

**MINUTES OF THE**  
Lone Tree Planning Commission Meeting  
February 23, 2016

**Lone Tree Civic Center**

**1. Attendance**

In attendance were:

- Dave Kirchner, Chair
- Andrew Dodgen, Vice Chair
- Rhonda Carlson, Planning Commissioner
- Daryl Heskin, Planning Commissioner
- Richard Rodriguez, Planning Commissioner
- Kevin Spencer, Planning Commissioner
- Herb Steele, Planning Commissioner

In attendance from staff were:

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

**2. Opening of Meeting / Roll Call**

Commissioner Kirchner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**3. Conflict of Interest Inquiry**

There were none stated.

**4. Public Comment (For Items NOT appearing on the agenda)**

Wynne Shaw, 7966 Witney Place, in Carriage Club, stated that she will be serving on City Council – and introduced herself to the commission.

**5. Minutes of the January 26, 2016 Planning Commission meeting**

Commissioner Dodgen moved to approve the minutes, Commissioner Carlson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**6. RidgeGate Section 15, Filing 5, Second Amendment, Lot 1-F1, Quadrant Building, Project SP15-99R. This mixed-use office and retail building is generally located in Lincoln Commons, to the west of Sprouts.**

Mr. Friedel introduced the application. He introduced Mr. Bob Turner, with Quadrant properties, to provide an overview of the proposal. Mr. Turner provided a background of the project – how they waited for inquiries from potential clients to gauge market demand prior to designing a building concept.

Mr. Turner introduced David Goode, the project architect. Mr. Goode discussed the thought process behind the design and the differences from the master planned SIP for Lincoln District East (LDE). They wanted to engage the south-side more, towards the library; whereas, the original master planned developed showed this as a loading dock. They went to a two-story, mixed-use concept. He stated that the prospective retail/restaurant tenants would face to the north to get the exposure. The ground floor depth is 65 feet for ground-floor units – widths vary based upon tenant requirements.

A challenge was mixing the uses and having a dual-fronted building. One challenge was separating the office and retail/restaurant parking. They wanted to maintain the pedestrian scale of Lincoln Commons – this was challenging within the context of a two-story building. They showed early design studies and the evolution of the building.

Commissioner Carlson thanked the applicant for their presentation and for sharing their thought process behind their decisions to modify and improve upon the design of the project. She also complimented the applicant on the evergreen landscape design on the south side of the building. She asked if there was anything different about this building compared to the other approved buildings in Lincoln Commons. The applicant responded that the materials matched the existing materials palette in LDE, and passed around the materials board to the commissioners for viewing.

Commissioner Steele appreciated the design evolution, and found the solution to be innovative. He commented that the intersection of Sky Ridge Avenue and Commons Street is a very busy intersection. He asked whether it was right-in right-out at the driveways. The applicant stated that they were full-movement driveways. He asked about the overall circulation, and whether there was enough stacking for cars waiting to turn left, headed east on Sky Ridge Avenue from Commons Street. The applicant responded that he thought there was enough room, and that Public Works had not expressed concern over this issue in their review.

Commissioner Steele asked about where loading would occur. He inquired about the doors on the south side – the applicant stated that these were for service, not the general public.

Commissioner Steele inquired about the intended architecture of the pad sites to the west. The applicant responded that they would match the palette of the existing LDE development.

Commissioner Steele further inquired about the concept of the wall where the public art would be located – what the materials would be. Mr. Goode responded that the wall would be either stucco or tile, depending on the artistic concept as it evolved. Furthermore, the southwest corner (Commons Street and Sky Ridge Avenue) was on the master plan as being a public engagement space. Commissioner Steele expressed concern about the sustainability and maintenance of the art over time, given the wall's western exposure to the sun. He also said he hoped the art would be compatible with the colors of the building.

Commissioner Dodgen inquired about the parking considering, not just this building but, the future pad sites to the west. He was concerned that there would not be adequate parking for the entire development.

Commissioner Dodgen inquired about the service activity on the south elevation – and what the plan was to keep it looking good. The applicant responded that it would be a combination of ongoing maintenance, maintaining the screening plantings, and painting. Mr. Turner responded that as a management group, they expect rent from the second floor; therefore, it is in their interest that the south elevation be well maintained. Commissioner Dodgen inquired about the market demand for the office on the second floor. Mr. Turner responded that they manage mixed-use office buildings across the Front Range – and they believed there was a strong demand for the second floor offices.

Mr. Dodgen asked about where the signage would go – whether it would be above the canvas awnings. The applicant confirmed that that is where the signs would be located.

Commissioner Dodgen was concerned that people would enter the office parking and circle back out onto Sky Ridge Avenue. The applicant responded that that is why they have that East entrance. The potential impacts of having a dead end would be worse.

Commissioner Heskin thanked the applicant for the presentation. He stated that the applicant had done a wonderful job breaking down a difficult site and reducing the massing of the two-story building into a human scale. He believed that the parking demand would increase as the other parcels were developed. He inquired whether they could make the crossing of the driveway to the north safer. The applicant stated that they could add stop signs and traffic control devices/markings.

Commissioner Heskin further inquired about a DRC comment about coordinating the landscaping with the Douglas County Library. The applicant responded that the landscaping was dictated in the Lincoln Commons Sub-area Plan and the streetscape is already established by the Rampart Range Metro District.

Commissioner Heskin inquired about whether they would use EIFS or stucco. The applicant responded that the intent was to use a hard-coat stucco. Commissioner Heskin asked that this be noted clearly on the plans.

Commissioner Rodriguez expressed concern about parking. He inquired whether the parking to the south of the building would be assigned – possibly with established parking hours. He asked what they were envisioning for parking spaces between Pad H and J and the mixed-use building, prior to development of the western pad spaces. He asked the applicant whether he envisions those spaces being utilized prior to pads H and J being developed. He asked if they, as the owner, had done a parking analysis for the entire shopping center. Mr. Turner stated that they have done a parking analysis, mostly for internal use to be sure they had sufficient spaces for this additional building. He added that staff will require a full LDE parking study prior to future development.

Commissioner Spencer reiterated a concern about parking. His concern was that people would park in the library and then walk across the street. He was also concerned about the longevity of a mural on the wall, suggesting a sculpture instead.

Chair Kirchner inquired about the depth of the landing area around the building, as the subarea plan called for an average 17-foot landing around the building. Mr. Friedel stated that the building had unique challenges being both two-story, and having two fronts. When the patio was considered, it met the subarea plan intent, therefore no variance was being requested.

Chair Kirchner asked about the colored cement in the courtyard, as the plans showed colored concrete but no color was specified. The applicant indicated that it would match the other such paving within Lincoln Commons.

Chair Kirchner stated that an acknowledgment should be added to the SIP stating that the maintenance of the sidewalks in Lincoln District East would be the responsibility of the owner. The applicant responded that they would do this.

Chair Kirchner asked for pedestrian crossings to the north of the building for safety. Also, Chair Kirchner echoed previous comments that the sustainability of the art piece should be considered.

Commissioner Steele inquired if the pad-site concepts to the west were also under consideration tonight. Mr. Friedel responded they were not, only the area within the extent of work. Mr. Friedel emphasized that a full LDE parking study would be required prior to submittal for any further development – with the exception of the Starbucks in process.

Chair Kirchner opened the meeting to public comment, and there being none, closed the period for public comment.

Chair Kirchner summarized the issues with the proposal as follows:

- Enhanced pedestrian safety/crossing on north side
- Parking study for future development
- Sustainability and maintainability of art
- Change SIP to refer to cementitious stucco – not EIFS
- Plan should specify office-parking only on south side during business hours

Commissioner Dodgen moved to approve the building, subject to a pedestrian crossing, striping, and stop signs on the internal driveway to the north; that the Lone Tree Arts Commission address the longevity of art mural prior to approval; that parking on the south side be designated office only with sufficient visitor parking; and that the building material be specified as cementitious stucco rather than EIFS. Commissioner Steele seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**7. Promenade Park presentation by Rampart Range Metro District. For information only.**

Kelly First introduced the Promenade Park plan item – stating that it was related to the Urban Villas Preliminary Plan on tonight’s agenda. This was a high-level presentation on the park concept, as opposed to a detailed SIP review. Using the RidgeGate West Village Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan as a guide, this park would be processed administratively. She introduced Denise Denslow with Rampart Range Metropolitan District.

Ms. Denslow described the park concept. She stated that the park would be nestled between the Harvard Communitites/Berkley Homes project planned to the east, and the Thrive (formerly New Town) townhomes being constructed to the west. She stated that they were working closely with these applicants to coordinate grading.

She introduced Jeff Wohlfarth with Consilium Design. He described the park as having an upper promenade portion to the west, and a lower portion running north-south to the east. The promenade garden would be the main entrance into the park and pointed to the Lone Tree Art Center. The Willow Creek regional trail runs through the lower portion of the park north-south.

There is a turf field, plaza, and play area accommodating children ages 2-12. Topography is an important condition of the park. The park has terraced walls of Rosetta precast concrete blocks to mitigate grade.

Commissioner Dodgen thanked the architect for the park, and said he looks forward to its completion.

Commissioner Steele stated that he was looking forward to it.

Commissioner Heskin stated that he was excited about what was going on in the area and he enjoyed the promenade. His question was how you get from the upper plaza to the lower level – at the trail ends and from the circular path from the lawn area down to the drainage. Mr. Wohlfarth described the connections.

Commissioner Carlson asked about grading on the west and east sides of the park, and whether land fill would be required to create the grassy areas on the west side of the park. The architect stated that grading would be addressed with retaining walls on the west and east sides of the park, and land fill would be required to create the grassy areas on the west side. Commissioner Carlson asked about the height of the retaining walls from a safety perspective. The architect stated they would add plantings on the retaining walls to discourage activity. On the west side, some sections of the walls vary from 2 ½-feet to 4-feet. On the east side they may be as high as 8-feet in some areas. Some sections of the walls have three tiers to minimize the height of any one wall.

Commissioner Spencer and Rodriguez stated that they thought it was a thoughtful and creative design.

Chair Kirchner inquired if there was a bridge over the drainage/creek, and the applicant stated that there was not.

He asked if there was enough distance between the Thrive and Urban Villas homes so as not to feel like a canyon. The applicant stated that this was subjective; however, he felt like there was enough open space.

8. **RidgeGate Section 15, Filing 19, Lot 3 (Urban Villas), Preliminary Plan Subdivision, Project SB15-98R. This project proposes 18 lots for single-family detached homes. It is located in RidgeGate, between Sky Ridge Avenue and RidgeGate Parkway, west of Bellwether Lane.**

Ms. Drybread introduced the item. She iterated that they were not here to discuss the architecture for the proposed detached homes – this was outside of the City's purview, but some information was provided to add context. The item under review is just the preliminary plan. She introduced Mr. Darryl Jones with Coventry Development.

Mr. Jones stated that the proposed 18-lot community would be a good addition to the community. He stated that there was a careful weaving between Thrive, Urban Villas, and Rampart Ridge Metro District to coordinate grading of these three close developments.

John Keith, representing Harvard Communities and Berkeley Homes, presented the Villas at RidgeGate. NorthSky was another of their projects, and won multiple awards including a national award for Best Architectural Design by the National Association of Home Builders.

The long, narrow shape of the parcel posed some unique challenges. They did not want to line the homes up directly along Bellwether. Their plan features narrow lots with fairly vertical homes – they refer to them as detached townhomes. There is a motor court off of Bellwether to provide a sense of place, access and parking.

In terms of the relationship to the park, there is a trail that passes between lots 8 and 9 to access the park. There is a maximum of 16 feet of grade between the high point of this parcel and the bottom of the park.

The applicant stated that no single retaining wall will be taller than eight feet.

Commissioner Carlson complimented the architecture, stating there was nothing else like it in RidgeGate. She stated that, in her opinion, Harvard Communities / Berkeley Homes is the premier builder in RidgeGate. She suggested that the applicant make the first retaining wall by the park higher to prevent people from jumping on the wall. She likes the fence above the walls, as a deterrent. She also complimented the builder on their landscape design.

Commissioner Steele appreciated all the thought and energy that had gone into the plan at this point. He was conflicted about the layout, expressing concern for the lot sizes, as it requires the buildings to be long, tall, and narrow. He asked why they did not choose zero-lot lines to maximize the side lots. Mr. Keith responded that the side lots are not really usable in this configuration, and they had worked to maximize open space and public areas.

Commissioner Steele asked if these homes would be slab on grade. The answer was yes, there would be no basements. Commissioner Steele asked about the soils. Mr. Keith responded that the site will be over-excavated, and low swelling soils added. They are very comfortable with that technology. There will be no fences between the homes, but they could be added later. Commissioner Steele asked about maintenance of the landscaping. Mr. Keith responded that the HOA will maintain the tracts; the homeowners will maintain the backyards. They are discussing who will maintain the retaining walls – the HOA or the District. Commissioner Steele encouraged the District to maintain the walls for ongoing continuity and quality.

Commissioner Steele asked about a ten-foot utility easement along the rear of the lots and if landscaping could be planted there. The applicant responded you could do plantings– just not trees. Commissioner Steele appreciated that if the homes were architecturalized. Commissioner Steele asked about the average depth of the rear yards. The applicant answered, 20 feet. He wondered if trees would block their views. Mr. Keith responded that they will have design guidelines.

Commissioner Dodgen inquired if the residents would be required to landscape within a period of time. Mr. Keith said they would. Commissioner Dodgen

inquired about trash pick-up. Todd Johnson with Calibre engineering stated that residents would pull their trash out in front of their units by the curb. He said they designed the access to the motor court so that trucks could access the area.

Commissioner Dodgen inquired if a traffic light would be warranted at Bellwether and RidgeGate Parkway. Ms. First responded that there was not a plan to do that, and such lights would need to meet warrants. Commissioner Dodgen felt that the landscaping outside of the fence in front of the homes should be maintained by the HOA.

Commissioner Heskin stated that he appreciates the responses by the applicant to his questions, and he agrees with their answers and their reasoning. He feels the size of the site is a constraint that requires a very strong concept and he thinks they have that. Commissioner Heskin agreed that the setback of the homes mitigated against some of the visual impact of the retaining walls by stepping the massing.

The schematic plan shows lighting would be uneven. He asked if more even, pedestrian-scale lighting could be run down Bellwether to more uniformly light the street. The applicant stated that 14-foot tall lights would be along the tree lawn along Bellwether. The tall 40-foot tall lights were at the intersections.

Commissioner Spencer thanked the applicant, stating that it was a challenging lot, with an excellent design. Commissioner Spencer asked about snow removal. Mr. Keith stated that since it was a private drive, this would be handled by the HOA. Since it was a single loaded motor court/drive in front of the homes, the snow storage would be on the five-foot wide grass area on the west side of the site and at the north and south edges of the drive.

Commissioner Spencer asked about moving the fence in 10 feet so that the utility easement could be located in the park, so the metro district would be required to landscape that area. This could accommodate uniform landscaping. Mr. Keith responded that they could, but the electric boxes and service gear would need to be pulled back and this would be difficult to accomplish.

Commissioner Rodriguez asked about the rail fence in the back. The applicant stated that it would be a 4-foot fence along the west boundary line and that there were stone plinths/columns intermittently along the fence.

Chair Kirchner inquired about five-foot setbacks on either side. He asked staff if they could condition approval of the application to require the 4-foot rail fence as a safety issue above the retaining wall. Ms. First responded they could. The ownership of the retaining walls will be the HOA. He asked about the financial ability for the HOA to maintain the walls. The applicant responded that it would be professionally managed.

A discussion ensued about whether the trail access between the lots would be public, with Commissioner Kirchner wondering if there would be a lot of foot traffic by Schwab employees on the trail. Commissioner Kirchner stated that he would like to keep the trail open to public access. Mr. Keith responded that the issue would be that the trail terminates on the east in a private drive. It was suggested that perhaps a public-access easement could be utilized.

Chair Kirchner opened the meeting to public comment, and there being none, closed the meeting for public comment.

Commissioner Carlson inquired of Coventry what Charles Schwab's plans were for the land east of this development. Keith Simon answered that they knew of no plans to develop it at this time

Commissioner Rodriguez moved to approve the preliminary plan application subject to staff's recommended conditions and a requirement for fencing above the retaining wall. Commissioner Steele seconded it, and the motion passed unanimously.

## 9. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Kirchner asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Dodgen made the motion to adjourn and Commissioner Spencer seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

These minutes have been reviewed and confirmed by

 (name), on 3/22/2016 (date)  
DAVID L. KIRCHNER