approval.

Mr. James Drever, Developer, gave an overview of the project and background. He stated that this property is part of a 25 year plan created by AURA to revitalizes ailing parts of the community to create a mix of vibrant retail, commercial and residential properties. Mr. Drever started to work with AURA in 2014 to create a mixed use urban walkable project that is an asset to the community. He continued to describe that they have been working with the community to develop these plans for the past 7 years and this proposed phase meets the goals of the AURA revitalization efforts.

Mr. Andre Baros, Architect, discussed the 6 phases of the total project in the AURA plan. He stated that this project fits in with the other phases that have been completed or are in future plans. He stated that this project fits the goals for this area. Mr. Baros discussed some of the neighbor comments and concerns that they have received from their neighborhood meeting; he said that the community is excited about this project. He continued to explain the reasons for the Conditional Use requests noting the convenience of public transportation and walk/biking ability and the community inclusion that this project will bring to the area

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Mr. Owens opened the hearing for comments from the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT

IN FAVOR

None

IN OPPOSITION

Lindsay Compton asked for comments from the developer about the height of the building and if they would block the mountain view from the park.

David Jensen submitted his comments in writing and also made a statement to the commission. His concern was that they have an inadequate setback from the creek and the development. He would like to see more green space along the creek. He feels that the City has the discretion to allow a more generous setback and not impact the creek trail with the development being too close.

Nicole Rades asked if there has been discussion on solar/renewable energy with this plan, as well as over congestion of the area with the several phases of residential units. She was concerned that residents may not be able to enjoy the community areas with so many more people.

Ms. Reva Boyles asked if the entrance and exit on Garrison Street and how it will impact the traffic.

There was no further public comment and Mr. Owens asked if the applicant wanted to provide a rebuttal.

APPLICANT REBUTTAL

Mr. Drever responded that the project had been reduced from four stories to three stories over concern of the height. He request Mr. Baros to explain further.

Mr. Baros confirmed that they are always concerned about height. He stated that the retail that faces the park on Garrison Street is shorter and that the majority of the height is pulled away from the park. On the North side of the property they pulled back some of the retail and left some closer to eliminate a wall of buildings straight across. He confirmed that they went with three stories but could have gone four stories, but that would not make sense for the area..

Mr. Drever noted that they have hired a consultant named Group Fourteen to look at water conservation. They are not sure if solar will work at this particular site, but will look at efficiencies for the property. He addressed concerns about congestion and traffic and stated that they did a traffic study and according to the study there are no major recommendations, since it was previously used as a grocery store and 100,000 square feet of retail space.

Mr. Baros added that the energy used per unit will be at the highest one-quarter the energy use of the single family residential. This project is probably 4 times more efficient and they are working with experts to make it better.

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Mr. Owens closed the public input portion of the meeting and allowed comments from the Commission.

QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMISSION

Mr. Griffith asked if any certification have been considered for this project, such as Well, Envision, Lead Neighborhood Development.

Mr. Baros responded that at this time they have chosen to not pursue any third party certifications. However, it does not mean that it is off the table. He continued to state that they will investigate those standards for Lead Neighborhood Development and that it is a perfect candidate.

Mr. Griffith commented that they could focus on using native seed and irrigated turf to reflect the adjacent park. He cautioned them about the trees on the North side along 58th, they will struggle if they are not shade tolerant and to put mature trees in. He mentioned that they may look at some shade canopies for the lawn area.

Mr. Magee questioned the amount of open retail spaces in the other phases of the project and wanted to know how much open (vacant) space was there in addition to the 5,500 square feet that they are adding in this phase.

Mr. Drever responded the Shops at Ralston Creek is approximately 30,000 square feet and 14 spaces. There are 3 vacant spaces since it was built. He stated one of the concerns from the neighborhood is there is no sit down restaurants and everything is fast casual dining. They have been working with AURA and they are going to provide some assistance with the plaza. They are looking for a more regional or sit down restaurant that will engage the community. They are hoping to add an ice cream shop and they will be adding a local coffee shop and martial arts studio in the other retail space in the near future.

Mr. Magee stated he likes the underground parking and the walk ability. He asked how many units will have steps that lead to a sidewalk.

Mr. Baros stated approximately 75% out of the ground units.

Mr. Magee stated there was a concern from the neighborhood meeting regarding the access to the sidewalk from the units for a person with a walker or wheelchair.

Mr. Baros responded there are two considerations, every unit will be served from the corridor and the corridor will have an elevator and a fully accessible path. Additionally there will be ramps. He stated traditionally the ground units tend to be taken by the dog owners and that is why they have a mixture.

Mr. Magee stated that the previous use had more traffic five years ago when it was retail and asked what level of service the intersections near the development will see as it pertains to the traffic stand point.

Ms. Wolfschlag responded that all of the signalized intersections in that area will operate at level B or better which is rated until 2045. The un-signalized intersections will operate at a level C or better until 2045

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Mr. Gay commented he had the same question/comments as Commissioner Magee regarding the elevators and parking. He asked since the parking is below grade, if it could be lowered a foot or two and preserving the stoops, to lower the building height. He commented on the staff report, page 6 third paragraph; it talks about a publicly accessible private street as being West 58th Ave. It is 58th PI and that is not very private.

Mr. McCarron asked staff if there have been any thoughts on how to limit the speed in this area. He has noticed that this area is very active and has concern over speeds and that traffic calming in this development is a necessity. He asked if speed bumps would be used in the area.

Ms. Wolfschlag responded that the speed on Garrison is currently posted at 25MPH. City Traffic staff generally monitors this on an annual basis. Or more frequently if they are receiving complaints from the police department. If it is a problem the police department would help add additional control through speed enforcement. She stated there are some different patterns in the concrete to delineate where pedestrians would be crossing. She commented that the City has evaluated some traffic calming alternatives and have not found anything that would be better than what is currently there.

Mr. Nitchals commented that the applicant is exploring on street parking on Garrison Street along with a bike lane which would potentially slow down traffic.

Mr. McCarron asked what the liner foot from the setback is from the building's foot print. He stated that it feels substantial and beyond what the normal set back would be. He also stated he likes the project and suggests looking in to the lead certified building.

Mr. Nitchals responded that conservatively it's about 175 feet from the building to the Southside of Brooks Drive and add another 60 feet of right of way on Brooks Drive. Depending on where you take the measurement it would be 170-230 feet to the actual building. The normal required setback for this use requires a 10 foot setback along the northern property line. On the conceptual plan proposal, which is not finalized, they show the setback around 15 or 16 feet. Mr. Nitchals clarified that if the MX-U zone district was adjacent to a property zoned RN-6 the height transition zone would require the first 35-45 feet of their property to be restricted to the height of the adjacent zoning. Which would be 28 feet of the first 35-45 feet of their property if they shared a common property line.

Mr. Owens asked if there were any further comments, no more comments were made. Mr. Owens asked for a motion.

MOTION:

It was moved by Mr. Magee, that a Conditional Use Application for Ralston Commons, generally located at the northwest corner of Ralston Road and Garrison Street, be recommended to City Council for approval.

This motion is based on the findings of fact and approval criteria on Page(s) 9 & 10 of the Staff Report.

DISCUSSION OF MOTION:

Mr. Owens stated he used to live in this area and the original plan for this area was for 400 apartments. This is a more welcoming idea for this property. He acknowledged AURA work in bringing this beautiful project.

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Mr. Hannan reiterated the same thoughts as Chairman Owens. He appreciates the step down from Garrison Street and the park, so there are no giant buildings looking over the park. He stated that from a conditional use standpoint this is excellent use and he will be supporting it.

Mr. Magee stated his appreciation of the presentation and there will be a Phase 5 of affordable housing on the Southside of Ralston Road. He applauded the thoughts into the landscape.

Ms. Connell expressed the same appreciations as the other commissioners. Noting the landscaping softens buildings and the practicality of the project being next to the large park eliminates driving and shows a soft environment for the larger buildings.

Mr. Griffith thanked the public for joining. He applauded the developers on their graphics on the presentation to better understand.

The Commissioners all stated their support of this project.

The following votes were cast on the motion:

Those voting Yes: Owens, McCarron, Gay, Connell, Griffith, Magee, Hannan

Those voting No: None

Those absent: None

The motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Owens explained that the motion carried.

9. OTHER ITEMS

Mr. Smetana reminded the Commission of the April 20, 2021 Planning Commission meeting.

12. ADJOURNED at 7:24 P.M.

T. O. Owens

T.O. Owens, Chair

Patricia Connell

Patricia Connell, Secretary

Stephanie Wallace

Stephanie Wallace, Recording Secretary