

**GUNNISON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, November 17, 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:**

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| Chairperson- Laura Daniels Vice-Chair- Andy Sovick Commissioner- Fred Niederer Commissioner- Matt Schwartz | Assistant County Manager Community and Economic Development (ACM)-Cathie Pagano Planner – Sean Pope Planner/ Manager of Administrative Services- Beth Baker Others present as listed in text |
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Zoom- Commissioner Andy Sovick

Absent- Commissioner Julie Baca

With a quorum present Commissioner Baca opened the November 17, 2022 regular meeting of the Planning Commission.

Moved by Commissioner Schwartz seconded by Commissioner Niederer to approve Planning Commission meeting minutes, dated November 3, 2022. The motion passed unanimously.

Whetstone Workforce Housing (LUC-22-00049) Work Session: The 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 Daniels opened the work session.

Chairperson Daniels explained the sketch plan process, noting the Planning Commission has conducted a site visit, and three work sessions. There will be a joint public hearing conducted with the Board of County Commissioners, likely in January. Following the public hearing there could be additional work sessions. It is the goal, but not requirement for the Planning Commission to have recommendation of approval, denial or approval with conditions within 60 days of the public hearing.

Town of Crested Butte Community Development Director Troy Russ was present. He noted the Town found it necessary to elaborate on their referral letter. The Town shares the goal of 100% deed restriction and understands development will require flexibility. But, the Town will have an expectation of 80% deed restricted properties. The Town has an expectation the roundabout intersection design will be included as part of the development design. Their support is contingent on a transit supported design. Russ explained three components of transit supported design include reduce time walking, waiting and riding on transit. The Town strongly feels as many houses as close to transit the better.

The concept of clustering it is encouraged, Whetstone has clustered design. The Town's Community Compass was explained. It includes maintaining the rural feel in the corridor, what they want to accomplish in the next five years. He applauded the county on the outreach done and adhering to the framework of the Compass. He noted the Town has not given approval of the plan yet.

Chairperson Daniels asked how long the infrastructure decision takes. Russ explained the utility extension will be discussed for consideration soon. Daniels asked if the development could be annexed into the Town. Russ said the Town has the opportunity to annex, it will be part of the conversation. Chairperson Daniels is it possible to annex later: Russ said yes, but it would be a different process. Commissioner Niederer asked if the Brush Creek intersection is a requirement. Russ noted it could be.

Chairperson Daniels questioned who would be responsible for the maintenance of everything. ACM Pagano said it is in flux and more a part of the preliminary plan. If the Town extends utilities they will be the operator.

Commissioner Sovick requested clarification of Transit Oriented Design. Russ explained it is higher density closer to transit as a key principal. Russ explained the placement of the buildings and curbs, etc. would reduce the speed on Highway 135. The roundabout has a designed entry of 15 MPH and is very safe. Russ explained transition designing streets to match the geometrics of the environment. The buildings are the environment. Timing is the problem, CDOT needs a contract from the county, and will be hesitant to develop the geometrics without one. Chairperson Daniels would like to see the evidence of buildings lowering speeds, with a memo included in the file.

Applicant's representative Assistant County Manager (ACM) John Cattles gave a power point presentation, which included an overview of the previous presentation. Also, LUR Standards, community engagement, site design and livability, and affordable housing thresholds.

The LUR standards including:

- Transit focused places and lowest cost units closest to transit.
- Efficient and functional street connections- East Rd. must be pushed as far away from the roundabout as possible.
- Efficient use of land- Several iterations of design working to solve interconnected problems have resulted in this site layout
- Safety and walkability-Large buildings at the entrance to the site give visual cues to slow traffic, residents will have access to bus stops via the central green space corridor with minimal road interference.
- Other variances- parking and building height (to be finalized at preliminary plan.)

Community engagement was explained. Willa Williford said the engagement has been very intentional. There were":

- Five site walks
- A design charette
- Youth engagement

The stake holders included developer's, employers, water and sanitation providers, housing authority, partner jurisdictions, financing/funding partners, transportation and neighbors.

Williford said there is general support for this location. The questions included the percentage of deed restricted housing, buildings along the highway, timing, the underpass, etc.

Site Design and Livability

JV DeSousa explained the site includes seven sections; west side, far northwest, central, east side, Riverland corner, far south, and urban north. The site is organized by a simple street grid. They have put open space throughout the project as an essential part of the plan. The greenway is the primary pedestrian site. The Boundary Trail wraps all the way around the site. It will be open to all the residents of the neighborhood.

The plan should be as sustainable as possible, by using water efficiently, and native and naturalized materials. There are snow storage areas for the winter. The streets are walkable, creating a sense of community. Narrower streets result in slower speeds and safer streets. The structures have not been designed, that will depend on future development partners. The design utilizes the topography, with energy efficiency obtained with solar access. It has been a key part of the strategy.

DeSousa noted the design has gone through several iterations, before the design that was submitted. The intentions included obtaining as much essential housing as possible on the site, provide safe and easy access to the bus for the residents, providing open space, adequate parking, snow storage, a connection to the outdoor environment with natural light and views. In the third iteration the largest building was moved closest to the highway. The topography on site lent itself to the placement of that building.

Cattles explained the underpass was designed to ensure it is not a deep dark hole, it was done very intentionally and fundamentally. He noted Pitchfork Subdivision has 13 units per acre, Stallion Park 15 units per acre, Paintbrush 17 units per acre, Anthracite Place 30 units per acre, Skyland Lodge 40 units per acre, and Whetstone 15 units per acre.

He explained essential housing means housing for qualified households as determined by the Gunnison County Housing Authority. Workforce means persons who are employees in Gunnison County whose household incomes are categorized:

- Low income: household whose annual income does not exceed 80 percent of the area median income; or
- Moderate income: household whose income is between 81 percent and 120 percent of the area median income

The development will consist of no less than 80% deed restreeted units with 40% restricted to incomes of 120% AMI or less. We will continue to seek funding to offset development and construction costs and will negotiate with developers to achieve the maximum benefit.

Cattles gave several local examples of current open jobs in relation to annual income, % of AMI, approximate affordable purchase, and approximate affordable rent. There is a commitment no less than 80% deed restricted units with 40% restricted to income of 120% AMI or less.

Cattles said the larger buildings will help keep the costs down, and taking the underground parking out helps cut costs. They will also help use the site as efficiently as possible.

Commissioner Niederer's concern was affordability. He added if the private sector is to actually build there has to be profit, but checks and balances must be used.

Chairperson Daniels was concerned with the buildings right next to the highway. It seems like most of the buildings achieve community values, but the ones closest to the highway might not. They face a parking lot and are along the highway. She asked if parking can be moved so they don't face the parking the lot. Cattles said there are compromises that have to be made, something has to go there. DeSousa added this is the central conflict- cars and parking vs. buildings and views. Perhaps making a neighborhood so walkable, fewer residents need a car, allowing for less parking. Parking takes space and can result into the reduction of units.

The commissioners agreed to review the staff report and review what staff sees as outstanding issues the applicant will have to resolve. Chairperson Daniels requested an example of a previous major impact sketch plan recommendation.

The commissioners agreed to conduct an additional work session in December, and directed staff to schedule a joint public hearing in January 2023.

Chairperson Daniels closed the work session and adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

/s/ Beth Baker

Gunnison County Community and Economic Development