

**MINUTES OF THE
Lone Tree Planning Commission Meeting
May 26, 2015**

Lone Tree Civic Center

1. Attendance

In attendance were:

Martha Sippel, Chair
Dave Kirchner, Vice-Chair
Andrew Dodgen, Planning Commissioner
Roy Kline, Planning Commissioner
Stephen Mikołajczak, Planning Commissioner
Herb Steele, Planning Commissioner

Absent:

Rhonda Carlson, Planning Commissioner

Also in attendance from City staff were:

Kelly First, Community Development Director
Jennifer Drybread, Senior Planner
Hans Friedel, Planner II

2. 5:00 p.m. Presubmittal Site Visit Agenda

The Commissioners and planning staff conducted a presubmittal site visit at Tract GG in RidgeGate.

3. Regular Meeting Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. with a quorum.

4. Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest stated.

5. Public Comment

No members of the public provided public comment.

6. Minutes of the April 28, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting

Commissioner Steele moved, and Commissioner Kline seconded, to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2015 meeting.

7. Presubmittal presentation of Tract GG in RidgeGate by the applicant, Lisa Evans of Century Communities

Ms. Drybread introduced the prospective applicant, Ms. Evans of Century Communities. Ms. Evans explained that they were before the Commission to provide a history and progression of the site prior to a formal hearing. The Tract GG site plan originally had 85 single-family residential lots and did not preserve the drainage channel. Saving the channel, as opposed to over-lot grading as was originally planned, required a detailed slope analysis and resulted in a reduction in lots from the original 85 to 70. She stated that they did not arrive at the current iteration easily – there was a lot of work going into it. The goal was an enclave community with expansive views. They would try to minimize the impact on native vegetation.

Ms. Evans said there were also more vehicular crossings and connections prior to the current iteration (fifth submittal). The most current iteration features a pedestrian crossing, primary amenity area, and a landscaped entrance. She also emphasized the pedestrian connections inherent in the site plan. Cabela Drive is shown terminating in an emergency vehicle access that wraps around Tract GG to the south and west. In the future, as more rural, estate lots are developed further up the bluffs, Cabela Drive will serve as their primary access. The drainage does fill-up in storm events, and therefore is not a place for recreation.

Chair Sippel inquired as to the location of the central amenity area. Ms. Evans stated that it was intended to have a pool and outdoor seating area.

Commissioner Dodgen inquired if the roofs would be higher than those at Montecito. Ms. Evans responded that the roofs would be higher. In terms of their relationship to the homes in Montecito, they would be up to 100 feet higher at the south end of the project. The lots right next to Montecito would be about 20 feet higher. However, the differential between the top of the homes and the bluffs would be similar.

Commissioner Kirchner asked how much higher the homes on the northeast end of the site would be compared to Montecito, especially lots 25 and 26. Todd Johnson, the project engineer, stated they would be approximately 60-feet higher.

Ms. Evans continued that they created a subarea plan, which among other things, promotes one story homes in higher areas, etc. Commissioner Kirchner expressed concern about “builder’s discretion” with regard to the height

stipulations. He inquired about the potential effects of the site, post approval, being sold to a different builder. He inquired as to whether the subarea plan would be binding. Ms. Evans stated that they would be guidelines to work towards, but not necessarily restrictions.

Commissioner Steele inquired about the average lot size in comparison to Montecito. Ms. Evans stated that all of the lots are larger than Montecito. Commissioner Steele continued that it in Montecito there was rock between the homes, a Ms. Evans stated that they do not have typical lots due to the topography. Houses would have various orientations and private spaces within their own lots – creating a nestled effect. In terms of specific landscaping and fencing between lots, those were not yet determined.

Ms. Evans introduced Paul Brady, the project architect. Mr. Brady showed various mass and bulk renderings to give an overview of the buildings and discussed the lot geometry. The houses would have varying roof planes. The intent is to have natural materials that would fit into the landscape, yet offer a contemporary edge. He explained that the houses would have asymmetric, minimum side setbacks of 3 feet on the upslope side and 9 feet on the downslope side. This off-centered alignment he felt, handled drainage in a better way than running down the center line between parcels. Mr. Brady furthered that average lot size was over 10,000 sf. They were working to have bulk planes where each floor or mass would step back on the rear – responding to grade. The “twist” in architecture breaks up parallel wall planes, creating interesting “ins” and “outs.”

Commissioner Kirchner, furthering Commissioner Steele’s earlier inquiry, asked if it would be all rock between houses or if there was room for vegetation. Mr. Brady stated that there would be room for 2 feet of vegetation due to the fire code requirement that vegetation be five feet from houses. Commissioner Kirchner expressed further concern that the height of the cluster of buildings immediately to the north of the drainage channel would appear to be three-stories tall from the hiking trails.

Commissioner Steele inquired about the number, height, and materials of retaining walls. Todd Johnson responded that there was about 100 feet of topography rising up the bluffs from along the drainage feature (from north to south). They sought to push the walls out to the drainage way so that the lots did not feel like a canyon. The retaining walls will would range from 8 feet up to 10-15 feet in height; however, they would be tiered. There would not be a single-faced, 25-foot wall. Materials had not been chosen yet for the walls. He stated that there might be some vegetation between the terraces. Commissioner Steele expressed support for planting in the tiers between the retaining walls.

Commissioner Steele inquired about any consultation with the Colorado Department of Wildlife. Ms. Evans explained that they contracted a full wildlife

assessments and study. She responded that there are no endangered species living on the property. Consultants informed them that their development would not have adverse impacts on native vegetation and wildlife.

Commissioner Kirchner inquired about that connection to Montecito. Ms. Evans stated that it would offer emergency vehicle and pedestrian access only. There are a variety of methods for accomplishing this, including knock-down bollards. It was not her intent to see it barricaded with chains and/or a gate.

Mr. Brady presented slides showing general building massing and forms; but not detailed architectural renderings – the detail work would happen later. The subarea plan would have specific restrictions for some lots. Ms. First added that the subarea plan would be subject to Planning Commission review and City Council approval but not recorded. Mr. Brady said the highest lots (19 and 25) would be designated as 1- or 1.5- story houses. Similarly, lots on the ends of rows would help massing taper into the site contours by being lower houses.

Mr. Brady indicated the roads traverse 100 feet of elevation from one end of the tract to the other, and there is about 3' of grade between houses. The lots are designed in such a way to work with the contours of the land and mitigate against the slope. There would be stepped floors, and steps going into casitas. The houses would work with the slope offering sunken and raised areas. Patios in the rear would be on the uphill portion of the houses. Also three of the five models will not feature front-loaded garages, helping to work with grade and add streetscape diversity.

Commissioner Kirchner expressed concern that the 1.5-story houses appeared like 2-story house. The applicant stated that the bulk of the second story was reduced – these would be main floor masters, but have 2-3 bedrooms upstairs. It would be 2/3rds down, 1/3 up type layout.

Commissioner Dodgen asked about the range of housing sizes from smallest to largest. The applicant responded that they would vary roughly between 2,000square feet and 4000 square feet in size.

Commissioner Kline asked about the exterior architecture of the homes especially the side and rear facades facing the trail. Mr. Brady stated that the goal was for four-sided architecture.

Commissioner Kirchner stated that there is a substantial amount of erosion on the eastern portion of the site and inquired how this would be handled. The engineer stated that areas eroding today would require stabilization and retention integration – for example, pushing back a 2:1 grade slope with 4:1 slope utilizing retention walls.

Commissioner Steele asked about how the site sheds water from the higher elevations into the channel. The project engineer replied that they would be looking to slow down the water on the south end of the project, hold it back, and release it at a slower rate – holding water at the crossings. Water being released over time rather than all at once would have the added benefit of helping to preserve and stabilize the channel while controlling drainage. He said there is a system up on top of the retaining wall of Montecito today that captures water so it does not sheet flow over the retaining walls.

Ms. Evans added that though portions of lots 1 and 2 have portions outside of the Southgate Water District boundary, these lot portions did not contain landscaped elements requiring irrigation and were driveways.

Ms. Evans concluded by thanking the Commission for their time.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Sippel adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

These minutes have been reviewed and confirmed by

Mathia Sippel (name), on 6/22/15 (date)