Continued hearing old to Oct. 28 to Move 39 (15) DATE 30/14/08

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT:

REVISED MAJOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN/PRELIMINARY PLAT

FOR SOMERSET SUBDIVISION

BACKGROUND:

The applicant is requesting approval of multiple revisions to the approved Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat for Somerset Subdivision (See attached Location Map). The property involved is owned by Erben Hunziker and Margaret Hunziker Development LLC, D&R Furman LLC, and R. Friedrich and Sons, Inc. The following revisions are proposed:

- 1. Request to Reduce the Number of Row Houses to be Constructed in Somerset and to Allow the Construction of Additional Village Houses. Change the land use planned for twelve lots located along the south side of Bristol Drive, between the existing brick row houses and the alley west of Kent Avenue (Lots 52 through 63 in Somerset Subdivision Second Addition) from "Row Houses" to "Village Houses". "Row Houses" are single-family attached dwellings and "Village Houses" are single-family detached dwellings. This revision would also reduce the number of lots from twelve to five.
- 2. Request to Change the Dimensions and Overall Size of Lots in Phase 22 of Somerset Subdivision. Change the dimensions and overall size of lots in "Phase 22", located in the northwest corner of Somerset Subdivision. The approved and proposed plats include 32 lots for development with single-family detached dwellings (Country Houses), and one outlot (Outlot UU-The Somerset Lawn) for use as a small neighborhood park. The location of lots has been adjusted to provide larger lots along Clayton Drive and around Piccadilly Square.
- 3. Request to Add Two Van-Accessible Parking Spaces and Change a Van-Accessible Space to a Standard Accessible Parking Space. Add two van-accessible parking spaces in the parking lot adjacent to the building at 2707 Stange Road and change the van-accessible parking space near the building at 2713 Stange Road from a van-accessible parking space with an 8-foot access aisle to an accessible space with the standard access aisle width of 5 feet.
- 4. Request to Change the Planned Use of Lots 21, 22, 29, and 39 in Somerset Seventh Addition. Change the planned use of Lots 21, 22, 29 and 39 in Somerset Subdivision Seventh Addition between Bradford Drive and Eaton Avenue from lots planned for Townhomes to lots that will be open space landscaped lots and will be labeled as "outlots."

The City's Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP) Map designates the land use of the subject area as "Village/Suburban Residential." This LUPP Map designation is consistent with the proposed revisions requested for the Somerset Major Site Development Plan and Preliminary Plat.

The zoning of the subject property is: "F-VR" (Village Residential Floating Zone). The zoning designation is consistent with the proposed revisions, except for the "Residential Land Use Allocation" for Row Houses, described in more detail in this report.

The following table identifies the existing land use, existing zoning, and LUPP designation of the properties surrounding the Somerset development.

Area	LUPP Designation	Zoning Designation	Land Use
North	Village/Suburban Res.	Residential Low Density (RL) &	Single Family
		Agricultural (A)	Detached Homes &
			Agricultural Crop Land
South	Low-Density Residential,	Government/Airport (S-GA),	ISU Student Housing,
	High-Density Res., &	Planned Residence Dist. (F-PRD) &	Single Family Attached
ļ	University/Affiliated	Residential Low Density (RL)	& S.F. Detached Homes
East	Low-Density Residential	Residential Low Density (RL) &	Single Family Detached
		Government/Airport (S-GA)	Homes & Vacant Ames
			School District Property
West	Low-Density Residential	Residential Low Density (RL)	Single Family Detached
ļ			Homes & Electric
			Substation

Request to Reduce the Number of Row Houses to be Constructed in Somerset and to Allow the Construction of Additional Village Houses. The applicant requests that the City Council reduce the number of row houses required by the Major Site Development Plan for Somerset from 21 to 9. This would be a reduction of 12 row house units and a reduction in land area designated for row houses from 1.56 acres to 0.70 acres.

Table 29.1201(6) "Village Residential Floating Zone Supplemental Development Standards" addresses the allocation of residential land use types in "village" developments. Village residential projects are required to contain a minimum of five (5) residential land use types selected from the residential use types listed in Table 29.1201(5)"Village Residential Floating Zone Uses." "Row Houses" is one of the residential land use types. Each residential land use type is to contain a sufficient number of dwelling units to represent not less than 5% of all dwelling units in the village residential project. The percentage of all types of dwelling units represented by "Row Houses" would be reduced from 2 percent to 1 percent.

This is a "nonconforming" situation in that the percentage of residential units represented by "Row Houses" on the approved Major Site Development Plan (2%) does not meet the minimum percentage (5%) required by the <u>Municipal Code</u>, Table 29.1201(5). The proposal by the applicant increases the nonconformity by reducing the percentage of residential units represented by "Row Houses" from 2% to 1%.

To approve a change to the Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat for Somerset and allow fewer row houses will require that the City Council approve a text amendment to Table 29.1201(5) of the <u>Municipal Code</u> that would bring the required percentage of row houses into conformance.

The applicant requests that the City Council increase the number village houses required by the Major Site Development Plan for Somerset from 93 to 98. This would be an increase of 5 units and an increase in land area designated for village houses from 18.24 acres to 19.04 acres. The percentage of all village residential units represented by village houses in the Somerset development would increase from 10% to 11%. This meets the minimum percentage (5%) of each residential land use type required by Table 29.1201(5) of the Municipal Code.

The table below compares the development standards for "Row Houses," which is the land use that has been approved for this area of Somerset and for "Village Houses," which is the land use proposed by the applicant.

	Row Houses	Village Houses
	(Single Family Attached)	(Single Family Detached)
Lot Width	24 to 36 feet	48 to 72 feet
Building Placement	Mandatory build-to-line	Mandatory build-to-line of
	between 0 and 15 feet	15 feet
	(constant along street face)	
Side Yard Setback	0 feet, except in a corner condition	5 feet for interior side lot line 15 feet to the side lot line in a corner condition
Porches, Stoops, Balconies	Covered porch or stoop is required. Open porches, stoops or balconies may encroach between build-to-line and property line. Porches 6 to 8 feet deep. Balconies 3 feet deep.	Open porches, stoops or balconies are not required, but if constructed must encroach between build-to-line and property line. Porches 6 to 8 feet deep.
Building Height	Minimum of 2 stories and maximum of 3 stories.	2 stories for lots 60-72 feet wide. 1-½ stories for lots 48-60 feet wide.
Parking Requirements	2 spaces required. Shall be located behind the row house.	2 spaces in an attached or detached garage. Access from the alley required for lots with widths smaller than 60 feet.

Section 29.1201(2) of the <u>Municipal Code</u> addresses "Village Development Principles." Property developed according to the requirements of the Village Residential district shall create neighborhoods or villages with a development pattern that adheres to a list of development principles. One of those development principles [Section 29.1201(2)(g)] requires "visually compatible buildings and other improvements, as determined by their arrangement, bulk, form, character and landscaping."

An analysis of the "visual compatibility" of the existing "Row House" residential type and the proposed "Village House" residential type with the existing surrounding development produces the following findings and conclusions:

- Development adjacent to the west of the subject property is a row house structure that includes 9 units and garages for each accessed from the alley behind the structure. The row house structure is two stories in height, brick construction and has open stoops with recessed front entries.
 - Row houses planned for the subject property would be visually compatible with the existing row house structure in terms of building height, setback, building mass, exterior building materials, landscaping, and alley access.
 - Village houses proposed for the subject property would be compatible in terms of front yard setback, access to the lots from the alley, building materials and landscaping. Visually the houses would not be as compatible in terms of building height and building mass. If the quality, detail and design of homes constructed on the proposed lots is consistent with the Village Houses across the alley fronting on Camden, this would make the Village Houses much more compatible with the Row Houses that have been constructed to the west of the subject property.
- 2. Development across Bristol Drive consists of village apartments and an associated garage structure. One village apartment structure includes 8 units. Another includes 16 units. Both structures are two stories, siding with brick accents, and a combination of covered porches and open stoops. The garage is a 4-stall one-story structure.
 - Row houses would be visually compatible with the village apartments in terms of apartment building height, building mass, landscaping, and exterior building materials.
 - Village houses would be compatible with the village apartments in terms of front yard setback, access to the lots from the rear of the lot, landscaping, and exterior building materials. Visually the houses would not be as compatible in terms of building height and building mass.
- 3. Development across the alley to the east consists of village houses. These houses have a building height of one story and have access to attached garages from the alley.
 - Row houses are not visually compatible in terms of building height, building mass, and side yard setback for the interior lots. They would be compatible in terms of access to the lots from the alley.

- Village houses constructed on the subject property would be very compatible with the existing village houses to the east, particularly if at the garages for all houses were accessed from the alley.
- 4. Development across the alley to the south consists of village houses. These houses have a building height of one story and have access to attached garages from the alley.
 - Row houses are not visually compatible in terms of building height and side yard setback for the interior lots. They would be compatible for access in terms of access to the lots from the alley.
 - Village houses constructed on the subject property would be very compatible with
 the existing village houses to the east, particularly if the garages for all houses
 were accessed from the alley and the quality, detail and design of the houses on
 the proposed lots was consistent with the houses across the alley fronting on
 Camden Drive.

Request to Change the Dimensions and Overall Size of Lots in Phase 22 of Somerset Subdivision. The applicant requests that the City Council approve changes in the dimensions and overall size of lots in Phase 22. The purpose of these changes is to provide larger lots along Clayton Drive and around Piccadilly Square. A high-pressure gas main easement extends diagonally through this development area necessitating that the lot layout takes this 50-foot easement into account. The proposed lot layout will result in much larger lots surrounding Piccadilly Square in the vicinity of the gas main easement. The developer is in the process of preparing a revised Preliminary Plat that shows a minimum lot width of 72 feet to comply with the zoning requirements for Country Houses.

Request to Add Two Van-Accessible Parking Spaces and Change a Van-Accessible Space to a Standard Accessible Parking Space. The applicant requests that the City Council approve changes that have been made in the Town Center commercial portion of the Somerset development. Two van-accessible parking spaces have been added to the parking lot behind the commercial building at 2707 Stange, and one van-accessible space at 2713 Stange has been altered to provide a 5-foot access aisle for standard size cars, instead of an 8-foot access aisle, which accommodates vans. This is a change to the parking lot design that occurred earlier this year at the time concrete was being poured for the parking lot and the developer desired to make this change as the parking surface and walkway ramps were being constructed. The developer chose to proceed with the changes, without approval of an amendment to the Major Site Development Plan, with the understanding that a revised site plan would be submitted for approval by the City Council at a later date, and that the developer was proceeding at his own risk in the event the site plan changes for the parking lot were not approved.

Request to Change the Planned Use of Lots 21, 22, 29, and 39 in Somerset Seventh Addition. The applicant requests that the City Council approve a change in the land use planned for the lots at 2422 Bradford Drive (Lot 21), 2506 Bradford Drive (Lot 29), 2421 Eaton Avenue (Lot 22), and 2503 Eaton Avenue (Lot 39). The applicant wishes to use these lots, which are planned for the construction of townhome units, as a landscaped

open area for the residents of the surrounding townhomes. This would be a decrease of 4 townhome units from 112 units to 108 total units, and a decrease in land area occupied by townhomes from 20.10 acres to 19.80 acres. The percentage of all residential units represented by townhomes in the Somerset development would remain at 12 percent.

Table 29.1201(6) of the <u>Municipal Code</u> provides Supplemental Development Standards for the Village Residential Floating Zone and addresses "Land Use Density". According to these standards, residential land use shall be developed with an average net density of 8 dwelling units per acre for residential land use, where all residential land use types are computed in the average. Approval of the changes in the number of dwelling units would maintain an average density of dwelling units greater than 9 dwelling units per acre.

<u>Facts and Conclusions</u>. Based upon an analysis of the applicant's request and laws pertinent to the proposed changes in the Somerset development, the staff finds and concludes as follows:

- 1. The decrease in the number of "Row House" dwelling units proposed by the applicant does not meet the minimum requirement in Table 29.1201(5) of the Municipal Code. This requirement specifies each residential land use type is to contain a sufficient number of dwelling units to represent not less than 5% of all dwelling units in the village residential project. In the case of the Somerset village development, the proposal for eliminating "Row House" units would decrease the percentage of row houses from 2% to 1%. To allow fewer row houses in Somerset will require that the City Council approve a text amendment to Table 29.1201(5) of the Municipal Code, that would bring the percentage of row houses into conformance.
- 2. The percentage of all village residential units represented by "Village Houses" in the Somerset development would increase from 10% to 11%. This meets the minimum percentage (5%) of each residential land use type required by Table 29.1201(5) of the <u>Municipal Code</u>.
- 3. The visual compatibility of future Village Houses along Bristol Drive with the surrounding single-family homes is much greater if the quality, detail and design of the Village Houses is consistent with the Village Houses that have been constructed along the north side of Camden Drive.
- 4. The standards set forth for "accessible parking spaces in Section 29.406(15) of the Municipal Code are met by the two proposed accessible parking spaces and access aisle, as well as by the change to an access aisle of 5 feet for the previously approved accessible parking space.
- 5. The proposal to change the land use planned for Lots 21, 22, 29 and 39 from "Townhome" development to open space and landscaping is consistent with the Village Residential District regulations in Section 29.1201 of the Municipal Code.
- 6. All lots are designed to provide adequate buildable area within the minimum required building setbacks.

- 7. Each lot within the proposed subdivision will be served by existing public utility mains in the street right-of-way, or in public utility easements.
- 8. The minimum required density of residential dwelling units in a Village Residential development, as required by Table 29.1201(6) of the <u>Municipal Code</u> is met by the proposed revisions to the Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat for Somerset.
- 9. The total of nine (9) "Row Houses" shown on the revised plan, which results from the reduction in the number of "Row Houses" from twenty-one (21) shown on the approved plan for Somerset, does not meet the minimum requirement of 5% as the percentage of all dwelling units in the village residential project, as required by Table 29.1201(6) of the <u>Municipal Code</u>.

Recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission. At its meeting of October 1, 2008, with a vote of 6-0, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended the following actions to the City Council, based upon staff's findings and conclusions:

- Approval of revisions to the approved Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat
 to change the future use of vacant Lots 21, 22, 29 and 39 in Somerset Subdivision
 Seventh Addition from the plan to construct townhomes to using the lots for open
 space and landscaping.
- Approval of revisions to the approved Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat
 to increase the number and change the location of accessible parking spaces in the
 parking lot adjacent to 2707 and 2713 Stange Road.
- Approval of revisions to the approved Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat
 to change the dimensions and overall size of lots planned in Phase 22 of the
 Somerset development, with the condition that the applicant modify the widths of
 Lots 23, 24, 25, 28, and 29 to meet the minimum lot width requirement of 72 feet for
 "Country House" lots, prior to consideration by the City Council.
- Approval of revisions to the approved Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat to reduce the number of "Row Houses" from twenty-one (21) to nine (9), subject to a zoning text amendment to change the residential land use allocation for row houses in the Village Residential Floating Zone [Table 29.1201(6)]. If the proposed zoning text amendment is not approved by the City Council, the recommendation would be to deny the applicant's request to reduce the number of "Row Houses." This approval is also conditional upon the construction of Village Houses on the subject property which are consistent with the quality, detail and design of the existing Village Houses located on the north side of Camden Drive, and subject to the Village Houses having vehicular access to garages only from the alley, and not from Bristol Drive.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1. The City Council can conduct the public hearing on the proposed revisions to the Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat for Somerset Subdivision, continue the public hearing to the City Council meeting to be held on October 28, 2008, and table action on the proposed revisions until the November 6, 2008 City Council meeting. This will coincide with the third reading of the proposed zoning text amendment to change the residential land use allocation for Row Houses in the Village Residential Floating Zone.
- 2. The City Council can conduct the public hearing on the proposed revisions to the Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat for Somerset Subdivision and deny approval of one or more of the proposed revisions.
- 3. Action on this request can be postponed and referred back to City staff and/or the applicant for additional information, provided that the applicant provide a written waiver of their rights to have their application processed within 30 days as specified in Ames Municipal Code Section 23.302(4).

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Two items are needed prior to City Council action on the proposed revisions to the Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat. One item is a revision to the proposed width of lots in Phase 22 of Somerset Subdivision. The developer is in the process of preparing a revised Preliminary Plat that shows a minimum lot width of 72 feet to comply with the zoning requirements for Country Houses and to comply with the Planning and Zoning Commission condition for approval. The second item needed prior to approval of the proposed revisions is a zoning text amendment to change the residential land use allocation for Row Houses in the Village Residential Floating Zone.

Notice of a public hearing to be held on October 14 regarding the revisions proposed to the Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat has been published and letters have been sent to all affected property owners, as well as those who own property within 200 feet. Therefore, it would be appropriate for the City Council to conduct the public hearing on October 14. To provide the public with an opportunity for input on the revised Preliminary Plat, it would be appropriate for the City Council to continue the public hearing to the meeting on October 28. The revised Preliminary Plat showing the revisions to lot widths and lot sizes will be available for the October 28 meeting.

The zoning text amendment changing the residential land use allocation for Row Houses requires a public hearing and three readings. The public hearing and first reading will occur at the City Council meeting on October 14. The second reading is scheduled for the meeting on October 28, and the third meeting would be on November 6. At the November 6 meeting, following action on the zoning text amendment, the City Council will be asked to take action to approve or deny the proposed revisions to the Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat.

It is therefore recommended that the City Council conduct the public hearing on the proposed revisions to the Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat for Somerset Subdivision continue the public hearing to the City Council meeting to be held on October 28, 2008, and table action on the proposed revisions until the November 6, 2008 City Council meeting. This will coincide with the third reading of the proposed zoning text amendment to change the residential land use allocation for Row Houses in the Village Residential Floating Zone.

Attachment A

Applicable Laws:

The laws applicable to this case file are as follows:

<u>Code of Iowa</u> Chapter 354, Section 8 requires that the governing body shall determine whether the subdivision conforms to its Land Use Policy Plan.

Ames <u>Municipal Code</u> Chapter 23, Subdivisions, Division I, outlines the general provisions for subdivisions within the city limits and within two miles of the city limits of Ames.

Ames Municipal Code Section 23.302(3):

- (3) Planning and Zoning Commission Review:
 - (a) The Planning and Zoning Commission shall examine the Preliminary Plat, any comments, recommendations or reports assembled or made by the Department of Planning and Housing, and such other information as it deems necessary or desirable to consider.
 - (b) Based upon such examination, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall ascertain whether the Preliminary Plat conforms to relevant and applicable design and improvement standards in these Regulations, to other City ordinances and standards, to the City's Land Use Policy Plan, and to the City's other duly adopted Plans.

Ames Municipal Code Section 23.302(4):

(4) Planning and Zoning Commission Recommendation: Following such examination and within 30 days of the regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission at which a complete Application is first formally received for consideration, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall forward a report including its recommendation to the City Council. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall set forth its reasons for any recommendation to disapprove or to modify any Preliminary Plat in its report to the City Council and shall provide a written copy of such reasons to the developer.

Ames Municipal Code Section 23.302(5):

(5) City Council Review of Preliminary Plat: All proposed subdivision plats shall be submitted to the City Council for review and approval in accordance with these Regulations. The City Council shall examine the Preliminary Plat, any comments, recommendations or reports examined or made by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and such other information as it deems necessary and reasonable to consider.

Ames Municipal Code Section 23.302(6):

- (6) City Council Action on Preliminary Plat:
 - (a) Based upon such examination, the City Council shall determine whether the Preliminary Plat conforms to relevant and applicable design and improvement standards in these Regulations, to other City ordinances and standards, to the City's Land Use Policy Plan and to the City's other duly adopted plans. In particular, the City Council shall determine whether the subdivision conforms to minimum levels of service standards set forth in the Land Use Policy Plan for public infrastructure and shall give due consideration to the possible burden of the proposed subdivision on public improvements in determining whether to require the installation of additional public improvements as a condition for approval.
 - (b) Following such examination and within 30 days of the referral of the Preliminary Plat and report of recommendations to the City Council by the Planning and Zoning Commission, the City Council shall approve, approve subject to conditions, or disapprove the Preliminary Plat. The City Council shall set forth its reasons for disapproving any Preliminary Plat or for conditioning its approval of any Preliminary Plat in its official records and shall provide a written copy of such reasons to the developer.

Ames <u>Municipal Code</u> Chapter 23, Subdivisions, Division III, provides the procedures for the subdivision of property; specifically Section 23.302 discusses Major Subdivisions.

Ames <u>Municipal Code</u> Chapter 23, Subdivisions, Division IV, identifies design and improvement standards for subdivisions.

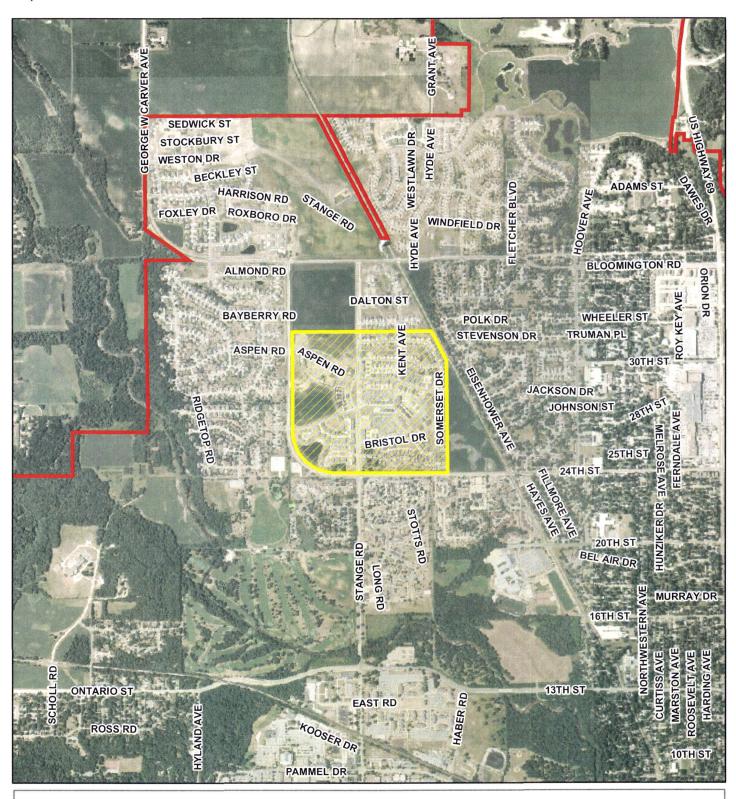
Ames <u>Municipal Code</u> Chapter 23, Subdivisions, Section 23.402, requires that trees be planted within the right-of-way of all streets in subdivisions zoned residentially, in accordance with the requirements of this Section.

Ames <u>Municipal Code</u> Chapter 29, Zoning, Section 29.1201, includes standards for the Village Residential District (F-VR).

Ames <u>Municipal Code</u> Chapter 29, Zoning, Table 29.1201(6), includes Village Residential Floating Zone Supplemental Development Standards.

Ames <u>Municipal Code</u> Chapter 29, Zoning, Section 29.1201(2), includes Village Residential Development Principles.

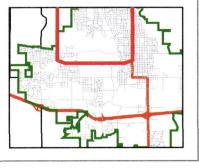
Ames <u>Municipal Code</u> Chapter 29, Zoning, Table 29.1201(7)-1, includes Village Residential Floating Zone Urban Regulations for Country Houses.



Location Map Somerset Neighborhood



Data Source: 2007 NAIP (National Agricultural Imagery Program)



1,300

2,600

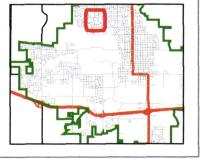
5,200 Feet



Summer 2007 Aerial Photo Somerset Neighborhood



Data Source: 2007 NAIP (National Agricultural Imagery Program)



350

700

1,400 Feet



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & HOUSING

515 Clark Avenue, P.O. Box 811, Ames, IA 50010 Phone: 515-239-5400 ◆ Fax: 515-239-5404 randerson@city.ames.ia.us

September 9, 2008

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to inform you that on *Wednesday, September 17, 2008*, the City of Ames Planning and Zoning Commission will consider the request of Erben Hunziker and Margaret Hunziker Development LLC, D&R Furman LLC, and R. Friedrich and Sons, Inc. for a revised Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat for Somerset Subdivision to approve the following changes:

- 1. Change the type of housing planned for the lots along the south side of Bristol Drive, between the existing brick attached single-family dwellings (Row Houses) and the alley west of Kent Avenue from Row Houses to detached single-family dwellings (Village Houses). See "#1 and #2" on the attached graphics of the "Approved Somerset Plan" and the "Proposed Somerset Plan."
- 2. Reduce the number of lots for the area of Somerset, described in #1 above, from 12 to 5. See "#1 and #2" on the attached graphics.
- 3. Change the dimensions of lots proposed in Phase 22 of Somerset Subdivision. See "#3" on the attached graphics.
- 4. Add a van-accessible parking space in the parking lot adjacent to the building at 2707 Stange Road. See "#4" on the attached graphics.
- 5. Change Lots 21, 22, 29 and 39 in Somerset Subdivision Seventh Addition between Bradford Drive and Eaton Avenue from lots planned for Townhomes to lots that will be open space landscaped lots. See "#5" on the attached graphics.

Larger scale copies of the approved and the proposed Major Site Development Plan/Preliminary Plat are available for your review at the Department of Planning and Housing, City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue.

Since you are the owner of property within 200 feet of the proposed development, you are invited to attend the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on *Wednesday, September 17, 2008, at 7:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers* located on the second floor of the Ames City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue. If you plan to attend, please enter the building through the main building entrance. As it is difficult to contact all interested persons, we respectfully ask you to inform others in your area.

If you have any questions or comments prior to the meeting or if you cannot attend the meeting and wish to make your opinion known, please call the Department of Planning and Housing at 239-5400.

Sincerely,

Ray D. Anderson

Planner

RDA\clh Enclosure



"Knuth, Mark" <Mark.Knuth@ARS.USDA.G OV> 09/26/2008 12:04 PM

To <randerson@city.ames.ia.us>

CC

bcc

Subject Somerset Home Owners desire Rowhouses vs. Village

Houses.

Hello Ray,

As the Planning and Zoning Commission requested, here is the response that I have received from the members of the Somerset Home Owners Association regarding Zoning Ordinance Amendments.

The response to the question of keeping the Row house planning or amend the planning for the construction of Village Houses was unanimous. Seven Association Board Members agree that the building of Village Houses in place of the Row house design would be acceptable, however, feel very strong about the need to address the snow removal problems which have become very apparent. The problem with small and large vehicle traffic through the alley, damage that has and continues to occur as vehicles leave the hard surface areas, and the issue of a dedicated place to locate plowed snow.

The alley problems are an issue that we feel the City of Ames and the Developers would want to address no matter which housing design is the final decision. Actual use of the alley has indicated a pattern of use by small and large vehicles. Snow removal becomes a significant problem which we have easily dealt with by using a small portion of the far east lot as a safe deposit point for the pushed snow.

The Somerset Homeowners Association Board of Directors are in favor of building Village Homes, as long as appropriate codes and consistent subdivision design criteria are met.

We look forward to the success of the Developers and working with them in solving any alley issues/concerns, along with the enjoyment of living in Somerset.

Sincerely, Mark Knuth Somerset Homeowners Association Rep.

