

**GUNNISON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, October 20, 2022**

The Gunnison County Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting in the Planning Commission Meeting Room in the Blackstock Government Center, 221 N. Wisconsin, Gunnison, Co. and on Zoom **Present:**

Chairperson- Laura Daniels	Assistant County Manager Community & Economic
Vice-Chairperson-Andy Sovick	Development-Cathie Pagano
Commissioner-Matt Schwartz	Senior Planner – Rachel Sabbato
Commissioner-Fred Niederer	Planner- Sean Pope
Commissioner- Julie Baca	Planner/ Manager of Administrative Services- Beth Baker
	Others present as listed in text

Recused/Absent: Commissioner Beth Appleton

Commissioner Beth Appleton has recused herself from the review of the Whetstone Workforce Housing application.

With a quorum present Chairperson Daniels opened the October 20, 2022 regular meeting of the Planning Commission.

Moved by Baca **seconded** by Schwartz to approve Planning Commission meeting minutes, dated October 6, 2022, as amended. The motion passed unanimous.

Whetstone Workforce Housing (LUC-22-00049) Site Visit: Applicant proposes development of an essential workforce housing residential development on the site. The total parcel is 15.1 acres. Approximately 231 units are proposed at the site, the majority (more than 40% per Essential Housing standards) shall be deed restricted based on AMI limitations which will vary based on a range of community need and the ability of the County and developer to secure supplemental funding and control costs. The units will vary and may include: apartments, townhomes, and live/work units. The parcel is located at 25315 Highway 135, a tract of land in the NW1/4SE1/4, Section 12, T14S, R86W, 6th PM.

Commissioner Baca did not attend the site visit.

No minutes taken.

Whetstone Workforce Housing (LUC-22-00049) Work Session: Applicant proposes development of an essential workforce housing residential development on the site. The total parcel is 15.1 acres. Approximately 231 units are proposed at the site, the majority (more than 40% per Essential Housing standards) shall be deed restricted based on AMI limitations which will vary based on a range of community need and the ability of the County and developer to secure supplemental funding and control costs. The units will vary and may include: apartments, townhomes, and live/work units. The parcel is located at 25315 Highway 135, a tract of land in the NW1/4SE1/4, Section 12, T14S, R86W, 6th PM.

With a quorum present Chairperson Laure Puckett Daniels opened the work session.

Commissioner Beth Appleton has recused herself from the review of the Whetstone Workforce Housing application, she is representing the adjacent property owner George Gers.

Assistant County Manager (ACM) Community and Economic Development Cathie Pagano described a major impact land use change application process. Pagano explained the process includes a Sketch Plan, Preliminary Plan, and Final Plan.

- **Sketch Plan** is exploratory, engineered designs and detailed plans are not required or accepted. There will be a joint public hearing. It can take 4.5 months or longer to go through this process.
- **Preliminary Plan** requires the applicant to formulate detailed, design/engineered solutions to the issues and concerns identified during Sketch Plan. There will be a joint public hearing.
- **Final Plan** is limited in scope: including final plat, covenants, and DIA documents. No public hearings at the phase. It is often combined with the preliminary plan.

ACM Pagano noted public comments are always forwarded to the Planning Commission, Board of County Commissioners, applicant and staff for their review. They are also included in the Community Development land use file.

The County is the applicant for the Whetstone Workforce Housing application. Pagano is the staff member for this project. Assistant County Manager (ACM) John Cattles represents the County in the review. County Attorney Hoyt explained this would not create a conflict, the public has the opportunity to be heard. There remains a system of checks and balances. The process remains the same, with no exemptions for the County as the applicant.

Site Visit Comments:

- **Puckett-Daniels**-seeing the grading, the levels of land and the size of the site was helpful. It is already significantly developed around that property. She was struck by the traffic noise and volume. It was helpful to see how big the parcel is.
- **Sovick**-walking the property was helpful to understand the site is tucked between Riverland and private property. It is a bit of an island. Envisioning streets, and terracing etc. was also helpful. The CDOT potential roundabout plan was also enlightening. Traffic noise, deceleration and acceleration on the highway was significant. He noted the need for good input from Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), because of the wildlife corridor.
- **Schwartz**-the property is beautiful. Berming and screening is already in place for the highway.
- **Niederer** -the site is beautiful, but he had trouble visualizing the pedestrian access.

ACM Cattles and the development team explained the proposed project with a power point presentation.

Project Timeline:

- Stage 1: Included groundwork with local partners
- Stage 2: Building a neighborhood framework for housing in the area
- Stage 3: Planning and design strategies
- Stage 4: Implementation strategy

- Stage 5: New parameters and design refinements
- Stage 6: Sketch Plan submittal
- Stage 7: Planning and Commission review

Project Vision:

- A significant development of affordable housing for a diverse mix of local individuals and families to live and work in the Gunnison Valley. Create neighborhood amenities, to cultivate a sense of community. Will be looking for way to be innovation in as many ways as possible, not being too prescriptive, for potential uses, creative solutions, and community priorities.
- Create a neighborhood at Whetstone, amenities such as a park or community garden.
- Working with the community and their ideas for potential uses, creative solutions, and community priorities.

Project Goals:

- Support the local economy, with reliable housing for the workforce
- Provide housing security for essential members of the community who have been facing housing challenges
- Support environmental goals by reducing commuting and improving energy efficiency through green building and modern construction techniques

Outcomes/ Affordability:

- Alleviate the stress of housing insecurity
- Maximize homes for rent to households below 120% AMI, and potentially include homes for sale for households up to 200% AMI
- Provide 100% deed restricted housing attainable by local workforce, in order to take advantage of the LUR incentives achieving a minimum of 40% essential housing (120% AMI and lower)

Outcomes/ Environmental Sustainability:

- Reduce energy intensity of buildings to meet or exceed 2021 IECC; reduce cost to heat homes by increasing the efficiency of homes
- All-electric buildings utilizing either a geothermal heat-pump system or air-source heat pumps
- Charging stations for electric vehicles
- Solar ready project
- Prioritize use of materials that are low-embodied carbon and those that may contribute to carbon sequestration

Outcomes/ Transportation Connections:

- Reduce commuting by creating opportunities for workers to live near their jobs
- Strong street, trail and park connections
- Bus and pedestrian underpass access points to work with the neighborhood design
- Safety and maintenance
- Natural site grading
- Strong connection within the site to a future CB to CB So. Trail

Commissioner Baca left the meeting for the day.

There was significant community engagement and outreach, which started in June 2021. It included five site walks, a design charrette, youth engagement and a virtual work session. The stakeholders included developers, employers, water and sanitation providers, housing authority,

partner jurisdictions, financing/ funding partners, transportation providers, and neighbors. Community engagement will continue throughout the entire land use process.

The project used a project website, video and survey, newsletter and press releases. A large number of stakeholder meetings were conducted with regional developers, large employers, potential water and sanitation providers, Gunnison Valley Regional Housing Authority, neighboring jurisdictions, DOLA and CHFA, transportation providers and neighbors.

In August of 2021 a design charrette was conducted and overtime a more detailed site plan/design was in place and presented to the BOCC in October 2021. The following iterations were done: November 2021 there was the first formal plan, December 2021 included the CDOT alignment, January 2022 the potential addition of the Gers property, March 2022 the inclusion of the Gers property, June 2022 alignment of greenway with underpass, reorient north road and July 2022 adjusted far northwest.

The Whetstone Essential Housing project is an attempt to create community vitality, by developing new housing for the workforce, which is permanently in place. Creating a great neighborhood experience that instills pride of place is a priority. The plan intends to utilize site to its' full potential, by using it fully. The intention is creating housing for the workforce so they can remain in the community. There are opportunities for placemaking: art/sculpture, unexcepted and interesting element community uses, that will work efficiently for site development.

ACM Pagano noted the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) establishes what the area medium income (AMI) is dependent on many factors including on how many individuals are in the household.

Cattles noted the county may have a developer on board, for the preliminary plan phase of the application.

The circulation & connections were reviewed. The vehicular, bus and pedestrian circulation corridors were presented on the power point. The open space was described as a lot of additional xeriscape areas in the neighborhood, making it sensitive to the use of water.

The neighborhood zones:

- **Urban north contains** nine townhouse units, one and three-bedroom units
- Architectural character responding to the agrarian history of the Slate river valley
- Trail connection
- Residential parking
- **Gers parcel**, Gers family intends to rebuild on the site
- **West side** contains 24 units, one and three-bedrooms
- Pitched roofs and front porches
- Buildings address garden courts and the street
- Parking courts between buildings and include enclosed garages
- Low fences
- **Central** contains 66 units
- Two story flats
- Alley loaded parking
- Front porches
- Second floor balconies
- Buildings address the street and the park

- Alley flats above enclosed garages
- **Far South** contains eight units
- Two story flats
- Front porches
- Second floor balconies
- Building address, the street and the park
- **East side** contains 12 units
- Two story units with living above enclosed garages
- Simple industrial contemporary forms, bridging to the Riverland Industrial Park
- Opportunity for live/work, home office, flex space, owner occupancy or employer owned units
- Likely to go up to 200 % AMI
- Design could also be modified to have more smaller units
- Riverland Corner contains nine units
- Two-bedroom two story townhouses, transitioning to Riverland neighborhood

Commissioner Schwartz referenced to the underpass, noting it is a cornerstone of making the project work. ACM Pagano explained sketch plan is the conceptual phase of the review. The Preliminary-plan will explore how multimodal will be addressed.

Commissioner Niederer questioned who will be required to maintain the roads: Cattles said it will part of negotiations with a developer.

Commissioner Schwartz asked about the turf and irrigation; Cattles noted we do have water rights and onsite wells with the potential to use them for site irrigation.

It was noted there has been a lot of community dialogue back and forth, and it remains a very transparent process. Extra time has been taken to develop the sketch plan.

ACM Pagano explained moving through the process, the upcoming work sessions will be conducted on specific sections.

Chairperson Daniels explained it is the job of the commission is to understand the LUR standards and determine if this project meets the LUR standards. She requested a deep dive into some to the standards. How the application meets the standards including density and affordable housing. Reviewing the comments from Crested Butte, Crested Butte Fire, and CDOT.

Commissioner Schwarz asked for an explanation of the tie between access and the application.

Commissioner Sovick said the sequence should be first reviewing and understanding the staff report and branch out after that to water, waste water, transit, parking, traffic, site plan compatibly, density and compliance with the LUR standards

Chairperson Daniels said water is an essential piece of this application, fire protection, and enough for consumption and landscaping.

Commissioner Niederer asked what are the chances this would be shot down by Skyland or the Town of CB because of water and sewer availability: ACM Cattles noted there have been many productive conversations with potential water and sewer providers.

Commissioner Niederer asked about the Crested Butte Three Mile Plan. Pagano explained the Town of Crested Butte is adopting the Compass Plan. The county and town do not have an inter-governable agreement. Where there is a conflict the county standards prevail.

Commissioner Sovick said this is something meant to last for decades, and it is good to engage the youth and the teachers.

Chairperson Daniels closed the work session at 1:40 P.M.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 P.M.

/s/ Beth Baker
Gunnison County Community and Economic Development