

Development Commission
November 2, 2016

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
November 2, 2016**

City Hall South
Council Chambers

135 E Sunset Way
Issaquah, WA

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard SOWA, Chair
Melvin MORGAN
Michael BRENNAN
Ray LEONG
Robert BAKH
Randolph HARRISON
Kevin PRICE

PUBLIC COMMENTS FROM:

Robert Wenzl, Applicant
Ron Faull
Mary Lynch
Connie Marsh
Paul Kappler
Rick Tolleshaugh, Milbrandt Architects
Dave Barnett, Milbrandt Architects

STAFF PRESENT

Lucy Sloman, Land Development Mgr.
Sherry Smith, Recording Secretary
Amy Tarce, Senior Planner
Doug Schlepp, Project Engineer/Consultant

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Carl SWEDBERG (alternate)
Vacant (alternate)
TJ GINTHER
Vacant

CALL TO ORDER

SOWA called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY MORGAN, SECONDED BY BRENNAN, to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2016. **MOTION CARRIED.**

PUBLIC HEARING

Inneswood Multi-Family Site Development Permit – SDP16-00006 – Amy Tarce

LEONG lives on the west side of the hill where the project is located and believes he can be impartial but will step down if asked to do so.

Sloman began staff's presentation by explaining that tonight's public hearing is a quasi-judicial matter on an application for development in the central Issaquah area. She asked all Commissioners whether they could answer "no" to a series of questions about any reasons why Commissioners could not be fair and impartial (procedural due process and substantive due

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process), or had had any ex parte communications on this application. All Commissioners replied “no” to all questions except for LEONG as stated above. There were no objections to Commissioners’ participation from any persons in the audience.

Tarce introduced herself stating that there would not be any decisions made tonight, and that this was an opportunity for staff to make a presentation, and for the audience to ask questions. The second half of the meeting will be December 7. There are 5 exhibits submitted to the Commission: She summarized the exhibits. *Tarce* presented an overview of the presentation: Connectivity, Quality of Open Spaces and the Place making Aspects of the Design. She also reviewed the improvements and provided a slide showing the placement of the project as well as the location. The project is part of the Gilman area. The Gilman Vision is to Complement the strong retail focus of the district with significant future office and residential development, and enhance Issaquah Creek and its buffers as an important link of the Green Necklace. *Tarce* then provided a slide showing the Inneswood Estates Preliminary Plat, zoning and adjacent land uses. *Tarce* provided slides showing the existing conditions, a view of Newport Way frontage – heading southeast and one view showing northwest, and a slide showing .25 miles to Issaquah Valley Elementary School. Slides provided information as to walkways and bikeways. Staff has evaluated the project and determined it complies with the general standards and meets height requirements. The setbacks will require an administrative adjustment for the retaining walls. She explained the introduction of a roundabout.

Tarce provided a slide regarding the Green Necklace explaining the meaning. She also provided an overview to the critical areas: steep slopes and wetland. A storm water vault will also be installed. A boardwalk will be provided in lieu of a sidewalk due to the wetland. *Tarce* provided a slide showing the circulation design. She explained that the private community spaces are each homes’ balcony. There are also two townhouses that line the front of the building. They are provided with porches. *Tarce* explained the community space design then slides of the external and hillside view of the site. She explained that staff had to take the power lines into consideration when selecting the type of trees along Newport Way. There are blank walls visible from the residential balconies. The applicant will continue to refine the plan and there could possibly be additional windows and trellises. The City does have a standard to create informal gathering spaces. She provided slides showing the possibilities. *Tarce* reviewed the details for the ground level explaining there are also two new conditions and one Revised Condition.

Revised Condition 6: ***Retaining walls along the Newport Way right-of-way shall be terraced where right-of-way width is adequate. The wall abutting the sidewalk shall be no greater than 6 feet in height. Additionally Where a secondary retaining wall is required in the terraced areas, the both retaining walls shall be setback a minimum of 4 feet from the face of the 4-foot retaining wall and softened with a combination of climbing vines, columnar trees and large shrubs obscured with landscaping and/or decorative wall materials. The two walls shall be separated by sufficient space to accommodate adequate soil depth and width to allow healthy growth of the proposed plant material used for screening.***

New Condition 26: ***Provide a 10-foot wide bike/pedestrian path along the Abossein parcel frontage where the existing bike lane on Juniper merges with the sidewalk along the Abossein***

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parcel. The bike path shall reconnect back to the existing bike lane on Newport Way at the point where the pedestrian facility becomes a boardwalk along Newport Way.

New Condition 27: The garage opening visible from the central plaza of the 86-unit building shall be screened with architectural elements consistent with the treatment of the plaza walls to conceal the garage. The design of the screening shall be coordinated with the blank wall treatment required for the wall next to the electric vehicle charging station.

PRICE – Where does the retaining wall occur on the plan – Condition 6. *Tarce* showed the slide for the Green Necklace and the retaining walls. The path through the critical is a soft surface area. There is no wall required at that section.

HARRISON – Walkway in front of the building. One is a private and one is a public walkway. *Tarce* – That is correct. HARRISON asked why someone would take the public walkway when the private one is shorter. *Tarce* explained the public walkway follows the street. HARRISON – has there been any discussion about parking for the workers and vehicles. *Tarce* – not at this point. HARRISON – would like to hear at the next meeting where the construction vehicles will be and workers will park.

BRENNAN – Wall adjacent to the sidewalk? *Tarce* will provide the information in the follow-up.

MORGAN – asked for clarification on Revised Condition 6. *Tarce* will show the 4 foot wall and 6 foot wall in two sections at the next meeting.

LEONG – What is the speed limit currently? 20 mph during school, then 30 mph. Is there another way traffic can get to I-90 from the south end? HARRISON stated – Sunset through Issaquah High School. There will be a lot of traffic that will be on Newport Way.

HARRISON – will the pedestrian cross walks (3) be lighted? *Doug Schlepp* – the code required any two lane section on a roundabout be signalized except where there is a single lane but they will be working with the developer to make the crossing safe.

LEONG – Why is there a roundabout on Newport and not on Oak Street? *Schlepp* – The road improvements being provided are regional in context. The city identified a roundabout several years back and the developer is carrying that forward.

Bob Wenzel – owner of the project – P.O. Box 6127 Bellevue, WA 98008

Wenzel provided some history on the purchase of the property. He was involved with the platting of the property and purchased the Abossein property for the vault. He shared information about the site conditions and how important it is to save as many trees as possible. There are 117 parking stalls for the building. He discussed the roundabout and how that project came into being. He believes the roundabout will take care of the traffic adequately and help with traffic flow. He explained the use of the water vault and the properties that will be using that vault.

Public Comment Open 8:23Mary Lynch 2690 NW Oakcrest Drive Issaquah, WA 98027

Lynch presented a handout with the definition of a Parkway. She shared that bikeways are to be five feet wide but they will no longer be provided. Why is parking being allowed? It does not adhere to standards. The roadway is very dark and very poorly lit. Lighting has not been addressed. There is no up-to-date traffic study with the current design or traffic including bus traffic. She would like a current study, and asked what is proposed for the roundabouts. This is being designed out to 2030. This is not a safe parkway for pedestrians or traffic. This is a major bicycle trail. Bicycles are not going to want to go around a roundabout. Where is the traffic calming when coming near crosswalks. The signs don't work if the driver's behavior is to go fast. The existing storm water is almost to overflowing now and the impervious surfaces aren't even built out. There doesn't appear to be any screening on top of the buildings. Noise from HVAC will reverberate up the slopes. If the trail is natural it will slip and slide and what does it connect to up and down? Community spaces won't get any sunlight. Where are the dogs going to go? The roundabout is not to parkway standards. There will be a lot of dual haul trucks – how many? How will the slopes be protected, and the housing above? How is the project going to impact IVE school – bus and parent traffic? Pedestrian route for students? Where is construction staff going to park? She does not see this project blending in with the residents that are there already.

Connie Marsh 1175 NW Gilman Blvd. #B11 Issaquah, WA 98027

She has read the SEPA checklist and spoken with Peter Rosen. The mustard color does not work well in the area. She has read the traffic analysis where the level of service will go to Level A. She does not believe this can happen. Please re-look at this. The smaller residential area will be right out only, then left on Holly then left on Juniper. What happens when they will stack up and turn left. It seems inappropriate to funnel traffic next to the school. Everyone has water running through or around their property on Squak Mountain. How much water is coming down the hill and has it been appropriately studied? She believes the project is too dense and the roads won't take care of the traffic. Replanting quantities for the hazard trees? She does not understand who is going to maintain the landscaping in the roundabout, and the Abossein property.

Ron Faull 520 Mountainpark Blvd. SW Issaquah, WA 98027

He is on the Planning and Policy Committee but speaking on his own. He likes the property and the design is commendable. He objects to the development. The property cannot safely support the buildings. He did accept the development on 7th Avenue. He provided some of his background. He has seen the destruction of many properties in California due to mud slides, and earthquakes. He believes Squak Mountain is stable but removing the buttressing will present instability to the mountain. When it rains springs go underneath houses. He does not believe this project should move forward.

David Kappler 255 SE Andrews Street Issaquah, WA 98027

The roundabout and the level of service it provides should be looked at as well as springs, potential slides, and ground water. There is an inadequate understanding of the water situation with the property.

8:49 Public Comment Closed

Tarce clarified the dwelling units equivalent for this project, using the total lot size – the total dwelling units per acre will be is 16.3 which is medium density. All streets in Issaquah are intended for pedestrian activity. They maintain the same requirements. The buildings can be set 0 to 10 feet per code. There are standards for planter areas. The bike lanes are being added not subtracted. There are many amenities that separate the pedestrian from the travel lanes. The City is considering two different elements in design on street parking. It also allows for slowing down of traffic. The City has to balance the traffic mitigation as well as pedestrian safety. The proposed roundabout will be designed for pedestrian safety as well as cars. Medians will be provided to protect pedestrians and to make sure the circulation of the cars is clear. As you go further north it will be evaluated additionally. The City required the applicant to reduce access from two driveways to one driveway. It is not safe for bikes to use the roundabouts so they merge onto a wider sidewalk. Construction comments will be responded to in writing.

Schlepp – Geotechnical analysis 3rd party review. The applicant prepared the analysis. We have received the third party approval.

Questions

BAKH – It doesn't appear to be safe for a bicyclist to hop on to a sidewalk. *Schlepp*- the way the roundabouts are designed is for those who are comfortable to ride through the roundabout, those who are not can get on the sidewalk where it has been widened for that purpose.

HARRISON – What is the state law for bicyclists on the sidewalk? *Schlepp* – The traffic engineer can better answer that. HARRISON – assuming it's not safe for them to jump from the road to the sidewalk. *Sloman* will check on state law and get back to the Commission. BAKH – would like to see the bike lane maintained through the roundabout and give it back. *Schlepp* will respond at the next meeting. HARRISON said he would feel more comfortable, as a bicyclist, going up onto the sidewalk. *Sloman* – there are both commuting and recreational cyclists and each has their own comfort level. HARRISON – There is a concern for bicyclists hitting pedestrians.

PRICE – New Condition 27 – where the sidewalk becomes a bike lane and a sidewalk then merges into a boardwalk. *Tarce* – the boardwalk is only for pedestrians.

LEONG – He likes the modulation of the main building but it's not there for the second building. What is the reason for not continuing the terracing? *Tarce* – We are breaking up the mass in different ways. There is a different articulation and paint color, and there are extended roof lines. LEONG – In the middle there is no connection, and the building does not tie in to the main building and they have separate driveways, and one has a street sign and the other does not. It looks like it belongs to a different development. *Tarce* – The City definitely looked at this. There are balconies, same roof elements. It doesn't appear as big as an issue with this small of a building. LEONG - The garbage collection truck comes in and the bins are inside? *Tarce* – there is a curbside collection path. L202 – to the left of the driveway is meant to be a place they can bring out the trash bins. C402 also calls it out. Residents pull their garbage bins out. LEONG – concerned about the trash pick-up with all the traffic going through.

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BAKH – the garbage trucks will be an impediment to traffic.

Sloman – there are two lanes.

Tarce – Service areas have to be screened.

LEONG – In the 7-unit building when you drive into it, how do you get back out? *Tarce* referred to a slide showing the parking area. LEONG would like this looked at more closely.

Sloman – one of the stalls is a loading staff and could be available for a turnaround spot.

BRENNAN – Related to the street trees and utilities – the utilities and communication lines are underground. Will the other lines be appropriate to the trees so they don't need to be topped off?

Tarce – The mid-size trees were determined to be appropriate. BRENNAN – you may want to check that closer. BRENNAN – 7 foot walls? And what is the treatment? *Tarce* - any wall over four feet needs to be landscaped or have decorative aspects applied. Currently, the wall is along the property line. A condition requires they need to be set back, but the intent was to ensure that if there is an adjacent property they wouldn't be impacted by a tall wall, but this area adjacent is a treed area. They need to still apply for an AAS. The blank walls – How can you respond to that condition. BRENNAN will be asking for additional design solutions when it comes back.

David Burnett – Milbrandt Architects, 25 Central Way #210, Kirkland, WA 98033

He reviewed the blank walls. It is not at its full design and the larger wall will be addressed at that time. Others can be opened up with windows. *Sloman* – The City is working with the applicant and they know how important the blank walls are to the Commission and comments are welcome now prior to the City asking them to address them.

MORGAN - North wall – large blank wall.

Rick Tolleshaugh – Milbrandt Architects, 25 Central Way #210, Kirkland, WA 98033

If there is opportunity, we will install additional windows. *Sloman* – if you look at a site plan, the center of the driveways and the forested site to the north may obscure that part of the building, but we will look at it more closely.

MORGAN – In the staff report on the density bonus – is the 6th floor more than the 2,400 square feet? *Tarce* – look at sheet A3 – diagram on the height – Base height is 54 feet. Beyond the 54 feet the base density begins to be counted on the space that is occupied.

MORGAN – colors of the building. The staff report talks about a color change ABOVE the third floor. *Tarce* – will clarify that. *Sloman* – Pedestrians won't see the building behind.

MORGAN – retaining wall height. 16.8 foot wall next to a sidewalk? Why are we putting the sidewalk in and building a huge retaining wall and the sidewalk just stops? *Schlepp* – his part of a larger road improvement project. In the future the sidewalk will be extended. The City is trying to address those tall walls and to have them set back.

MORGAN - Condition 10 – concerned about narrow driveways especially along busy roads. Can an adjustment of standards be completed for this? *Sloman* – we can go up to 22 feet. We are trying to keep the speed slower with the narrower driveway throat. *Sloman* – there are two travel lanes there also.

HARRISON – He likes the rain gardens, and believes the roundabout is necessary. The structure as it is now, does not denote anything to the Pacific Northwest. He is very concerned with the water once the portion of the hillside is taken away. The main entrance is not obvious. He is very concerned about the pedestrian crossing at the roundabout. If the current crosswalk is moved halfway down, closer to the Issaquah Valley Elementary School, it would be safer. And the other crosswalk be moved halfway to the library building. The crosswalks should not be integrated with the roundabout. He doesn't believe that traffic needs to be slower on Newport. It's already very slow due to the volume of traffic.

BAKH – The bicycle path. He would like to see the walking area and bicycle area separated.

PRICE – He would like to see site sections through the retaining wall.

LEONG – He thanked the applicant and the staff for their work. As you come out of the driveway, the driver needs to have a better line of vision. There needs to be a hammerhead/turnaround at the smaller building in the parking area.

BRENNAN – He appreciates the way the townhomes have been added in. It should be a more enjoyable interface. There's some great opportunity for landscape design. He's still not clear about condition #13. What will be done with the community amenities space? He expects some design solutions for the blank walls. He has some concern as to the entry to the building. It's not obvious. Ensure there is not a safety concern for the residents with the retaining walls and the planters. The large retaining wall next to the street is not a good condition. He asked for the revised conditions.

MORGAN – he thanked the applicant and the team for the extremely thorough package. He agrees the building creates a lot of housing downtown, walking distance to schools and retail. He is not qualified to address any of the slope or water issues. He is concerned what the retaining wall will look like. The blank wall on the north side is definitely an issue and critical on how it gets treated. Maybe a gabled roof can be added to the entrance. Colors are sensitive and he's not a fan of the mustard color.

SOWA – He thanked the staff and the applicant. He expressed his appreciation to the public.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Smith
Recording Secretary