

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

Date: September 16, 2015	Debra Lee, Chairperson	2018
	*Rob Bowers, Vice Chairperson	2018
Call to Order: 7:00 p.m.	Yvonne Wannemuehler	2018
	Julie Gould	2016
Place: Ames City Hall	John Tillo	2016
Council Chambers	*Carlton Basmajian	2017
	Matthew Converse	2017
Adjournment: 7:57 p.m.	*Absent	

MAJOR TOPICS DISCUSSED:

1. Public Hearing for the Planned Residence Development Rezoning and Major Site Development Plan for 125 and 130 Wilder Avenue

CALL TO ORDER: Debra Lee, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION: (Tillo/Wannemuehler) to approve the Agenda for the meeting of September 16, 2015.

MOTION PASSED: (5 - 0)

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 2, 2015:

MOTION: (Gould/Converse) to approve the Minutes of the meeting of September 2, 2015.

MOTION PASSED: (5 - 0)

PUBLIC FORUM: There were no public comments.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE PLANNED RESIDENCE DEVELOPMENT REZONING AND MAJOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR 125 AND 130 WILDER AVENUE

Karen Marren, Case Planner, stated that this request is for a Planned Residence Development (PRD) Rezone and Major Site Development Plan for two existing properties that front Lincoln Way and Wilder Avenue. She indicated that these lots abut residential homes located in Sunset Ridge Subdivision to the north and to the east, the City of Ames corporate limits to the west, and Lincoln Way and additional single family homes to the south. Ms. Marren stated that the two properties total 6.81 acres in size and are currently zoned Convenience Commercial Node (CVCN). She stated that the two properties have been vacant since 2005, since the property was rezoned to CVCN. Ms. Marren stated that the applicant is requesting that this property be rezoned to a residential use to allow for the construction of single-family attached townhomes on the lots. She stated that the applicant is proposing to build two and four unit buildings. Ms. Marren stated that there will be 40 total units. She stated that the applicant is proposing to construct two dead end private streets within this development that have access to Wilder Avenue. Ms. Marren stated that the proposed streets do not connect to Lincoln Way. She stated that the private streets will access the garages at the rear of each unit. Ms. Marren stated that

there will be a private open space between the residential units and the detached garages. She reviewed sketches of the two unit and four unit buildings with the Commission and the type of materials that the applicant is proposing to use on the exterior of the buildings.

Ms. Marren stated that staff recommends that several conditions be placed on the site plan, one of which is the addition of a foundation treatment on the front of the buildings. She stated that staff recommends that brick or stone veneer be used. Ms. Marren stated that staff also recommends that a covered porch extension be added to one unit of each building, for a total of 12 covered porches. She stated that the detached garage provides two parking spaces within the garage structure for each lot plus parking on the drive. Ms. Marren stated that the applicant proposes to have an individual platted lot for each unit. She stated that there is also a parking lot located at the end of each private street adding 11 parking places to each parcel in the development. Ms. Marren stated that this site plan meets the minimum parking requirements for a PRD development.

Ms. Marren stated that the applicant's proposed plan meets the minimum 40 percent common open space in the development. Ms. Marren outlined the location of the proposed common open space on a map. She reviewed details of the standard that was used to determine the landscaping requirements. Ms. Marren reviewed details of the applicant's landscape plan. She stated that the applicant's proposed plan meets the minimum tree requirement; however, the applicant is not proposing to plant enough shrubs to meet the L3 buffering requirement. Ms. Marren stated that the applicant proposes to provide a wider space than 10 foot which is typically an L3 screen. She stated that the applicant is providing 30-33 feet from the north property line to the north wall of the northernmost townhome building to try to accommodate the intention of an L3 buffer, but not include a fence. Ms. Marren stated that staff does not disagree; however, they feel that there still should be additional screening, with shrubbery, especially in the driveway areas and private streets along the north side of the property. She stated that there is a surface water flowage easement along the north property line of the east lot. Ms. Marren stated that there is space outside of this easement to place additional shrubbery screening. She stated that staff recommends Alternative #1, listed in the Commission Action Form, subject to four conditions. Ms. Marren reviewed details of those conditions with the Commission.

Kelly Diekmann, Director of Planning & Housing, stated that the applicant's landscape plan notes that details for some of the landscaping along Lincoln Way have been deferred to a later date to give the applicant and staff implementation flexibility. Mr. Diekmann reviewed the details of this notation. John Tillo asked if the landscape details would be reviewed during the preliminary plat process. Mr. Diekmann stated that only street trees will be reviewed in the preliminary plat process.

Julie Gould asked for clarification of the grade levels of the townhomes and the single-family lots. Ms. Marren stated that other than the detention areas along both lots the grade levels of the townhomes and the single-family lots are similar.

Ms. Gould asked what kind of trees the applicant proposes to use on the north property line. Mr. Diekmann reviewed the types of trees that may be used.

Yvonne Wannemuehler asked for clarification of the location of the proposed brick façade for the buildings. Ms. Marren reviewed the proposed location of the brick façade along the foundation with the Commission.

Ms. Wannemuehler asked if there would be a sidewalk placed along Lincoln Way. Ms. Marren reviewed details of the shared use pathway along Lincoln Way and Wilder Avenue as well as the locations of proposed sidewalks within the development.

Matt Converse asked if these units are located in the Ames Community School District. Mr. Diekmann stated that he believed that they are located in the Ames Community School District.

Yvonne asked about maneuvering a fire truck down the proposed streets in the development. Mr. Diekmann stated that the proposed parking lots provide the requirements for a fire truck turn around.

Debra Lee asked if the lots will be individual lots and the buyers will purchase the units on those lots. Mr. Diekmann stated that condition states that each of the lots must be platted. He stated that each of the 40 units will be placed on its own subdivided lot and available for sale.

Ms. Lee asked if the occupancy rate for a single-family residence is three unrelated people. Mr. Diekmann stated that there is not a rule that prohibits these units from being rented. He stated that if the units were rented, they would still be treated as a single-family home. He reviewed the single-family occupancy rate with the Commission.

Ms. Lee asked for clarification of the driveway parking for each unit. Mr. Diekmann stated that the depth from the private street to the garage face is less than 20 feet. He stated that parking on the driveway would be for temporary parking.

Ms. Lee asked for clarification of who is responsible for the trees and the maintenance of the private streets in this development. Mr. Diekmann stated that the homeowner's association would be responsible for the maintenance of the private streets and the trees that were shown on the landscape plan.

Justin Dodge, Hunziker Companies, 105 South 16th Street, stated that this property has been zoned CVCN for ten years. He stated that there is a need for affordable housing in Ames and that this is their effort in meeting that need. Mr. Dodge stated that he expects that all of these townhomes will be built by HCS Builders. He stated that this concept is based on townhomes that were built in Somerset on the west side of Stange Road. Mr. Dodge stated that those townhomes were very popular and sell very quickly even on the resell market. He stated that they hope to be able to sell these townhomes for \$225,000. Mr. Dodge stated that one area that they differ with staff's opinion is the need for stone veneer on the front façade. He stated that it would increase the cost by \$3,000 per unit. Mr. Dodge stated that they are currently proposing to add a covered porch to the front of every unit. He stated that by expanding the porch on one unit in every building it would increase the cost of that unit by \$5,000. Mr. Dodge stated that they are asking the Commission to approve Alternative #1, section A and B, subsection i. and ii.

Mr. Converse asked about the amount of square footage per unit. Ms. Marren stated that 1,800 square feet on the first and second floors with some partial finish on the lower level.

Ms. Lee asked if they were going to have any units with bedrooms on the main floor. Mr. Dodge stated that there is a market for this; however, the units in this development will not have bedrooms on the main floor.

Bradley Miller, 5417 Springbrook Drive, stated that he doesn't have any concerns about this development. He stated that he feels that it looks nice. Mr. Miller stated that he is concerned

about the amount of commercial space along main arterial roads in Ames. He said that a commercial development in west Ames makes sense. Mr. Miller stated that he realizes that the developer has owned this property for ten years but the housing development in this area has only been in place for about three to four years. He stated that he feels that the residential demands for this type of commercial convenience are just now coming into place. Mr. Miller stated that he hopes that there will be other land in this area that can be used for commercial purposes.

Mr. Diekmann stated that one of the reasons that staff is supporting tonight's request is that the Comprehensive Plan of Ames states that somewhere in the vicinity of County Line Road and Lincoln Way we need another convenience commercial development. He stated that the City ends at the west boundary of Sunset Ridge Subdivision and that everything west to County Line Road is eligible for commercial development. Mr. Diekmann stated that when an annexation request is received staff will look to see if it would be a good location to add back those six to ten acres. He stated staff feels that there is an opportunity on either the south side of the road or immediately abutting the townhomes for this type of commercial development.

Mr. Miller asked if there are plans to connect the current mixed-use sidewalk along Lincoln Way further east to serve this development. Mr. Diekmann stated that there is large gap in the sidewalk east of Sunset Ridge. He stated that the City does incremental infrastructure improvements. Mr. Diekmann stated that it is likely that this portion of the sidewalk will not be constructed until the property is developed.

Justin Walsh, 5506 Durant Street, asked for clarification of the location of the garage for each of the townhomes. Ms. Marren reviewed the location of the garage for all of the units and how they will be accessed. Mr. Walsh asked if fencing was going to be placed along the north property line. Ms. Marren stated that fencing will not be placed along the north property line. She stated that there will be landscaping along the north property line. Mr. Walsh asked how much space was between the building and the north property line. Ms. Marren stated that there is 33 feet. Ms. Wannemuehler stated that the applicant will be planting 14 trees along the north property line.

Ms. Wannemuehler stated that she realizes that there is a great need for affordable housing in Ames; but, this proposed development is physically different than what is already located in the area. Mr. Converse stated that it is a price point that is needed in this community and it is located in the Ames Community School District; but, it is very different than what is already located in this area. Ms. Gould stated that maybe the reason that it feels that way is because it is near the city limits and there is not really anything located to the west or to the east. Ms. Lee asked if the Commission's concerns were due to aesthetics. She asked the Commission what a commercial area would have looked like. Ms. Gould spoke about the City's lack of design guidelines. She stated that she is personally pro design. Ms. Gould stated that she is in support of adding the foundation treatment and adding a porch extension on one unit per building.

Mr. Tillo stated that he feels that it is within the character of the surrounding area to rezone this property. He stated that he is hesitating about approving staff's recommendation to add the additional foundation treatment due to the fact it will increase the cost of each unit. Mr. Tillo stated that he was hoping that the cost of each unit would be lower than what the applicant has stated. He stated that he realizes that the applicant is in business to make a profit.

Mr. Converse stated that these conditions do increase the cost of each unit for a type of housing that the community needs. He stated that he would support the first two conditions that staff has proposed but not the last two conditions.

Ms. Wannemuehler asked if the foundation treatment would cover the cement portion of the stairs. Mr. Diekmann stated that it would be located below the window and could include part of the stoop. Ms. Wannemuehler asked if it would include the stairs. Mr. Diekmann stated that it depends upon what is done with the porch. He stated that when he made the 150 foot estimate listed in the Commission Action Form he was figuring the full length of the façade. Mr. Diekmann referred to a drawing of one of the four unit buildings and stated that it appears that the third unit in the building already appears to have the stone veneer on the lower level. He stated that there are already elements of staff's façade recommendation shown on the buildings. Mr. Diekmann outlined exterior details of some of the townhomes that have been built in Somerset.

Several Commission members expressed favorable opinions for having an available porch.

Mr. Tillo asked if the applicant could give further details as to why the Commission should strike two of staff's recommendation from Alternative #1 (the foundation treatment and the porch extension).

Mr. Dodge stated that the reason that Somerset has the additional masonry is because of the strict design guidelines placed on the entire subdivision. He stated that their current lowest priced townhome is in Scenic Valley with a price of \$325,000. Mr. Dodge stated that they have looked at what could be cut to get the price down to an affordable level.

Discussion was held on the price of homes in Ames.

Ms. Gould stated that she feels that there needs to be some treatment to break up the façade and add some character along with the addition of a porch. She stated that unfortunately it does add cost but better design and products do add cost.

Mr. Tillo stated that mature shrubbery at the base of the front façade would provide some screening of the base of the homes.

Ms. Wannemuehler asked which direction the units face. Mr. Diekmann stated that the majority of them face Wilder Avenue and the remainder of the units face the open space that may someday be developed. Ms. Wannemuehler stated that half of them face Wilder Avenue.

MOTION: (Tillo/Converse) to accept Alternative #1, as modified by striking subsection iii and iv, that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommends that the City Council approve the following requests for the properties at 125 and 130 Wilder Avenue:

- A. Rezone the properties from Convenience Commercial Node (CVCN) to Planned Residential District (F-PRD); and
- B. Approval of the Major Site Development Plan, subject to the following conditions;
 - i. Approval of a preliminary and final plat for creation of the proposed residential lots as depicted on the site plan; and
 - ii. Revision of the landscape plan to include the clustering of additional shrubs along the north property lines to meet the intent of the L3 screen buffer for the PRD.

Ms. Wannemuehler stated that the applicant might want to independently consider adding additional design features after hearing input from the Commission members. Mr. Converse stated that he feels that if the applicant built a larger porch on one unit in the building and charged more for that unit that they would be able to sell that unit; however, he did not want to make that a condition.

Ms. Lee stated that she feels that design features need to be enhanced in the projects that are being proposed. The Commission stated that they also recognize the need for affordable housing.

MOTION PASSED: (4 - 1) (nay, Gould)

COMMISSION COMMENTS: None

STAFF COMMENTS: Mr. Diekmann stated that Justin Moore joined the Planning Department staff this week.

Mr. Diekman stated that a City Council workshop was held last night regarding the update of the Land Use Policy Plan. He reviewed details that were discussed during this workshop.

Mr. Diekmann reviewed the tentative agenda for the meeting of October 7, 2015.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

MOTION: (Wannemuehler/Tillo) to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION PASSED: (5 - 0)

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Debra Lee, Chairperson
Planning & Zoning Commission

Lorrie Banks, Recording Secretary
Department of Planning & Housing