**MINUTES OF THE**
Lone Tree Planning Commission Meeting
July 14, 2015

**Lone Tree Civic Center**

1. **Attendance**

In attendance were:

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

In attendance from city staff were:

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

2. **Regular Meeting Call to Order**

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

3. **Conflict of Interest**

Commissioner Kline recused himself from the RidgeGate III and Schwab Trainstation Circle Projects.

4. **Public Comment**

No members of the public spoke.

5. **Minutes of the June 23, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting**

Commissioner Carlson moved, and Commission Dodgen seconded, to approve the minutes of the June 23th meeting, and they were approved unanimously.

6. **RidgeGate III (Martin Fein) Apartments, Project SP15-29R, located east of Park Meadows Blvd. and south of Commonwealth Street in RidgeGate, proposes a 219-unit apartment building on 3.18 acres.**

Ms. Drybread introduced the project consisting of a request for approval of a Site Improvement Plan (SIP) to construct a four-story, 219-unit multi-family apartment building on 3.18 acres in RidgeGate. The property is located in a commercial mixed use zone area that allows residential by right. The building design is in conformance with the City's Design Guidelines. The building has undergone several significant changes since it was first proposed to the RidgeGate Design Review Committee (DRC). Building colors were modified to distinguish this building from the apartments to the north of this site, yet are compatible with surrounding development.

Ms. Drybread introduced Mr. Darryl Jones with Coventry Development on behalf of RidgeGate to introduce the applicant. He reiterated that the project was consistent with subarea plan and other RidgeGate developments. He introduced Mr. Steinberg, the project architect, to present the development.

Mr. Steinberg stated that the proposed multifamily project was similar in concept to The Vue, now AMLI, in that it is a four-story, courtyard-style multifamily complex wrapping around a five-story structured parking garage. The amenity center is located on top of the building. Compared to the AMLI, this building is more contemporary and features more prominent glazing and a lighter color palette per DRC recommendations.

Commissioner Steele stated that it is an exciting project and he likes the clean look and colors. He inquired about the parking numbers. Mr. Steinberg said the ratio is 1.68 parking spaces per unit, 356 total, not including the street parking. They stated that this was comparable to parking ratios at AMLI and they are not aware of problems at that property. Mr. Steele stated that it used to be that the developers wanted less parking and the government more, and now they both are moving towards less parking.

Mr. Tim Wooten, of Martin Fein, said they have extensive experience with parking and apartments of this kind. He said they are over the minimum parking requirement and, if anything, they probably have more parking than they need.

Commissioner Steele said the concept of wrapping the parking with the units was good to limit visibility. He asked about ventilation in the garage. The applicant stated that the garage would be open on two sides.

Commissioner Steele expressed concern about traffic on Park Meadows Boulevard, northbound, turning left (west) onto Lincoln Avenue.

Commissioner Mikolajczak inquired of staff if there were traffic studies done for this project. Ms. First responded that these studies were conducted for the overall RidgeGate mixed-use development, but not specifically for this project.

Mr. Billy Harris, Civil Engineer, stated that due to signalization changes, a second left-turn lane on Lincoln may need to be activated (currently striped). Other than that, the project is not expected to negatively impact traffic.

Commissioner Mikolajczak inquired as to whether Schwab employees were being asked to take specific routes to work to mitigate traffic, and stated that increased traffic in general is a quality of life issue. Commissioner Mikolajczak commented that other apartments to the south are in proximity to the recreation center, parks, and trails. He said he would like to see a small park in this area where residents can walk their dogs and socialize. Mr. Jones said they make an effort to locate housing with a mix of experiences (i.e., some are embedded in the community while others are in more urban locations). He said there will be easy pedestrian connections and trail improvements in the area as development builds out. Mr.Steinberg added that there is a small park to the east of the building.

Commissioner Mikolajczak expressed concern that the material sample board looked darker than the colors represented by the building renderings. Mr. Steinberg described the location of each of the proposed materials and added that they were going to use a light mortar. Commissioner Mikolajczak said he really liked the design of the Chatham Drive side of the building and that distinguishing the look of this project from AMLI was good.

Vice-Chair Kirchner stated that it was a nice project for Lone Tree. He inquired about the level of the amenity center relative to the parking. The applicant stated that it was on the sixth level, located on top of the garage. Parking ratios were described as generally 1 space for each bedroom.

Vice-Chair Kirchner inquired if the only ingress-egress was on Trainstation Circle, and how many lanes were there. Mr. Steinberg stated affirmatively, and that there would be two lanes in and two lanes out to allow for guests to use the call box to access the unit. There was clarification provided about the location of amenities within the project. Vice-Chair Kirchner said the design of the corners of the building is a nice touch and that he really likes the project.

Commissioner Dodgen inquired if the applicant also designed Miramont - the applicant did. He stated that the he lived in the Miramont for six months, and observed there was adequate parking in the garage. He said the demand for parking was on-street, because of convenience. He stated that one issue with the apartments was picking up dog waste, and that many of the dog waste dispensers were out of bags, etc. Mr. Wooten said they can add waste stations but pointed out that that there was an approximate 20 by 40-foot space internal to the apartment where owners can walk their dogs without leaving the area.

Commissioner Dodgen inquired about sound attenuation for units on the east side where light rail would be located. The applicant responded that there would be proper insulation and sheet rock– the same treatment as at AMLI.

He inquired as to the location of metal window awnings, and the applicant stated that they would be on the lower levels. Applicant responded that the DRC wanted this project to be more streamlined architecturally than some of the other apartments like AMLI.

Commissioner Dodgen stated that it was a good project and good for Lone Tree.

Commissioner Carlson inquired if the basement-level parking would be where guests would park. Mr. Wooten stated that this had not been fully programmed yet, but will likely be for employees and prospective residents when on-street spaces are full. She commended the project for its well thought-out design, providing residential parking spaces next to each apartment. She said the best feature is the rooftop terrace, which should provide nice views for the residents, and continued that this was a very tasteful project for Lone Tree.

Chair Sippel agreed that the project design was a complement to the area and inquired whether there would be any external doors from the units to the streets. Mr. Steinberg stated that only a small number of the ground-floor units along Trainstation Circle had stoops, but they did not access the street.

Chair Sippel stated that she could not find the Pinyon Pines and Ponderosa Pine on the landscape plan. The landscape architect clarified the location of the pines - most of which are along the south side of the property, and indicated that one Ponderosa Pine had been removed. Chair Sippel encouraged the applicant to add a few Blue Spruce trees for variety, potentially on the west side that is visible to the most people.

Chair Sippel wanted to reiterate what fellow commissioners have said about traffic concerns in the area. She observed that the light at the northbound left-turn lane from Park Meadows to Westbound Lincoln Avenue only allowed six cars through at 3 PM, and stated that traffic patterns need to be reviewed. She stated that a second left-turn lane would help here.

Commissioner Mikolajcazak suggested that it might be nice if there was more articulation, through color change, on the beige vertical elements in the lengthwise plane of the building. He asked Mr. Jones if there would be more projects like this. Mr. Jones responded that it was hard to say if there would be more multifamily residential on the west side, but there were no plans at this time.

Commissioner Mikolajczak suggested that applicants bring design alternatives to the Planning Commission first, before the DRC process, as it's often too late to make major changes once they come before the Planning Commission.

Mr. Wooten added that the DRC was very active with this project, and that it had changed quite a bit from the original proposal.

Chair Sippel requested that future applicants show earlier versions of the designs to the Planning Commission so they have the opportunity to see the first and last designs during the the DRC process. This would allow them to more easily compare how the building design has changed.

Commissioner Steele inquired as to whether any of the units were furnished. The applicant indicated they are not. Commissioner Steele commented that it was nice that resident parking could be on the same level as the unit, for ease of moving. Commissioner Steele inquired about bicycle parking facilities, as a lot of people tend to store bikes on the balconies. Mr. Wooten stated that there would be bicycle parking in the garage along with repair facility. He stated that they did not allow bicycles on the balconies.

Vice Chair Kirchner moved to recommend approval of the SIP with three conditions stated in the staff report. Commissioner Mikolajczak seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

7. **Schwab Trainstation Circle, Project SP15-32R, located near the existing Charles Schwab I-25 highway sign in RidgeGate, proposes a single-story, 5,000-square-foot office building.**

Mr. Friedel provided a brief overview of the project. The applicant intends to occupy this building with a financial advisory services center housing approximately 20 employees. He then introduced Mr. Darryl Jones with Coventry development, representing RidgeGate, to introduce the applicant.

Mr. Jones stated that as this project was in the Sky Ridge Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) area, it was intended to be phased – consisting of the proposed office building first, then later a much larger development on the balance of the property as depicted in a building massing study completed by the applicant, consistent with the TOD subarea plan. He added that the intersection of Sky Ridge Avenue and Park Meadows Drive would be signalized by the end of the year – well in advance of upcoming apartments or this project. Furthermore, he indicated that RidgeGate and the City would continue to study the Lincoln Avenue-Park Meadows Drive intersection with the City. He then introduced Ms. Kelly Dunn, the Project Architect.

Ms. Dunn stated that Schwab received permission to build the sign from the City and referred to Hans' background of the project as explaining the situation. The proposed building would satisfy CDOT regulations and the architecture "recalls" the main Charles Schwab campus. She described the conceptual massing plan that indicates how the balance of the site could accommodate 52,000 square feet and structured parking for 205 cars and how it is demonstrative of the development potential of the remainder of the site. She continued that the position of the proposed office building on the site was dictated by the CDOT requirement that the building be within 50 feet of the sign. She provided an

overview of the landscape plan and described that the architectural character is a continuation of the Schwab campus to the west and the building provides architectural cues to visitors that reiterate this campus relationship

Commissioner Carlson noted the project is straight-forward, as the materials and design are consistent with the Schwab campus. She asked whether the same type of interior "lantern" lighting would be visible from the second story windows as Schwab's retail building at the main campus. Ms. Dunn responded that the lighting would be much more modest in this building. Commissioner Carlson asked about Schwab's future plans for the balance of the site—whether Schwab would own or lease the property. Mr. Kevin Bernard and Mr. Anthony Nemec were in attendance from Charles Schwab, from Denver and San Francisco. Ms. Dunn stated their preference to sell the remainder of the site in the future. In the interim, Ms. Dunn confirmed the parcel will be fully landscaped. The perimeter of Trainstation Circle will be landscaped by the Rampart Range Metro District, with native grasses beyond this landscaped strip. She stated this will dress up and formalize the appearance of the site. She stated that the trash enclosure will be wrapped with plants.

Commissioner Carlson stated that it was a straight-forward building. She inquired as to whether they would use the same type of interior lighting here as was used on the branch building at the main Schwab campus. Ms. Dunn responded that the lighting would be much more modest in this building. Commissioner Carlson asked if Schwab would own the balance of the site in the future, or lease. Mr. Kevin Bernard and Mr. Anthony Nemec were in attendance from Charles Schwab. Ms. Dunn stated their preference to sell the remainder of the site in the future. There was a question regarding the landscaping. Ms. Dunn responded that the perimeter of Trainstation Circle would be landscaped by the Rampart Range Metro District, with native grasses beyond this landscaped strip. She stated that this would dress up and formalize the appearance of the site. She stated that the trash enclosure was wrapped with plants.

Chair Sippel stated that she liked the landscape plan and inquired as the height limit in this area. Mr. Friedel responded that it was 250 feet subject to FAA approval.

Commissioner Dodgen thanked Charles Schwab for building in Lone Tree. He inquired as to whether the landscaped trees would block the sign – referring to RidgeGate Design Review Committee (DRC) comments included in the packet. Ms. Dunn responded that the trees were now close to the building to soften the edges, but not block the sign, and that they had been adjusted per DRC comments.

Commissioner Dodgen stated that the building was close to the highway and very visible – and that it stands out as an island. He asked whether there was any concern with the "back of the building" along I-25. Ms. Dunn responded that the DRC and staff recommended 360-degree architecture, and that spandrel

sign from a distance, but that Charles Schwab was aware of the future light rail crossing.

Commissioner Dodgen asked Mr. Jones if developers can hold land for an indefinite time without building on it. Mr. Jones responded that they typically included contractual construction commencement provisions in their agreements with land purchasers; however, there was no hard timeframe with the second phase of this development. This would be included in their negotiations as they prefer development, not speculation.

Commissioner Mikolajczak moved to recommend approval of SP15-32R subject to final approval from Public Works, and Vice Chair Kirchner seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, with Commissioner Kline abstaining due to a stated conflict of interest.

**8. City of Lone Tree Comprehensive Plan amendments, Project MI14-07 (Public Hearing)**

Ms. Drybread introduced the Comprehensive Plan update, indicated that staff made the changes previously requested by the Commission, and stated that this update was before the Commission for a recommendation of approval to City Council. She invited discussion and comments.

The commissioners shared a number of additional grammatical and format-related edits that were recorded by staff that they will make prior to City Council review.

Regarding the section on Plan Consistency (page 29), commissioners want to add "developers" to the list of those who benefit when development occurs according to plan.

In the section about Wildlife Habitat, it was suggested to clarify the meaning of "wildlife compatible fencing."

Also within that section, Commissioner Dodgen said that we are really not preserving wildlife habitat through implementation of this plan, as is stated on page 40, noting that there will be development on the top of the bluffs. Ms. Drybread responded that the plan supports compact, mixed-use development patterns that preserve larger areas of wildlife habitat. The clustered development planned on the bluffs will limit the area of development and preserve open space.

In the section about Community Facilities and Services, it was suggested to characterize emergency response times as being shortened *or maintained* as a result of the growth patterns described in that section.

It was suggested that Sweetwater Park be added to the list of parks included within the larger Lone Tree community (Parks and Recreational Facilities section).

In the Transit Section, commissioners felt that we should list light rail stations by their formal names.

Commissioner Steele stated that this has been a very educational process; however, in the future, rather than try to update the entire plan, consider working on updating one section in detail – such as spending a year on land use.

Ms. Drybread stated that several of the sections are intertwined and it would be difficult to work on sections independently rather than as a whole. Commissioners Dodgen, Kirchner, and Sippel agreed that it was better to review the entire plan.

All the commissioners thanked staff for their efforts and agreed that it was helpful to have the different entity updates throughout last year to provide a good foundation of information on which to solidify the update.

Ms. Drybread stated that taken by the Lone Tree Photo Club would be added to the document, and that the document would be published to be viewed online. Commissioner Sippel stated that it would be useful to create hyperlinks to the different sections when they are referred to in the text.

Vice Chair Kirchner moved to recommend approval of the Comprehensive Plan to the City Council, Commissioner Steele seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

## 9. Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Dodgen moved to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Kirchner seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

These minutes have been reviewed and confirmed by

DAVID KIRCHNER (name), on 7/28/2015 (date)