

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Mark Frost called the meeting to order at 5:31pm.

PRESENT: Commissioners Mark Frost (Chair), Bill Irving, Erika Price, Amy Schlappi, Tina Lassen

ABSENT: Sue Powers, Megan Ramey

STAFF: Planning Director Dustin Nilsen, Planner Jennifer Kaden, Development Technician Ami Santillan

II. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S UPDATE:

Planning Director Dustin Nilsen gave a reminder regarding the three open positions for Planning Commission. There will be no meeting on July 5th, due to the observed holiday. Nilsen provided updates on the middle housing appeal process.

Commissioner Bill Irving asked, in regard to the appeal of the Middle Housing code, what the next steps are. Nilsen explained he is currently working on compiling the record, filing a draft, and reviewing the record objections which should be completed within the coming week.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commission Chair Mark Frost requested to proceed with the approval of the May 3rd, 2021 minutes at the beginning of the agenda, given that Commissioner Bill Irving was going to be recusing himself from the meeting.

Commissioner Amy Schlappi stated that her name was misspelled.

Commissioner Irving made a motion to approve as corrected. Amy seconded the motion. No discussion. Unanimous vote. Motion passed.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING:

FILE NO.: 2021-07 Hazel Ridge CUP/PUD/SUB

PROPOSAL: Conditional Use, Planned Unit Development and Subdivision to develop two single-family detached homes and four 2-unit townhome buildings on site accessing E Eugene Street and E Hazel Avenue with associated site improvements.

APPLICANT: Tim O'Byrne and Mark Vanderzanden, Surround Architecture

PROPERTY OWNER: Inland Pacific Oregon II, LLC

PROPERTY LOCATION & ZONING: Between E Hazel Avenue and E Eugene Street; Legal Description: 3N10E36AB Tax Lots 6900 & 6903. The property is zoned Urban High Residential (R-3).

Planning Commission Chair Mark Frost read the procedural script and asked the Commissioners to disclose any ex-parte contacts, conflicts of interest or bias in this matter. Commissioner Irving recused himself from the proceeding on the grounds that he represented the owner when purchasing the property.

John McGrory, 21 E Hazel, asked Commissioner Irving whether he has been involved in anything regarding this property prior to this meeting. Commissioner Irving affirmed that he had, explaining that this was the reason for recusing himself; he explained had been in communication with the applicant and the developer during the development process, and no other commissioner had been involved in this discussion.

McGrory asked if Commissioner Irving received a commission for the work he did related to this property and whether he is still contact with the applicant. Commissioner Irving reaffirmed that he was no longer in contact with the applicant after the purchase of the property.

There were no additional disclosures. Chair Frost asked for challenges from the audience; there were no additional questions or challenges. There were no challenges from commissioners.

STAFF REPORT:

City Planner Jennifer Kaden provided background information about the site and project. Kaden highlighted the lack of detail regarding the setbacks and height standards but stated that they will be verified during the final review procedure. She summarized key points from the staff report: geological factors, street access, driveway spaces, traffic concerns and common open spaces.

Kaden elaborated that the applicant completed a traffic analysis study which addresses the existing conditions of roadways, access spaces, and intersection safety. Based on this analysis, Kaden explained that the City Engineer is requiring street frontage improvements and installation of a streetlight on E Hazel.

Kaden noted the additional steps that must be taken by the developer including a recommendation to include a public pedestrian easement/pathway to connect Eugene with E Hazel. She explained that the City engineer has reviewed the preliminary plans and has submitted conditions to meet the land use criteria. Kaden recommends approval of proposed development with 47 conditions.

Kaden mentioned that the Planning Director has concerns about the aesthetic and urban design in relation to the proposed three driveways on Eugene Street.

Commissioner Tina Lassen asked about the street code requirements. Kaden clarified the standards for street frontage improvements as identified by the Transportation System Plan (TSP). Kaden further elaborated that because most of the streets around the site are not build to full standards in that area, the city engineer has requested several road improvements.

Lassen asked about the discretion that the City engineer has in regard to the road improvement exceptions. Kaden clarified that the the code allows the engineer to grant exceptions.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Applicant/Owner Tim O'Byrne stated he agrees with the staff findings and conditions.

Applicant architect Mark Vanderzanden, 3265 SW Fremont Blvd, Portland OR, provided background information and explained the project goals: provide needed housing, provide density that works best for the zoning, build to the scale similar to single family homes and townhomes in the surrounding neighborhoods, and maintain consistency of design and landscape.

Vanderzanden explained the street improvements include widening the streets, improving the street trees in that area, building a new sidewalk on Hazel, installing underground powerlines, and improving the stormwater lines. Vanderzanden continued to explain that the project will provide a total of 22 parking spaces on the site, which exceeds the city requirements. Applicants agree with the pedestrian pathway recommendation made by City staff.

Frost asked if the front lawns were going to be maintained by an HOA.

Commissioner Schlappi asked if there would be a sidewalk built on Eugene Street. Vanderzanden clarified that there was no room for a sidewalk on that street.

There was no proponent testimony.

Neutral testimony:

Mike Stroud, 515 E 3rd Street, expressed concern regarding traffic and pedestrian safety. Explained that there are only four access points into this area. Stroud questioned what the city was going to do to improve pedestrian and traffic safety if they approve this project. Stroud continued to express his concerns about the heightened traffic activity in this area if this project is completed.

Samantha Westra, 215 E Eugene, had a question about the boulders on her property that encroach onto the proposed project site. She asked if any signage was going to be added to slow down traffic.

Allan Schmidt, 318 E Eugene, expressed his concern about the traffic volumes.

Brad Schell, 423 2nd, explained that there are 18 oak trees that might be cut down if the streets were widened by 5 or 6 feet. He is concerned about the discretion that the city engineer has regarding the street widening and asked what is going to happen to the trees; stated that the public should have the opportunity to provide more input in relation to the outcome of the trees.

Opposing testimony:

Margo Blosser, 423 E 3rd, stated the applicant is trying to put too many houses on the site. She noted the roads are not safe enough to accommodate the current density. Blosser continued to elaborate on the precarious traffic situation in that area.

Greg Vos, 114 Eugene, stated that there was no street parking on Eugene and limited parking on Hazel. He expressed his concerns regarding visitor parking for the existing and proposed homes.

John McGrory, 21 E Hazel, suggested that the applicants or City conduct a pedestrian safety study. He stated that this project is not good for Hood River and believes that this project is premature.

Scott Schanel, 119 E Eugene, expressed concerns about overflow parking. He is surprised about the number of units that are being proposed and thought it is too dense for that area. He continued to expressed concern about the street trees and the impact this development might have.

Sofia Prokop, 523 E 4th St, is concerned about the stormwater impacts, particularly on the southeastern side of Hazel. She explained that the south side of Hazel is being undermined, especially during the winters. Prokop asked if there was a clause or ordinance that details the responsibility for the developer to help mitigate the potential impacts this project might have. She commented on the slanted nature of the property and the safety impacts it might have on the proposed chapel on the site.

Chair Frost asked what long-term plan can be made to improve the traffic safety issues in that area. Director Nilsen stated that there is still a lot of work to be done in a wide range of issues which are all on the City's radar.

Commissioner Lassen asked about the status of on-street parking in that area.

Chris Gardner, 410 E 4th Street, expressed traffic concerns. He suggested building less units in order to meet the capacity in the area.

Chair Frost closed the public hearing.

REBUTTAL:

Vanderzanden stated his team is not opposed to having further traffic calming discussions. Vanderzanden explained that the improvements that are being done will help improve traffic circumstances on Hazel and Eugene and noted that they intend to protect the trees that surround the area. He affirmed the validity of the traffic analysis study and its findings. Vanderzanden stated that on-street parking will increase once the street is widened.

Chair Frost recommended that City staff should consider options for parking as development increases in this part of the city.

STAFF RECAP:

Kaden explained that she has been in contact with the City engineer and will pass on all of the testimony that was presented today. Kaden suggested several options that could be taken by the city and the public in order to potentially mitigate several of the traffic concerns: signage, traffic calming requests. She emphasized that the engineering department has heard the neighbors' concerns about tree retention and is trying to work around those trees.

DELIBERATIONS:

Schlappi asked about the pedestrian path and what design elements were going to be placed in order to make it obvious that it is for public usage.

Commissioner Erika Price stated that the land use portion of the project is very clear and has no further concerns or questions.

Lassen expressed her concerns about the site of the project, specifically regarding the traffic and pedestrian safety. She stated that the impacts outweigh the benefits of this project. Commissioner Lassen described there is a need for these issues to be addressed instead of adding new developments in this area.

Frost agreed with Commissioner Lassen. He believed that the developer is being sensible given the area and zone but is concerned that the impacts of this project will put a lot of constraints on the neighborhood.

Schlappi suggested adding language in the city recommendations to ensure that the City engineer looks at traffic calming mitigation strategies for this area.

Lassen expressed problems with approval due to certain aspects of the project, specifically the open space issue and driveway spacing and access. She cautions the possible precedence that will be established from this decision.

Frost emphasized the need for consistency in regard to the standards. He agreed with Commissioner Lassen regarding the need for further examination and improvement of this area. However, Chair Frost stated that this development is within the legal confines of this zone and area.

MOTION:

Commissioner Price moved to approve File No. 2021-07, with the findings and conditions as written in the staff report ; Commissioner Schlappi seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0 with 1 abstention (Lassen).

V. ADJOURN

Chair Frost adjourned the hearing at **7:59 p.m.**

Mark Frost, Chair

Date

Dustin Nilsen, Planning Director

Date (Approved)