

COMMISSION ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT: MAJOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR RINGGENBERG PARK
SUBDIVISION**

BACKGROUND:

On July 12, 2005 the City Council approved zoning for property located at the southwest corner of Cedar Lane and Oakwood Road as FS-RM (Suburban Residential Medium Density). On June 11, 2013 the City Council approved a Master Plan for that property that provided for 144 multi-family dwelling units in 12 buildings. Apartment buildings within the FS-RM zoning district require approval a major site development plan prior to building construction. **At this time a Major Site Development Plan has been submitted for approval to allow the construction of five apartment buildings in the western portion of the site.**

A proposed amended Master Plan has also been submitted for approval at this time. A separate Commission Action Form addresses that application. All of the proposed changes to the Master Plan are within the eastern portion of the site. The western portion of the site is unchanged from the current approved Master Plan. (See Location Map, current approved Master Plan and Proposed Master Plan attached to the Commission Action Form on the Proposed Master Plan) This proposed Major Site Development Plan should be reviewed based on the current approved Master Plan. If approved, the proposed apartments can be constructed regardless of the outcome of the application to amend the Master Plan. The remaining master planned uses within the site will be subject to a separate approval process.

Project Description

The subject property is currently one platted lot, Lot 79 Ringgenberg Park Subdivision. City zoning code allows multiple apartment buildings to be constructed on a single lot. The zoning code also requires the apartment buildings to meet all area and setback requirements as if each structure were on its own individual lot (*Ames Municipal Code* Section 29.401(5)(b)). The Major Site Development Plan demonstrates compliance with that standard by showing future lot lines. The developer is also in the process of subdividing the property into separate lots and a Preliminary Plat for the entire site is also presented for approval. A separate Commission Action Form addresses that application. However, if the Major site Development Plan is approved, the proposed apartments can be constructed independently of the process to divide the subject property.

Landscape buffers around the site perimeter have been an important element of the Master Plan. The Major Site Development Plan includes all of the landscape buffers on this north portion of Ringgenberg Park that the Master Plan requires, as these are to be planted with the development of the first buildings. These landscape buffers include dense deciduous and coniferous trees along the north and, on the west, plant species native to the prairie savanna landscape. The south buffer and street trees along

Suncrest Drive include overstory deciduous trees in a variety of species. On the east deciduous overstory trees are added to the existing street trees along Cedar Lane. Native prairie grasses and forbs are proposed in storm water drainage ways and detention areas. Around the parking lots in the site interior these prairie plantings are in place of the typical parking lot perimeter planting of trees and shrubs. Ames *Municipal Code* Section 29.403(4)(g) allows this substitution with approval of this Major Site Development Plan.

Staff has analyzed the Major Site Development Plan, reviewed the supporting material and conducted an on-site inspection. The attached addendum provides background and analysis of the proposal and the requested action. Based upon the above facts and analysis, staff concludes that the proposed apartment buildings and site are consistent with the approved Master Plan and meet the City's criteria and standards for approval of a Major Site Development Plan.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council approve the Major Site Development Plan for five apartment buildings in the Ringgenberg Park Subdivision.
2. The Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council deny the Major Site Development Plan for five apartment buildings in the Ringgenberg Park Subdivision.
3. Action on this request can be postponed and referred back to City staff and/or the applicant for additional information to be presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission on or before its December 4 meeting.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff believes that the Major Site Development Plan for five apartment buildings in the Ringgenberg Park Subdivision conforms to the approved Master Plan and relevant and applicable design standards. **Therefore, staff recommends that the Planning and Zoning Commission act in accordance with Alternative #1, which is to recommend that the City Council approve the Major Site Development Plan for five apartment buildings in the Ringgenberg Park Subdivision.**

ADDENDUM

The use of the proposed buildings is consistent with the **permitted uses** listed in the use table in the Zoning Ordinance (AMC Table 29.1202(4)-2). This use table requires City Council approval of a Major Site Development Plan for apartments in the FS-RM zoning districts. The Major Site Development Plan is attached.

The proposed buildings comply with the **setbacks and heights** in the Master Plan, which are in some cases more restrictive than those listed in the development standards table in the Zoning Ordinance (AMC Table 29.1202(5)-2).

Suburban Residential Zoning also establishes Suburban Regulations with minimum standards for **open space, residential net density, and landscape buffers** (AMC Table 29.1202(6)). The Master Plan establishes required common open space that is to be owned by the property owner and designated for active or passive recreation, as required by the Zoning Ordinance. Residential net density in this project is calculated after deducting the common open space from the total site area. It is also established by the Master Plan. The proposed Major Site Development Plan complies with the Master Plan for the portion of the site being developed. Future site plans for additional buildings will be required to meet the Master Plan as well. The Master Plan also establishes the required landscape buffers, requiring a higher standard than in Table 29.1202(6). The Major Site Development Plan provides detailed planting plans that meet the Master Plan requirements. The main body of this report addresses landscaping in more detail.

Parking is provided in conformance with the parking standards in the Zoning Ordinance (AMC Table 29.406(2)). These standards are based on the number of bedrooms in each apartment. The standard requires a total of 130 parking spaces; 135 spaces are provided, including 60 in garages and five accessible spaces.

Additional criteria and standards for review of all Major Site Development Plans are found in Ames *Municipal Code* Section 29.1502(4)(d) and include the following requirements.

When acting upon an application for a Major Site Development Plan approval, the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council shall rely upon generally accepted site planning criteria and design standards. These criteria and standards are necessary to fulfill the intent of the Zoning Ordinance, the Land Use Policy Plan, and are the minimum necessary to safeguard the public health, safety, aesthetics, and general welfare.

- 1. The design of the proposed development shall make adequate provisions for surface and subsurface drainage to limit the rate of increased runoff of surface water to adjacent and down stream property.***

Storm water management has been an important element of the Master Plan review. The Master Plan requires storm water discharge after development to be directed primarily to two storm water detention areas at the north east and northwest portions of the site. The grading plans and storm sewer plans of the

Major Site Development Plan are consistent with these requirements of the Master Plan. A detailed storm water management plan for the entire north portion of Ringgenberg Park Subdivision is part of the Preliminary Plat submittal. It demonstrates that the storm water discharge rates after development will be substantially less than those required by City standards and to a large extent preserve capacity of the City storm sewer system to meet the needs of major storm events. (See Commission Action Form for the Preliminary Plat for additional discussion of storm water management for this site.)

- 2. *The design of the proposed development shall make adequate provision for connection to water, sanitary sewer, electrical, and other utility lines within the capacity limits of those utility lines.***

Existing water, sanitary sewer, electrical lines and other utility lines on the site perimeter are adequate to serve the proposed development. Water and sewer mains to serve the buildings are being extended through the center of the site with the access drive, with extensions to the north and south between buildings. All of these water and sewer lines will be in easements to the City and will be installed in accordance with the approved preliminary plat and infrastructure plans submitted to and approved by the City. The private service lines proposed to serve the buildings have been sized for the intended demand for these services. The electric and other utility lines are not provided by the City.

- 3. *The design of the proposed development shall make adequate provision for fire protection through building placement, acceptable location of flammable materials, and other measures to ensure fire safety.***

Building placement is consistent with the approved Master Plan. The City Fire Inspector has reviewed and approved the proposed Major Site Development Plan for compliance with the City's Fire Code. Adequate provisions have been made by the owner to meet the minimum requirements.

- 4. *The design of the proposed development shall not increase the danger of erosion, flooding, landslide, or other endangerment to adjoining and surrounding property.***

The proposed development is not located in a floodplain nor on or near steep slopes. The measures taken to manage storm water to prevent impact on adjoining and surrounding property are described above under item #1. There is no indication that this development presents any endangerment to adjoining and surrounding property.

- 5. *Natural topographic and landscape features of the site shall be incorporated into the development design.***

There is 30 feet of topographic relief across this site, with the highest area being on the western portion and the lowest area being in the northeast corner. A storm water detention area is to be located in this low corner. In the western portion of the site, the low area is along the north boundary, where another storm water detention

area is to be located. Although significant grading is needed to create building pads and parking areas, the existing topography provides the basis for drainage ways and the center access drive. The location of all of these features is consistent with the approved Master Plan

- 6. *The design of the interior vehicle and pedestrian circulation shall provide for convenient flow of vehicles and movement of pedestrians and shall prevent hazards to adjacent streets or property.***

Access to the site at two locations, from Cedar Lane and Oakwood Road, and the internal circulation is consistent with the approved Master Plan. That Plan was found to provide safe, convenient and effective vehicular and pedestrian circulation.

- 7. *The design of outdoor parking areas, storage yards, trash and dumpster areas, and other exterior features shall be adequately landscaped or screened to minimize potential nuisance and impairment to the use of adjoining property.***

All of these areas are in the site interior and therefore will be screened from adjoining properties and streets by buildings. The one exception, a parking area in the southwest corner of the site, is screened from adjoining street and property by a shrub row.

- 8. *The proposed development shall limit entrances and exits upon adjacent streets in order to prevent congestion on adjacent and surrounding streets and in order to provide for safe and orderly vehicle movement.***

In accordance with the approved Master Plan, access is limited to two locations, as described above under #6.

- 9. *Exterior lighting shall relate to the scale and location of the development in order to maintain adequate security, while preventing a nuisance or hardship to adjacent property or streets.***

The access drive and all parking areas are located in the interior of the site and buildings will contain lighting within the site. All exterior lighting will meet the City outdoor lighting code which prevents excessive glare and light trespass.

- 10. *The proposed development shall ensure that dust and other forms of air pollution, noise disturbances, odor, glare, and other nuisances will be limited to acceptable levels as prescribed in other applicable State and City regulations.***

Similar uses at other locations in the project and the community have not resulted in these impacts.

- 11. *Site coverage, building scale, setbacks, and open spaces shall be in proportion with the development property and with existing and planned development and structures, in adjacent and surrounding property.***

All of these factors were important in the review and approval of the Master Plan, which imposes standards for site coverage, building scale, setbacks, and open spaces that are more restrictive than the usual requirements of the Ames *Municipal Code*. The proposed Major Site Development Plan meets the requirement of the approved Master Plan.

The Development Review Committee has reviewed the Major Site Development Plan and found that it complies with the other requirements of the Ames *Municipal Code*.

