



Planning and Economic Development

Ed Anzek, AICP, Director

From: James Breuckman, AICP
To: Planning Commission
Date: 1/10/2013
Re: Potential South Boulevard PUD Pre-Application Review

We are in receipt of a sketch plan for a potential PUD project on a 9.9 acre parcel of land on the north side of South Boulevard between Adams and Crooks Road (see attached location map). The parcel contains very little frontage on South Boulevard, is wooded, and also has 2.38 acres of City and State regulated wetlands. The applicant's cover letter notes that these site conditions make the site less suited to single family residential development when infrastructure costs are considered.

The applicant has submitted a preliminary sketch and has requested a pre-application review with the Planning Commission. In the case of a PUD where the Planning Commission and City Council have broad authority to adjust development requirements, it is helpful for staff and the potential applicant to have your input and guidance early in the process.

As you look at the plans and prepare for next Tuesday's meeting, I suggest that the following considerations may be of assistance to you in your deliberations:

1. **Density.** As proposed, the proposed PUD has a gross density of roughly 3 units per acre, or a net density of 4 units per acre when the wetland area is deducted. It is unknown how many single family residential lots could reasonably be developed on the site based on the R-4 district requirements, which would serve as a baseline density for review considerations.
2. **Building Design.** Building design and appearance is of particular importance for attached units, as it can strongly impact the apparent density of a project. Well-designed buildings that have a human scale can mask the number of units that actually exist, lessening the impact of density. On the other hand, poorly designed buildings can exacerbate the impacts of density, making a development actually feel more crowded and denser than is actually the case.

One of the objectives of the PUD option is to enhance the aesthetic appearance of the City through quality building design and site development. No information about the building design has been provided, although the applicant has indicated that they will bring examples of their proposed buildings to the meeting. The proposed concept plan shows tri-plex units with garages lining the street frontage of all buildings.

3. **Site Layout.** The site layout is largely driven by the location of wetlands on the site. The buildings are designed to take advantage of views of the golf course and the central wetland area. We suggest the Planning Commission consider the following site layout items:
 - a. **Apparent Density.** Garage-lined streets are one way to make a development feel denser than it actually is, and buildings 5 and 6, and 7 and 10 are separated by just 60 feet across the street. While closely-knit buildings can actually create an inviting and pleasant street feel, this only works with the front of the buildings that are close to each other are designed to a human scale. When two garage doors face each other separated by just 60 feet, it feels crowded and uninviting.

- b. Street Design. Will on-street parking be allowed? Where will visitors park? What will the overall streetscape effect be, given the large number of driveways?
- c. Building Layout along South Property Line. Presuming that the buildings are designed with their living area at the rear of the building to take advantage of rear views, buildings 6-8 will be looking at the backyard of the developed single family lot to the south. The interaction between buildings along the south property line and the developed lot to the south is a consideration.
- d. Building Mix. Is there a possibility to mix different types of units to achieve a similar overall density while improving the design of the site? For instance, could duplex units replace the tri-plexes along the west edge of the site, with one or a few higher-unit buildings being located along the southern portion of the site? This could also allow for a mixture of buildings that are designed to capitalize on rear-yard views when buildings are located along natural areas or the golf course, and buildings that are designed with a more private rear yard if adjacent to the existing residential units to the south and east.

It might be beneficial to the applicant and Planning Commission if additional alternatives were studied using different types of building styles. In working with the builder for the Summit at Kings Cove he advised that the market for 3 and 4 unit buildings is not as strong as duplexes. The middle units always get less natural light.

Finally, staff is gravely concerned with this layout in that Ed usually hooks his approach shot to number 18 into the woods left of the green. With this concept it would hit Building #2. We recommend very large nets.