MINUTES

DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
6:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 15, 2023

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1. Call to Order

The hybrid meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by CHAIR SANFORD.

Commissioners Present:	Chair Sanford, Commissioners Brennan, Dillon, Gilbert, Ikeda, and Morgan, Jr. (Alt)
Absent:	Vice-Chair Shore and Commissioner Price (Excused)
Staff Present:	Emily Adams, Associate Planner Christian Geitz, Planning Manager

2. Approval of Minutes

a) CHAIR SANFORD asked for corrections or comments regarding the November 16, 2022 Minutes. There were none and the Minutes were approved.

3. Public Comment (General)

There were no requests to speak.

4. Regular Business

a) **Newport Way Townhomes (Inneswood Multi-Family) Community Conference, (I)** *(00:01)*

Presented by:
Emily Adams, Associate Planner

CHAIR SANFORD stated that the order of operation would be Appearance of Fairness, Staff Presentation, Applicant Presentation, Public Comment, and Development Commission Comment.

Geitz stated that the project is in the initial stage of a formal Site Development process and was a Quasi-Judicial matter.

Adams gave the staff presentation and stated that the subject is not a revision of previous projects. *(00:03)*

Bob Wenzl, Inneswood Estates, and Jeremy Pfarr, Millbrandt Architects, gave the applicant presentation. *(00:07)*

CHAIR SANFORD opened Public Comment. *(00:19)*

- Simone Hausmann (present), 944 10th Place Northwest, stated that a Critical Area exists behind her property. In the past 10 months, three trees have fallen onto property but the Homeowners Association (HOA) states that nothing can be done in maintenance of the area. Many trees will be removed for the project being presented but nothing will be done for residents in danger from falling trees elsewhere.

Wenzl replied understanding the tree issue and explained where and why trees were being cleared or not cleared on the presented project. There is a steep slope. Fallen trees become natural habitat in native tracts.

Hausmann stated not minding that there are trees left to fall, but concerned about the safety of her family after a tree fell onto her property recently. The trees are safety hazards. Hausmann restated not understanding why the development is allowed to clear trees but that unhealthy trees cannot be removed when there is a safety concern.

Adams replied that there is a permit available to remove Critical Area trees if there are hazards and offered contact information to address the issue. The HOA can apply for a permit to remove hazardous trees in Critical Areas.

Hausmann asked how the noise ordinance will be enforced during building of the Newport Way Townhomes.

Wenzl replied that citizens can inform the city if code is not complied with.

Hausmann asked if there will be community space developed.

Wenzl replied no, but a pedestrian path will be connected to Newport Way.

- David Kappler (present), 255 Southeast Andrews Street, stated that the pedestrian trail design should be built to last. Regarding trees, keeping the forested hillside is important while also acknowledging that root rot is an issue in Issaquah.

Wenzl replied that a condition of the short plat approval is to connect the pathway from the existing subdivision and Newport Way. There will be hand work but no machines.

CHAIR SANFORD closed Public Comment and opened Commissioner Questions and Comments. *(00:33)*

COMMISSIONER MORGAN, JR. asked if comments should follow questions. CHAIR SANFORD replied that the idea is to encourage an informal discussion. COMMISSIONER MORGAN, JR. asked for clarification regarding the through-block passage and the woonerf design. Pfarr replied that the site is unique with only the Newport Way frontage, and stated understanding that a through-block passage would be necessary to design with units in the back, also considering topography challenges. COMMISSIONER MORGAN, JR. asked for staff opinion, as the solution does not appear to meet the intention of code. Pfarr stated that there are two secondary through-block passages connecting Newport Way to the woonerf. COMMISSIONER MORGAN, JR. asked for clarification regarding the site plan, Pfarr replied by describing access. COMMISSIONER MORGAN, JR. stated a concern regarding difficulty for cars needing to turn around within the development and Pfarr replied that the roadway is wide. COMMISSIONER MORGAN, JR. stated that renderings of frontage elevation differences will be important to see later in the process. Pfarr stated that renderings at this point are conceptual and that the main challenge with the site is the topography. Landscaping details will be developed. COMMISSIONER MORGAN, JR. asked if sidewalk detail is known at this point, and if construction can begin without a concern regarding accommodating the sidewalk design in the future. Pfarr replied that the sidewalk location is known.

COMMISSIONER IKEDA asked if light green areas on the site plan are site limits for construction. Pfarr replied landscape space. COMMISSIONER IKEDA asked if there would be slope stabilization above the homes, and how water will be taken away. Sheri Murata, Civil Engineer with Core Design, replied that all retaining walls will have drains at the bottom to capture water from the slope, directing either to the vault or the well across the street. COMMISSIONER IKEDA asked if the parking area is separated with an oil-water separator, and Murata replied that there will be one vault under community space providing water quality treatment as well as detention. There is a proposal to expand the existing vault across the street to provide treatment and detention from the frontage. COMMISSIONER IKEDA asked if there is a Plan B as documents indicated there is not enough information for certainty at this point, and Murata replied that a Plan B would be addressed if needed. COMMISSIONER IKEDA asked if a garbage truck would drive in but need to back out, regarding roads. Murata replied that a plan for access must be approved by the garbage company. COMMISSIONER IKEDA stated a concern that a retaining wall will need to be built for seismic activity and loads.

COMMISSIONER GILBERT asked if parking could be redesigned to be more accessible to units. Pfarr stated that each townhouse units has two garage stalls meeting code, and parking spaces are intended for guest parking. The space will be maximized as much as possible. A pedestrian connection can be explored between parcels to connect guest parking. COMMISSIONER GILBERT asked if there may be a crosswalk installed across Juniper Street at Newport Way. Pfarr replied that a crosswalk would be ideal, but not aware if the idea has been explored at this point. Geitz replied that Public Works is working through the Newport Way roadway improvements. There are three roundabouts and crosswalk features proposed. Public Works will be coordinating on the review to align right-of-way improvements.

COMMISSIONER BRENNAN asked for clarification regarding pedestrian amenities. Pfarr replied that the intent is a primarily pedestrian and bicycle friendly passageway through the site that can also accommodate vehicles to private garages. Seating, sidewalks, and plantings are anticipated. Additional information can be provided when the Site Development Permit (SDP) is

submitted. COMMISSIONER BRENNAN stated that the space will be important for residents and additional details will be helpful. COMMISSIONER BRENNAN asked where the trail passes through to Newport Way, and Wenzl described a rendering. COMMISSIONER BRENNAN asked for clarification regarding the visual experience of retaining walls in the front. Pfarr replied that retaining walls will be 10 feet maximum and terraced. Two 10 foot retaining walls with green space between for planting is the plan. Towards the bottom of the approach, walls will be shorter. The intention is to integrate landscape to soften the walls. Pre-application feedback was to locate the main access to the site as far from Juniper Street as possible to alleviate turning traffic. Wenzl replied that a trellis with ivy could be a feature to soften a wall.

COMMISSIONER DILLON stated that more options for guest parking in terms of functionality are needed, anticipating that parking availability is going to be an issue. Pfarr replied that the comment will be investigated.

CHAIR SANFORD asked about a dead-end passage in the woonerf, and if the area is mixed-use or residential only. Pfarr replied residential only. CHAIR SANFORD stated that parking stalls are inappropriate for a woonerf and 54 garage doors back onto the through-block passage. Pedestrian and bicycle traffic as well as a play area create fundamental concerns in an area that is not actually a woonerf but resembling an alley. If the woonerf is approved, a precedent could be set in the city. Pfarr replied that the challenge is providing access to the rear row of townhomes and having understood that a mixed-mode passage would work. The likelihood of someone coming through who is not familiar with the site would be small. CHAIR SANFORD stated that the project must be responsive to current code, but new draft code addresses dead end situations. While functional, to call the access a mixed-mode through-block passage stretches the original intent. CHAIR SANFORD asked if there will be a second passage. Adams replied that staff does not view the mixed-mode passage as adhering to Central Issaquah Design Standards (CIDDS). The Pre-Application packet submitted had a pedestrian only design. CHAIR SANFORD stated that a Juliet balcony is a step from the Craftsman style and might be softened.

COMMISSIONER MORGAN, JR. stated that the pedestrian access could be the through-block passage with the woonerf standing alone. Pfarr replied that providing the front entrance for rear units is the concern, and that the front entry for a residential unit must be either on a street or through-block passage in code. There was not enough room to accomplish on the high side. COMMISSIONER MORGAN, JR. stated agreement with CHAIR SANFORD regarding Juliet balconies, but otherwise that the building designs look good. COMMISSIONER MORGAN, JR. stated that people should be encouraged to spend less time in cars and that more parking stalls should not be necessary.

COMMISSIONER DILLON asked if the current through-block passage could be redefined as a private street, providing access to back units. Off-site bicycles and pedestrians should not be encouraged due to the safety issues mentioned earlier. The pedestrian stairway entrance should meet through-block passage requirements. Pfarr stated that feedback regarding options for the approach is helpful.

COMMISSIONER BRENNAN stated agreement that the layout is good considering site constraints and the through-block passages are more appropriate in more intense, large urban

blocks. Site constraints and Critical Areas need to be considered. Frontage will be the public face. The concept idea, retaining wall treatment and trail connection are good. The ownership option is good to see presented to the market.

COMMISSIONER DILLON asked if there may be an opportunity for a pedestrian path to connect from the woonerf to the trail to further circulation elements.

COMMISSIONER IKEDA stated that the site is difficult with challenges and stated appreciating the work toward design.

CHAIR SANFORD closed Commissioner comments and questions.

5. Reports

a) **City Council Update** *(01:12)*

Presented by Christian Geitz, Planning Manager

Geitz stated that the Planning Policy Commission had provided a final recommendation for Title 18 to the Council committee. The Council committee will review on February 28, 2023, followed by city Council, a final hearing and final deliberations in April and May 2023.

6. Other Business/Announcements

a) **Upcoming Schedule** *(01:13)*

Geitz stated that the Administrator office has begun outreach for new Commission members as well as to members with seats ending after April, 2023.

7. Adjournment

With no further business to conduct, CHAIR SANFORD adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Garza, LLC
Recording Secretary