

**MINUTES
CITY OF AMES
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

Date: July 17, 2019	Matt Converse, Chairperson	2020
	Carlton Basmajian, Vice Chairperson	2020
Call to Order: 7:00 PM	Ruth Hulstrom	2021
	Jon Emery	2021
Place: Ames City Hall Council Chambers	Carol Spencer	2021
	Anuprit Minhas	2022
Adjournment: 8:55 PM	*Doug Ragaller	2022
	[*Absent]	

MAJOR TOPICS DISCUSSED:

1. Planned Residence District Amendment with a Major Site Development Plan and Preliminary Plat for 130 Wilder Avenue
 2. Amendment to Adaptive Reuse Plan for 2801 Grand Avenue
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CALL TO ORDER: Matt Converse, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION: (Minhas/Spencer) to approve the Agenda for the meeting of July 17, 2019

MOTION PASSED: (6 - 0)

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JUNE 19, 2019:

MOTION: (Spencer/Hulstrom) to approve the Minutes of the meeting of June 19, 2019.

MOTION PASSED: (6 - 0)

PUBLIC FORUM: None

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE PLANNED RESIDENCE DISTRICT WITH A MAJOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND PRELIMINARY PLAT FOR 130 WILDER AVENUE

Eloise Sahlstrom, Planner, stated that this request is from Hunziker Land Development who owns the land and it is already zoned Planned Residence District (PRD). In 2016, it was approved with a Major Site Development Plan for both sides of Wilder Avenue which included 40 attached single-family homes (townhomes) on the two lots that mirrored one another. Development on 125 Wilder has now been completed or is nearing completion. The property owner is interested in developing the undeveloped lot on 130 Wilder Avenue that would include 15 detached units on small lots, rather than 20 previously approved townhomes. The site totals 3.73 acres and would have an overall net density of 10.1 dwelling units per acre which meets

the Residential Medium-Density standard. This is part of the Sunset Ridge Subdivision and there are single-family homes to the north, open space to the east, Lincoln Way to the south and townhomes to the west. The concept of the PRD is to allow housing options that are not otherwise available with a conventional subdivision. The proposed units are rear-loaded as are the townhomes across the street. The garage is accessed off of a private street. The front façade faces either Wilder Avenue or the common open space. There will be a covered front entry that will have a walkway leading out to the public sidewalk. The homes along Wilder Avenue will have the standard 25 foot front yard, the homes on the east side will have a 10 foot setback to the property line that abuts to the open space with 20 feet to the sidewalk. And there is a 20 foot rear setback from the garage to the private street property line. Each residence includes a two car attached garage. There are four different floor plans with four different colors and roof line options available. The change in the roof lines changes the appearance substantially even though the neighbor next door may have the same floor plan. Allows for differentiation along the street even if all the units have the same floor plan. One option doesn't include a basement but is built on a slab on grade and is the smallest of the units at 1200 square feet with two bedrooms. The other units are three bedrooms with two bedrooms in the lower level.

The private street has a single point of access from Wilder Avenue it aligns with the private street that goes into the townhouse development. Staff requested emergency access onto Lincoln Way that will be Geoblock™ and over seeded with grass. The appearance will be of a grassy area and not a driveway. It isn't expected to be used except by emergency vehicles. Staff believes there should be on-street parking in the development. Each unit will have a two car garage with a 36 foot driveway behind the garage. There is no public or guest parking provided. Staff recommends reducing the setback by two feet on the open space side to add footage to the pavement area on the private street. This would allow for 26 feet of pavement that is typical in the City where we have one-sided on-street parking. This would allow for three guest parking spaces along the private street. The proposed open space does meet the 40% requirement of the PRD. It would add a piece of open land to what has already been part of this subdivision, which makes an even greater common open space to the east.

The PRD encompasses all the zoning requirements. All of the details that would normally be part of a zoning table are established through the Major Site Development Plan that is associated with the PRD.

The Findings regarding the PRD development principals allow for innovation and imaginative approaches to the residential development that wouldn't occur under the underlying zoning regulations. It does replicate the pattern utilized in the townhome development across the street with the units facing Wilder Avenue and being rear-loaded. It is a more efficient, aesthetic and desirable use of the land while meeting the Land Use Policy Plan and the underlying zoning of Medium-Density Residential. This pattern of development is new and is looking to reach a new market that isn't being met at this time within the city. Staff supports this new development option.

This development is compatible with the height of the structures in the adjacent neighborhood which are often one or two story. The minimum yard setback requirements are appropriate as proposed and conditioned in the staff's approval. The development meets the parking requirements for a home, but the staff has concerns about the lack of guest parking.

There is an interconnected system of sidewalks that connect with the other phases of the subdivision. The major open space and the private street will be maintained by the Sunset Ridge Property Owners Association.

The Fire Inspector approved the emergency access made with Geoblock™. There is a ditch along the north end of the property that would convey storm water away from the site and acts as a buffer area against the single-family residential homes that are at a lower density than this development.

Landscaping was planned to help screen driveways and to help buffer to the north. Staff would recommend Alternative 1, with a condition of approval that the site layout and street design be amended to accommodate on-street parking.

Kelly Diekmann, Director of Planning and Housing stated that this product type is being looked at as a lower cost single-family home option compared to a townhome. If it is successful, there may be more versions of this throughout the city. They are trying to produce a single-family home with smaller lots and private streets. The applicant has built these previously in the Des Moines area.

Ruth Hulstrom questioned what the spacing would be between the homes. Dr. Carol Spencer stated that the spacing would be six feet. Ms. Sahlstrom stated that it would be six feet to the property line so a minimum of 12 feet between the homes. Mr. Diekmann continued to say this would be typical for a one story minimum set back. There are no side yard setbacks just a total lot size. Ms. Sahlstrom said the footprints might vary slightly depending on the floor plan but all the setbacks would be met.

Ms. Hulstrom questioned if there were other homes in Ames with similar spacing. Mr. Diekmann stated that Woodhaven in the Stone Brooke area would be the closest lot size. And there is another PRD on the north end of Bloomington Heights on Brickman that would also be similar.

Carlton Basmajian asked for clarifications of the range of square footage options of the floor plans. Ms. Sahlstrom stated that they ranged from 1200-1578 square feet per unit.

Mr. Basmajian asked for clarification for the on-street parking of the difference from 26 to the 24 foot difference on the street parking. Mr. Diekmann stated that 26 feet allows parking only on one side. If it is 24 foot wide road there would be no parking on the street this would just be a fire access lane. The Staff recommendation would allow for three parking spaces on the private road between drives where space allows.

Anuprit Minhas asked if there is an existing sidewalk on the north side of Lincoln Way. Ms. Sahlstrom stated that there is a multi-use trail on the north side of Lincoln Way. The City is looking to close the gap by building on the south side of Lincoln Way to connect from Wilder Avenue over to South Dakota Avenue. The City has a separate Capital Improvement Project (CIP) to connect Wilder to South Dakota. Discussion continued about future development and future CIP for multi-use trails in that area.

Mr. Jon Emery questioned if the private street/alley is where the on-street parking would be allowed. Mr. Diekmann stated that Wilder has no on-street parking and the current plan has no guest parking spaces. Discussion continued about the parking possibilities.

Ms. Sahlstrom stated that the staff's recommendation to reduce the front yard setback to the open space results in no loss of driveway length.

Ms. Hulstrom questioned the distance to the available on-street parking in the neighborhood. Mr. Diekmann stated that Durant Street is the next closest street with parking. Discussion continued about sidewalk connectivity from Durant Street and Lincoln Way.

Mr. Emery questioned the direction of the front façades. It was explained that the front façades would face either Wilder or the open space and the garages are in the rear accessed from the private street.

Applicant, Justin Dodge, with Hunziker Land Development stated his appreciation for the time and effort put in by Mr. Diekmann and Ms. Sahlstrom. He stated that it is outside the box even for them. As developers they hear that homes are just too expensive and all look alike. They are trying to address these issues that are being presented to them. This development is a creative solution. They tried the townhomes in 2016. Currently working on the last four-plex now but they haven't sold as quickly as hoped. The developers are shifting gears to this type of home for the market. Hunziker will be developing the 15 lots and then selling to Destiny Homes. Destiny Homes has had a lot of success in the Des Moines area with this smart series home. Destiny Homes believes that the homes can be priced at about \$220,000 depending on the lot price. Mr. Dodge explained that with a PRD there is always trade-offs. The PRD allows for smaller lot sizes that aren't allowed in the normal zoning code. Thus there will be more units on a smaller footprint plus narrower streets. On the other side of the PRD there needs to be 40% reserved for open space. This project is combining that with an existing recreational area within the subdivision. The street width was one of the trade-offs, if the Commission feels the additional parking is needed the cost will be reflected in the price. The developer feels that there was plenty of parking accommodated in the plan. They are trying to provide new options for the market place.

Ms. Hulstrom questioned the location of the mechanical equipment. Mr. Dodge stated that some of the lots he has seen in other developments are less than what they proposed for this site. What is proposed is the standard for single-family setbacks.

Mr. Basmajian questioned how the mix of the styles they were planning to build would work. Mr. Dodge stated that he has appreciated the staff's flexibility, usually with PRD the builder has to have all the floor plans and elevations for each lot. The staff has been flexible with the allowance of the styles that are available. Destiny has a process developed. They have to build three at a time to make the construction process work. Discussion continued as to whether they would be spec homes or buyers. It was explained that it would be a combination. Ms. Sahlstrom stated that the same floor plan had three elevation options and the builder would offer this diversity.

Mr. Converse thanked Mr. Dodge and asked for Commission discussion.

Dr. Spencer stated that this is a niche in the market that hasn't been addressed in the city. This would be attractive to someone looking for a new home and was willing to forego a large yard. She is supportive of the project and very attractive in the market with less risk because of the scale of the project.

Mr. Emery stated that he didn't see the need for the private street parking. Ms. Sahlstrom stated if they add the extra pavement on the street some of the drives would be longer on the east side.

Ms. Minhas appreciates the design with private street garages. But understands that Wilder doesn't allow on-street parking but given the possible demographic purchasing the properties there is a need for more parking for guests. Mr. Diekmann stated the staff has given flexibility for the location of the homes on the lot to accommodate the driveway depths.

MOTION: (Minhas/Spencer) to accept Alternative #1, which states: that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommends that the City Council Approve the following requests for the property at 130 Wilder Avenue:

- A. Amend the Planned Residence District (F-PRD) with a base zone of Residential Medium Density (RM) to include 15 detached single-family housing units; and
- B. Approve the Major Site Development Plan, subject to approval of a preliminary and final plat for creation of the proposed residential lots as depicted on the site plan.
 - i. Amend the site layout and street design to accommodate on street parking.

MOTION PASSED: (5 - 1), Nay: Basmajian

Mr. Diekmann stated that this item will move forward to City Council next week for review of the Commission's recommendation.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE PRELIMINARY PLAT FOR 130 WILDER AVENUE

Ms. Sahlstrom stated that this item is for the Preliminary Plat known as Sunset Ridge Subdivision 9th Addition.

They have met the public improvements required for landscaping, open spaces, sidewalk connectivity, infrastructure and storm water management. In both cases it has been noticed to the property owners within 200' and received two inquiries. No objections were received.

Mr. Diekmann stated that this is a companion item because of the PRD that has an allowance of the private street. The Plat is making a subdivision code modification to approve the private street through this process.

MOTION: (Spencer/Hulstrom) to accept Alternative #1, which states: that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommends that the City Council approve the preliminary plat for Sunset Ridge Subdivision 9th Addition, subject to conformance to the design requirements of the PRD Amendment Major Site Development Plan.

MOTION PASSED: (6 - 0)

PUBLIC HEARING FOR AMENDMENT TO ADAPTIVE REUSE PLAN FOR 2801 GRAND AVENUE

Mr. Diekmann stated that an Adaptive Reuse Plan is a tool that was created for unique conditions. The site is treated similar to a Planned Unit Development (PUD). This gives flexibility to the site recognizing the existing conditions where it would be difficult to meet all code requirements. The Mall has long history of re-development options. The Adaptive Reuse Plan is related to the economic importance of the site. This building is a small building and does not fundamentally change the plan but is an amendment to the approved plan. The entire site is under one permit with multiple owners. Collective parking and access was agreed to in the

original approval. This project is focusing only on the NE corner of the site. When the 2012 version was approved there was approval for a restaurant pad in this location, this is a reconfiguration of what was previously authorized.

Julie Gould, Planner, this is located at the NE corner of the mall at 30th Street and Grand Avenue. The Applicant proposes for three tenants in a 7,745 square foot building with the parking being re-configured. Two drive throughs, one for pick-up only, the other a true drive through with a menu board, as well as a patio on the east side of building. There would be changes to parking configuration, how the site circulates and additional landscaping. The staff report stated that there is concern regarding the stacking of cars and how the circulation would work. Staff suggested one way traffic on the east side. Since the staff report was written the applicant has sent a new site plan to retain two way traffic by reducing the patio area to have a twelve foot drive through lane, a painted median and the required 24' drive aisle that allows for two way traffic access and the 18' parking depth.

The Adaptive Reuse Plan in 2012 assigned four stalls per 1000 square feet parking ratio across the site. There is a long term plan to reconfigure the parking area. When the building is constructed the site will go from 427 to 365 parking stalls. When the re-stripping is done there would be a total of 385 parking stalls. It does reduce the parking ratio and the overall parking.

The front yard has ornamental trees and staff recommends three over story trees. There will be additional parking islands added and so there could be more parking lot trees. Along with the plan there is improvement to the parking lot with a sidewalk from Grand Avenue to the main entrance of the Mall.

Staff recommends Alternative 1 with the five conditions of approval.

Mr. Basmajian asked for clarification on the landscaping plan. He clarified that the staff was okay with the adjustment to landscape plan even though they don't meet the current standards except for adding the additional over story trees. Mr. Diekmann stated that the over story trees would be placed where appropriate on 30th Street and Grand Avenue. It would be similar to what was done from Walgreen's to Fazoli's. There is a mix of old and new landscaping standards. Ms. Gould stated that the front yard area doesn't meet code because they are not changing that area. So they are not changing the curb in that area so the grass area stays the same.

Mr. Diekmann stated the significant difference is the parking lot trees. Under current code there would be more but there is no expectation of adding dozens of trees. Conversation continued about what would happen in the future to other areas of the mall regarding landscaping expectations. If it wasn't adaptive reuse then yes it would have to be brought up to code. The parking spaces need to be maintained so the landscaping would be considered based upon maintaining the number of parking spaces.

Mr. Basmajian questioned the total reduction of parking spaces. Mr. Diekmann stated that 1707 parking spaces is the total minus Walgreens because those spaces weren't not included in 2012. The ratio will be 3.83 spaces per 1000. It is less than a 5% reduction.

Applicant, Zach Ludwig with Haverkamp Properties, thanked the Commission for considering their proposal. Currently parking is not an issue at the Mall. The owners would be happy if that was the case.

Ms. Hulstrom shared concern about the current patio location next to cars with exhaust. Also, questioned the width of patio. Mr. Ludwig stated they were concerned with one-way traffic, coming from the west. Those cars would hit a dead end.

Mr. Basmajian questioned the number tenants. Mr. Ludwig stated there were currently no tenants, but could be two. They wanted the option to have up to three tenants. One tenant is for pick up only. Developer didn't want to restrict how the tenant could use the space.

Commission members discussed the location of the patio to the cars. Mr. Basmajian stated that the the market would dictate whether it was a success. Mr. Diekmann stated that the patio would be an asset and that 15 feet should be adequate space with the drive-through.

Discussion ensued about different designs, parking spaces and location of building on the site for aesthetics and the orientation of the drive-throughs. Commission members discussed having the building pushed further in the corner so that there is separation from the cars and patio. Desire was to have the patio orientated to the street without any cars visible from the street. There was discussion about moving the building would make the drive-throughs more difficult and the space less leasable. Discussion continued about how the drive through would work on that location.

Mr. Diekmann stated that with Adaptive Reuse the parking can be set by the Plan. It does not have to meet code. The site renderings have two fronts to the building one facing Grand Avenue and the other would face JC Penney's. He stated the Commission is tasked to make a recommendation whether the proposal is approvable. The Commission can recommend conditions and other attributes to the site, but are not asked to generate a new site plan. You can ask them to explore something or be specific about a change to the project. That would be the Commission's role on the project.

Mr. Ludwig, stated he can't speak for the owner but a lot of energy has been put into the site plan. There was a lot of hard work put in to make elevations attractive on all four sides. They would not like to start over on the site. They would like a recommendation for a one way or two way drive way around the building. The developer would like to begin this fall.

Mr. Basmajian and Ms. Hulstrom stated that they would like more time to think about the proposal since it is a prominent area in the north part of town. Dr. Spencer stated that she felt the landscaping would soften the look and would enhance the site. She likes the elevations with the appropriate landscaping. Mr. Basmajian said this could set the tone for the future.

Mr. Diekmann, explained that the Commission could ask for the developer to make a different plan but they are not obligated to change their plan and the Commission would have to consider what was before them.

Ms. Minhas, asked if Mr. Ludwig could take their suggestions back to the owners and he was agreeable. Mr. Ludwig, asked if it was the rendering. Mr. Diekmann stated that what he was hearing the Commission say was that they would like the orientation of the building to the site changed and Ms. Minhas suggested that they also consider the 30th Street façade.

MOTION: (Minhas/Basmajian) to accept Alternative #4, which states: that the Planning and Zoning defer action on the request and refer back to City staff and the applicant for additional information as discussed in the Commission meeting and listed as:

1. Looking at the site to explore options to pull the building closer to 30th Street and Grand Avenue.
2. To re-locate the drive-through to the west side of the proposed development and activate the intersection on the north and east side by way of increasing and exploring enhanced landscaping and site lay-out options.
3. Explore options to wrap around the architectural character from Grand Avenue to the north along the 30th Street façade.

MOTION PASSED: (4 - 2), Nay: Converse, Spencer

MOTION: (Hulstrom/Minhas) to continue the Public Hearing for the Amendment to the Adaptive Reuse Plan for 2801 Grand Avenue to August 7, 2019

MOTION PASSED: (6 – 0)

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Mr. Emery questioned what was going on with the Kmart building. Mr. Diekmann stated that the Commission approved the plan last fall.


STAFF COMMENTS:


Mr. Diekmann, Plan 2040 workshop last night, July 16, 2019 with the first draft of scenario plan. The Commission will discuss this in August. Public input will begin at the end of July through August.

RDG will be providing a drop-in time for the public towards the end of August.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

MOTION: Mr. Converse adjourned the meeting at 8:55 PM.


Matt Converse, Chairperson
Planning & Zoning Commission


Natalie Rekemeyer, Recording Secretary
Department of Planning & Housing