

**DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES
January 26, 2012 at 8:30 A.M.
245 EAST BONITA AVENUE
CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL**

PRESENT

*Emmett Badar, City Council
Dan Coleman, Director of Development Services
Scott Dilley, Chamber of Commerce
Blaine Michaelis, City Manager
Krishna Patel, Director of Public Works
Jim Schoonover, Planning Commission
John Sorcinelli, Public Member at Large*

CALL TO ORDER

Jim Schoonover called the regular meeting of the Development Plan Review Board to order at 8:35 a.m. so as to conduct regular business in the City Council Conference Room.

DPRB Case No. 11-42

A request to build 67 townhomes within the undeveloped portion of the Grove Station project located on the east side of San Dimas Avenue just south of the railroad tracks.

Zone: Creative Growth (CG-3B)

Allison Kunz, applicant, Olson Company, was present
John Reekstin, Vice-President of Olson Company, was present
Alan Scales, Architect of KTG Y Group, was present
Peter Duarte, Landscape Architect of Studio Pad, was present
Randall Kehr, neighbor, was present

Associate Planner Espinoza explained that the original Grove Station project was approved for 14 live/work units and 96 residential units in 2006 and since approval, only 14 live/work units have been developed. Due to the downturn in the economy, the original applicant lost the property and the bank took possession of it and is now in the process of selling the remaining undeveloped lots to the Olson Company. The new applicant is proposing to develop 67 townhomes on the site where the 96 units were originally proposed. The 67 townhomes will be developed within 12 separate building pods. The largest of the building pods will have seven-units; the smallest will have three. The development will occur in phases. The duration between the phases will be determined on the sale of the units. Phase 1 will consist of Buildings 1 – 4, the rest will be done in Phase 2. The building elevations have been submitted for approval, they feature stucco on the building and accent materials such as siding, cornice detail and

metal awnings along the door. Staff would like to add additional brick to the building and address other concerns. All of the units will have their own two-car garage at the ground level and four of the units will have tandem parking. The building will be 2 & 3 stories, but 3 stories will be the most dominant. Buildings 5 & 6 will be the largest and Building 12 will be the smallest with 3 units. Some of the units will have patios at the front and some will not. Buildings 1 through 4 overall are designed well; however, Staff has a concern with Building 5 and 6. Three units within Building 7, which are four bedroom units, will be allowed to accommodate two additional required parking spaces within their driveway which will be 19 feet in depth.

Staff recommends the applicant enhance the paving to connect pedestrian paths to match the entry. Staff wants the applicant to provide additional details for the fence and gate drawings. The original application proposed metal arbors at the entrances but they have been changed to stucco which is more appropriate. The proposed color for the shutters is pea soup but Staff would prefer an alternative color. Staff is requesting additional corbels along Building 5 and 6 and detail be provided for the utility closets for those buildings. Staff would also like the applicant to revise the cross section, since the Code requires parapet walls to be above the ac units. The outstanding issues also include the trash enclosure, which needs to be modified to provide for a pedestrian entrance that is screened. The applicant is proposing the exact type of trash enclosure as the one in Covina and noted that the concept of standing outside of the trash bins and opening the lids from the side to dump trash is difficult. Staff is not in favor of this type of enclosure and feels it would be better if it is accessed and opened from the front. The applicant has provided another option that has a front entrance that allows entry inside the enclosure to dump their trash and added this is the alternative but accessibility may not be achieved. Staff feels that the overall brick design is good since there is not much repetition; however, Staff is not in favor of the cut outs from the wall that gives the appearance of a two-story building within a three story building and recommended minimizing the affect especially at the corners of Building 5 and 6. He suggested continuing the brick along the 1st and 2nd story to the end of the unit.

Mr. Coleman asked how one would maneuver and exit the parallel parking spaces.

Associate Planner Espinoza replied that the maneuvering the turnaround will not be a simple circulation pattern especially when it comes to parallel parking. He added that Staff has met with the applicant since the Staff report was received and they addressed many of the concerns which included the four missing parking spaces which were not included on the plans. He pointed out that three parking spaces were missing to comply with requirements so landscaping was removed from the center driveway so additional parking spaces could be created. Since three parking spaces will be met, two additional spaces will be included which will allow for an additional bedroom to be added.

Mr. Sorcinelli asked for an explanation of the landscaping and patios around the entrances of each doorway unit.

Associate Planner Espinoza replied that it varies from unit to unit and added some will have patio areas. The patio area will replicate ones at Covina.

Mr. Sorcinelli commented that some of the entrances on Building 2 and 3 do not have direct access to the sidewalk adjacent to the street parking and noted it does not occur everywhere.

Mr. Patel recommended that the east side of the property include more trees to screen the fence of the City yard.

Mr. Coleman recommended using Cypress or Colombian trees.

Associate Planner Espinoza commented that the double retaining wall will need to be looked at. He also recommended using Boston ivy against the wall.

Mr. Sorcinelli asked if there are provisions for potential access around or through the property for the Gold Line Station.

Associate Planner Espinoza stated that there is currently a 10 ft. easement that goes through Building 12 and recommended relocating it to the East portion of the property. He added that the relocation of the easement will be reflected in the Conditional Use Permit associated with the project.

Mr. Coleman stated that if the tracts are 15 ft. higher for the Gold Line and in order to serve parking, how many linear feet is required to comply with ADA requirements.

Assistant City Manager, Larry Stevens replied that there have been discussions to use the mini storage for the parking lot of the Gold Station but not designs have been created at this time.

Mr. Sorcinelli stated that once you get to the platform, how would a resident walk to the Downtown area on the rail platform.

Mr. Patel replied that the Gold Line will connect from the San Dimas Ave parking lot and to the Gold Line Station.

Mr. Coleman stated that there needs to be a required disclosure for buyers that the bridge will be at eye level with the bedroom windows of Building 12.

Associate Planner Espinoza stated that the buyers will be made aware of the Gold Line Station, etc. when they receive their CC&R's.

Mr. Stevens noted that the mini storage parking lot can affect the visibility for other units as well.

Mr. Sorcinelli asked how a resident would get to the Gold Line from the units.

Mr. Stevens replied that it will be determined by the bridge design which may not meet ADA requirements. The design elements and detail will be explained when the project moves forward.

Mr. Coleman asked if the 10 ft. easement is for pedestrian access.

Mr. Stevens replied that the easement, based on the prior site plan where Building 5 is located, was to have a proposed sidewalk but does not work effectively. A design is being proposed that may not use the mini storage site and can be adjusted with more facts. He noted that ideally you want to accommodate access to the Gold Line but it is difficult to provide an approximate access of path to travel. He noted that a lot of these issues will not apply to the developer but the HOA in their statement of intent.

Mr. Sorcinelli asked if the current easement will be relocated. He asked if anything can be done in regards to adding a stair or gate with an entrance for access from the project site.

Associate Planner Espinoza replied that the easement will be relocated and noted that the purpose of the easement is to provide access to the project and the proposed parking structure.

Mr. Patel asked if solar panels were ever considered.

Ms. Kunz replied that they did consider solar panels; however, the roof design did not make it feasible.

Associate Planner Espinoza stated that the raised parapet walls conflicts with the operations for the panel's efficiency.

Mr. Stevens stated that it is important to screen the vehicle lights as much as possible from Building 2 and 3.

Mr. Coleman asked if the interior window covers will be provided for the units.

Ms. Kunz responded no.

Mr. Coleman stated that there is a concern with partial driveways which are between 3 ft. to 18 ft. Building 2 and 3 have 6 ft. partial driveways. He added that the garages should have a condition stating that they have to use it for vehicles only and not for storage.

Associate Planner Espinoza responded that it can be added in the CC&R's to use the garage for vehicles and not storage.

Ms. Kunz stated that it will be added in the CC&R's requirements.

Mr. Coleman recommended using different patterns for the garage door in order to break up the monotony.

Mr. Patel asked if the street lighting fixture proposed will match what is onsite.

Associate Planner Espinoza replied they will feature standard street lights.

Ms. Kunz stated that the trash enclosure and landscaping inquiries have been adjusted.

Peter Duarte, landscape architect, stated that some of the landscaping concerns have been addressed and an enhancement to the paving reinforces the circulation. There is a modified courtyard in the entry way to compliment the other elements. He added that three alternative trash enclosures have been provided. The applicant wanted to maximize the footprint of the space and explained if the trash enclosure area is larger; it can become a place that people dump large objects which will become unsightly. Another alternative would be to put a pedestrian accessible gate so they can enter inside the enclosure; however, that can pose as a safety concern when having to access during late hours in a confined dark space.

Mr. Sorcinelli inquired about the process of opening the bins.

Ms. Kunz commented that the bins are now plastic and are a lot lighter and easier to open.

Mr. Coleman asked if they consulted with Waste Management in regards to the recycling process.

Ms. Kunz replied there will be one recyclable bin and one trash bin.

Mr. Sorcinelli stated that it appears it would be difficult to open the trash on the side and does not seem secure or sturdy.

Mr. Coleman stated that the standard bins have double lids and are not easy to open.

Mr. Badar stated that he understands the safety concerns for residents who enter into the confined trash area but also likes the idea for the non-accessibility into the enclosure.

Mr. Patel asked what the proposed landscaping will be at the eastside of the property near the City yard.

Mr. Duarte replied liquid ambers and other various trees.

Associate Planner Espinoza stated that there is currently a perimeter wall at Grove Station.

Mr. Stevens indicated that more details should be included on the walls such as screening and terracing.

Mr. Sorcinelli asked about the wall height that is along the rail line.

Ms. Kunz replied that a portion have been installed already and is not sure of the accurate height.

Mr. Stevens stated that the height will change due to the existing rail and freight rail. He noted that there will be three train tracks, one for the freight and the others for the Gold Line. He pointed out that there won't be much visual screening but added that adjustments can be made.

Mr. Sorcinelli stated that the wall will be unattractive. He inquired about the grade of the road in relation to the building. He stated that there is a level change where one street stays above and then drops down which gives the appearance of a double sidewalk.

Mr. Duarte stated that one is a public street and one is semi-public with a retaining wall in between.

Alan Scales, architect, stated that they are trying to use an on grade design and added there is a variable grade from the street they are trying to work with. He noted that there are concerns having to redesign the building in order to achieve a street level entry for the units.

Mr. Sorcinelli explained that the grade will affect the value and asked if there is a height limit for the buildings.

Mr. Scales stated that there are pros and cons in the proposed design but a street level entry unit would be best for Buildings 2 and 3.

Mr. Sorcinelli recommended that a section be drawn of the road way for a visual representation of how to deal with entries to the units in question. The current drawings are very subjective.

Mr. Coleman recommended a rendering depicting the street sloping in relation to the elevations in question (Building 2 and 3).

Mr. Scales emphasized that they are trying to work with an existing lot and noted there are five types of plans and the alternates vary.

Associate Planner Espinoza explained that the other Buildings units not shown in the plans to the Buildings present today will return to the Board for final approval, but all will be very similar.

Mr. Coleman commended the applicant for their hard work on the project and emphasized the comments today serve as recommendations to enhance and to move the project forward.

Mr. Patel inquired about the color palette used for the project.

Mr. Scales responded that the colors can be refined and be more earth toned to match the brick façade.

Mr. Sorcinelli stated that the use of Hardie panel can convey a lower quality standard to the building versus the use of brick.

Mr. Scales commented that there is subjectivity to the discussion of Hardie panel. The proposed fiber cement will not dilapidate over time.

Mr. Sorcinelli inquired about the treatment of the entryways along the street edge and noted the concern with the stoop to step down and recommended depicting that in a new set of drawings prior to presenting to Planning Commission.

Mr. Scales agreed and added that they will identify those issues on the plans, including the public and private spaces.

Mr. Sorcinelli stated that the private entry's space at the front help create ownership.

Associate Planner Espinoza stated that all of the items mentioned at the meeting today will be addressed prior to the Planning Commission.

John Reekstin, Vice-President of the Olson Company, stated that the project was taken over by the bank and will close at the end of March. He emphasized that it is on a fast track with an inflexible seller but they are working on closing soon and appreciates all the feedback.

Mr. Scales stated that the brick is used in the development should be similar to the front building for consistency. He emphasized that this project is in the early conceptual design so there is still time to define the entry.

Mr. Stevens emphasized that today is a preliminary approval of support for the project to be heard before the Planning Commission but will return to DPRB for final approval.

MOTION: Moved by Dan Coleman, seconded by John Sorcinelli as a preliminary approval to move forward to the Planning Commission subject to the applicant working with Staff to revise the plans before presenting to Planning Commission on the following recommendations:

1. Work with Staff on trash enclosure design options.
2. Address direct accessibility from Building 2 to Building 3 to the street level along the main driveway.
3. Consider alternative finish materials to replace the use of Hardie Board on Buildings 5 & 6.

4. Revise the renderings to show the streetscape from Building 2 to 3.
5. Identify the proposed street light fixtures on the plans.
6. Revise the plans to provide for screening of the parking stalls along the main driveway from Buildings 2 and 3, to avoid the glare from vehicle headlights to shine into the units.
7. Provide for a variety of garage door designs on the larger building pods to break up the monotony of the same door design.
8. Provide a 2D rendering and or cross-section depicting each entry door with stoops and rails to better understand the extent of the area.
9. Consider reducing or increasing the driveways for the units to three feet or 19 feet deep.
10. Revise parking stall No. 44 to 11 feet wide.
11. Provide cross-sections of the perimeter walls at different intervals of the project; focusing on the north, south and east walls to screen the City Yard.
12. Revise the CC&R's to note that the tenants are required to maintain the interior of their garages to be free and clear of any obstructions that would prohibit the parking of two vehicles.
13. Revise the CC&R's to mention the future building of the Gold Line Extension.

Staff was directed by the Board to modify the following items.

1. Revise the Conditions of Approval to coincide with the established agreement regarding the payment of the Quimby Fees.
2. Revise the Conditions of Approval to specifically note the required building improvements required by the noise study.
3. Create a condition that would provide for any vacant building pads to be irrigated and landscaped if the second phase of the project does not commence within a year after the first phase has been completed.

Motion carried 6-0-0-1 (Schoonover Abstain)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:18 a.m. to the meeting of February 9, 2012 at 8:30 a.m.

Jim Schoonover, Chairman
San Dimas Development Plan Review Board

ATTEST:

Jessica Mejia
Development Plan Review Board
Departmental Assistant

Approved: