

MINUTES
Warrenton Planning Commission
April 8, 2021
6:00 p.m.
Warrenton City Hall - Commission Chambers
225 S. Main
Warrenton, OR 97146

Chair Paul Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioners Present: Chair Paul Mitchell, Chris Hayward, Mike Moha, Ken Yuill (via Zoom), Christine Bridgens, and Kevin Swanson (via Zoom, joined at 6:06 p.m.)

Excused: Commissioner Lylla Gaebel

Staff Present: Community Development Director Scott Hess, Public Works Director Collin Stelzig (via Zoom), Secretary Rebecca Sprengeler, and City Attorney Spencer Parsons.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes – 03.11.21

Commissioner Yuill made the motion to approve the minutes from 03.11.21 as written. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Bridgens and passed unanimously.

Mitchell – aye; Hayward - aye; Moha – aye; Yuill – aye; Bridgens - aye

PUBLIC HEARING

SITE DESIGN REVIEW SDR 20-8 & VARIANCE V 21-1 | TRILLIUM HOUSE
MULTIFAMILY DEVELOPMENT

Chair Mitchell opened the public hearing for the Site Design Review (SDR 20-8) for Trillium House Multi-family development located approximately 700 SE 14th Place in Warrenton and for the Variance (V 21-1).

Commissioner Yuill recused himself from this item. Commissioner Bridgens disclosed an ex parte that she has visited the site. Chair Mitchell asked for clarification of the ex parte requirements. City Attorney Spencer Parsons noted a site visit does not qualify as an ex parte; the legal recommendation is to still disclose this as an ex parte of contact, if the entire Planning Commission has not visited the site, and state if this impacts ability to vote. Commissioner Swanson asked for context on the discussion. Chair Mitchell summarized. Commissioner Bridgens stated she does not feel her vote will be impacted by her site visit. Mr. Parsons clarified

this item is a consolidated application; the primary application and variance were submitted together. State law and City ordinance require these be processed as a single application.

Community Development Director Scott Hess clarified that there are two separate motions for the Site Design Review (SDR) and the variance. He asked that the Planning Commission weigh in on staff findings. Mr. Hess reviewed the staff report. The rezone and master plan required traffic study and mitigation. The City did a traffic study indicating required intersection updates for any new development in the Chelsea Gardens area. One of these was a left turn lane from 104 Spur to Ensign Dr. The City requested a rough proportionality study from the developer. The City had third party application done. The City recommends this be moved to development or other funding agreement between the City and developer to move out of land-use approval realm. Mr. Hess summarized the parking variance application and background. It is staff's opinion based on the City Code requirements and the developer's analysis of related projects in the community that the variance will not be an issue. The tradeoff with the variance is an improvement of amenities that are requested through the master plan process. The addition of the parking would reduce amenities on site. The Code states the developer can receive a 10% reduction in parking for including vanpool and carpool spaces and another 10% parking reduction if the site has more than the minimum number of parking spaces. The developer has done both. Staff generally recommends approval for the variance. Mr. Hess noted that there is a culvert of unknown ownership on the southwest side of the property. There is currently drainage from Home Depot and ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation) running through it and draining underneath Spur 104 and into the full drainage system. The City and Legal Counsel recommended not providing approval on a land use application that would create a trespass. There is research being done on the title for this property. There is potential development of an alternative solution if the original title cannot be located, and the title approval process is unsuccessful. It is staff's understanding that this can be approved with the condition that this issue be resolved correctly through finding the property owner or an alternative solution. Staff recommends approval of the application. Mr. Hess noted it meets design requirements, has main entrances, is a secured building, is of multiple colors and materials; it will be a nice amenity in the location.

Mr. Hess noted the applicant requested an amendment to condition of approval 15 that the language be changed from "...prior to *submitting* any engineer or building plans or documents" to "...prior to *approval* of engineer or building plans." Staff feels this is a friendly amendment; the risk is all on the developer's side. Commissioner Hayward asked for clarification of the amendment to condition of approval 15. Mr. Hess noted that as worded, if the application is approved with conditions, the applicant's only next steps would be to work through the development agreement; everything else stops. The requested amendment will allow for the development agreement to be done prior to *approval* of building permits. This allows extra time for negotiations between the developer and the City for the funding mechanism while the final plans are being reviewed.

Chair Mitchell asked the applicant to speak.

Stuart Emmons, Emmons Design, introduced himself and thanked Mr. Hess, Public Works Director Collin Stelzig, and Adam Daily for their fine work. Mr. Emmons introduced Jim Evans

and Nina Reed from NOHA (Northwest Oregon Housing Authority). Ms. Reed made some comments about NOHA and introduced interim Executive Director of NOHA, Jim Evans. Mr. Evans commented on the necessity of and his excitement for this project. Briana Murtaugh, with Greenlight Development, introduced herself and commented on the work of her employer. Mr. Emmons made introductory comments and noted his experience with housing projects. Jay Nees, Project Manager for Walsh Construction, introduced himself. He noted Walsh Construction's experience, strengths, partnerships, and progress on design work. Eric Hoovestol, Civil Engineer with Firwood Design Group, introduced himself and made comments about projects Firwood Design Group has worked on in Warrenton. He noted his excitement for this project and is honored to be on this great team for a much-needed housing project.

Mr. Emmons presented the Trillium Team Process from a digital presentation (Attachment A). The 2019 Clatsop County Housing report identified need for more housing on North Coast. Eleven sites in Clatsop County were being considered. Many sites were tested. This site was chosen because of proximity to services, need, transportation services available, and proximity to jobs. The Chelsea Gardens area name originates from old plans for a town named Chelsea in this area. There were two C-MU (Commercial Mixed Use) framework plans. Conversations with property owners in this area have indicated a desire to create a diverse residential neighborhood. Mr. Emmons created a development plan and worked with the developer on a roadway system and layout for this area. The Trillium House Project is a four-story model that includes security, management office, laundry services, playground, yard, community garden, and bike shed. These amenities are available because of the choice to do four stories instead of three. The project won competitive state-wide funding in August 2020 that included scope of the project and budget. Construction costs are a little over \$10 million. Mr. Emmons noted the parking variance allows for a large community garden and playground; he does not feel all the parking stalls are needed. There is some Home Depot and ODOT water going into the culvert of unknown ownership. The applicant wants to have storm water drain into the culvert too. The process to establish ownership of the culvert is in progress; there is an alternate route for stormwater if ownership cannot be established. After three pre-application meetings with the City in 2020, the applicant was asked to do a traffic study, especially focused on the Spur 104 and Ensign intersection. The traffic study by Lancaster Mobley stated "...the installation of a dedicated turn lane as part of the proposed development is not necessary or recommended." Mr. Emmons noted the importance of staying within the budget regarding City-requested improvements. The improvements will make other projects more financially viable; it is kickstarting the neighborhood. Mr. Emmons noted the off-site costs are \$437,621. The developer acknowledges there are traffic issues in Warrenton, but there is also a responsibility to the project budget. There were brief comments about the left-hand turn lane for the Ensign and 104 intersection. Mr. Emmons noted this project is investing in Warrenton. The project cost is about \$10.5 million; the goal is to spend 1/3 - 1/2 of the construction budget locally. Mr. Emmons noted the need for local workforce housing.

Chair Mitchell asked about the number and sizes of the rental units. Ms. Murtaugh clarified that there are 42 units. There are 11 three-bedroom units, 19 two-bedrooms, and 12 one-bedrooms. With the tax-credit financing, the rent is in the \$800 - \$1,100 range. Mr. Emmons noted the need for three-bedroom apartments in Warrenton.

Commissioner Swanson asked about the projected percentage of increase to peak-hour traffic. Mr. Emmons noted the estimated addition is five cars during peak evening traffic for the Spur 104 and Ensign intersection. There was discussion about vehicles per unit and the parking variance. The variance allows for a community garden and larger greenspace.

Commissioner Bridgens asked which street will be the entry and exit points and the total number of entrances and exits. Mr. Emmons stated most entry would be off 14th Place. There is also the Galena Court entrance. There was brief discussion about vehicle trips and traffic flow. There was brief discussion about an emergency exit by Home Depot. This is not planned as the property is private. The proximity to shopping and services was noted; this may lead to more foot traffic. There was discussion about additional sidewalks in the future of the Chelsea Gardens district. Mr. Hess noted the decision documents for the rezone and the master plan consider a system development area charge in addition to the standard SCD's to cover sidewalks, parks, trails, and roadway improvements as required by the rezone. Discussion continued. There was discussion about the Galena Court alley; it is gravel for emergency ingress and egress; there are no sidewalks. Mr. Hess noted this is one of the offsite improvements requested by the Fire Department. Commissioner Moha asked about street parking on SE 14th Place. There was brief discussion. Mr. Hess noted it could technically be used for parking. The primary entrance for emergency vehicles is 14th Place and the secondary entrance is from Galena. There was discussion about the stormwater runoff; there would be an increase to the existing pipes if needed. Mr. Hoovestol noted this project will be providing stormwater detention on site as required by the City, estimated at \$75,000 - \$80,000; this will match existing runoff rates. The capacity analysis done on the unknown culvert showed it can withstand the '100-year storm.' The existing drainage has sufficient capacity. Commissioner Bridgens inquired about waiting for further development of the area before sidewalks and other infrastructure come in. Mr. Emmons noted they are hoping for a phase II. Mr. Hoovestol asked for clarification on condition thirteen for sewer inspections. Mr. Parsons clarified that a staff response to this question could wait until after the public testimony. Commissioner Bridgens asked who will own the project. Ms. Reed responded that the owner of the property will be Trillium House LLC. NOHA will be the sole managing member. It was noted that NOHA is exempt from property taxes.

There were no comments in opposition.

Chair Mitchell closed the public hearing.

Mr. Stelzig clarified that the expectation for condition 13 is a video recording of the main. Typically, repairs are completed by the developer. It was noted past repairs have not usually been significant.

Chair Mitchell asked about ingress and egress traffic. Mr. Hess noted it is anticipated that the population using these apartments will utilize ridesharing and have varying work schedules, similar the new Skipanon apartments; he described the traffic flow and road improvements. It is staff's opinion that the daily traffic will be averaged. The traffic report showed single digit increase in traffic trips to the area during peak hours. There was discussion about the half-street improvements to 14th Place. Mr. Hess noted limitations; half-street improvements are the standard for existing streets or right of ways. Chair Mitchell asked if the gravel alley should be

paved. Mr. Hess responded that the Fire Department asked that it be an all-weather surface that will accept a garbage truck or fire truck; it is not required to be paved because it is not the primary access. Commissioner Moha asked if the Home Depot parking lot is accessible by foot from the Galena gravel alley. Mr. Hess noted it is not fenced off; there is a right-of-way between the two; the parking lot is accessible by foot. Home Depot is private property; there is no internal sidewalk network to request to connect to. It was noted that 14th is a City street. Mr. Hess noted that North side of the 75% street improvement will come when there is a developer on the North side of 14th. Mr. Parsons added that the City must be cognizant of potential takings claim. The presumption is that frontage improvements are proportional to impact of the development. Improvements such as sidewalks and streets that are fronting the development are because the developments impact mandates the improvements be made. A fair and proportional impact will be assigned to future developers. This applies to sidewalk improvements. The area SDC's can be used for those improvements if they are in the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan). SDC's are not typically assigned to one improvement.

Commissioner Bridgens asked about the project timeline.

Chair Mitchell reopened the public hearing.

Mr. Emmons noted the expected timeline is 13 months after breaking ground in the fall. Chair Mitchell noted concerns about loss of property taxes on the property and asked Ms. Reed to speak about NOHA and how it will work. Ms. Reed said housing is infrastructure for the City. NOHA is not for profit. This is a tax credit property. Chair Mitchell restated concerns about loss of tax income for Fire Department, schools, etc. Ms. Reed said this is what the \$143,000 SDC's are for. Discussion continued. Mr. Emmons added that the property taxes for this site are about \$2,000 per year. There is expectation of increased property development in this area that may lead to future property tax revenue.

Chair Mitchell closed public hearing.

Chair Mitchell noted he appreciates the affordability of the housing. He likes that the variance allows greenspace and a community garden. He has no issue with the parking variance. He noted concerns with continual growth without additional property tax income. He believes phase II will require more improvements to the infrastructure.

Commissioner Hayward noted the planning of the project looks well done and made comments about the use; the project meets a lot of needs; it may not impact homeless population but will help the workforce population.

Commissioner Bridgens agreed the project is needed; she is bothered this location will not produce property taxes to support schools, police, fire, etc. She hopes to not repeat this.

Commissioner Swanson noted concerns that the traffic study does not account for impacts on whole city. Mr. Hess responded that the traffic study for the rezone included eight different intersections including up to Harbor and Hwy 101. The rough proportionality for the traffic study notes that a larger percentage of improvement costs are paid for intersections nearest to the

development site. This percentage decreases for each intersection as the distance from the site increases. The rough proportionality analysis from DKS uses the same methodology; five of eight intersections were determined relevant to Trillium House with percentages allocated. The City had a wide scope for the traffic study; the applicant focused the study to the development area; between the two is the development agreement discussion.

Commissioner Moha made the motion to approve the Site Design Review SDR 20-8, for Trillium House apartments, located approximately 700 SE 14th Place, based on the findings of the staff report, conditions of approval, and discussion with the amendment to number 15. The last sentence should be “This agreement shall be signed by both parties prior to approval of any engineering or building plans or documents.” Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hayward and passed by majority.

Mitchell – aye; Swanson - aye; Hayward - aye; Moha – aye; Yuill – abstain; Bridgens - aye

Commissioner Moha made the motion to approve the Variance V 21-1, for Trillium House apartments, located approximately 700 SE 14th Place, for parking reduction, based on the findings in the staff report and discussion. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hayward and passed by majority.

Mitchell – aye; Swanson - aye; Hayward - aye; Moha – aye; Yuill – abstain; Bridgens - aye

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS & PROJECT UPDATES

Mr. Hess noted Clatsop County discovered a street vacation of the Galena cul-de-sac within the Yuill property; there is a note specifying it is for block 2; it is not for block 1 and 2. This created a hanging piece of right-of-way that was assumed to be vacated. The City Manager is aware. The City Commission will finalize the street vacation.

Mr. Hess noted the Economic Development Study will be presented to the Planning Commission possibly in June; there will be adopting language in late June/early July. Staff has been working with DLCD (Department of Land Conservation & Development) on funding for a Goal 5 Economic Development update to the City; there is a draft Economic Opportunity Analysis (EOA); the committee’s second TAC (Technical Advisory Committee) meeting is April 13th; there is contract with CREST (Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce); DLCD is working on this; the consultant is Community Attributes; to be completed by June 30th; there will be Comprehensive Plan changes and amendments based on the new EOA.

Mr. Hess noted his last day with the City of Warrenton is April 23rd. He is in awe of the work of the Planning Commission. He complemented the City and the people here. Chair Mitchell asked about an Interim Planner. Will Caplinger is currently under contract to be the Interim Planner; he will be working on project items for the Planning Commission and City Commission; he has assisted with past City projects and is very familiar with City Code. Mr. Hess noted upcoming agenda items. Mr. Hess noted Mr. Caplinger is excited and will be presenting via Zoom from Taiwan.

Commissioner Bridgens noted a noise complaint of home occupation auto repair in Astoria; she asked what the process for making an addition to WMC (Warrenton Municipal Code). Mr. Hess noted several options but recommended sending an email to the City Manager in the interim; Discussion continued.

Chair Mitchell thanked Mr. Hess for his time, noting he did a great job and was very organized.

There being no further business, Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Next Meeting: May 13, 2021

APPROVED:


Paul Mitchell, Chair

ATTEST:


Rebecca Sprengeler, Secretary