

**MINUTES OF THE**  
Lone Tree Planning Commission Meeting  
May 24, 2016

**Lone Tree Civic Center**

**1. Attendance**

In attendance were:

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

Commissioner Dodgen was absent

In attendance from staff were:

- Kelly First, Community Development Director
- Jennifer Drybread, Senior Planner

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

Chair Kirchner called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

**3. Conflict of Interest Inquiry**

There were none stated.

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

There was no public comment for items not on the agenda.

**5. Minutes of the April 12, 2016 Planning Commission meeting**

Commissioner Steele moved to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2016 Planning Commission meeting, Commissioner Spencer seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

**6. Integrated ENT SIP (RidgeGate Section 15, Filing 12, 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment, SP16-18R)**

Ms. Jennifer Drybread introduced the application, providing an overview of the request, the project location, and a description, including how the project evolved through the review process. She described staff findings. She recommended that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the SIP and associated variances, subject to final approval by the City Public Works Department.

Mr. Darryl Jones, Coventry Development expressed his support for the project and indicated that it is compliant with the sub-area plan, with exception of the variances that are described, which they feel make the project better. He indicated a bank was proposed for this site at one time, but they feel the medical office use is more appropriate for the site, given its proximity to Sky Ridge Hospital.

Ms. Laura Walker, representing the practice, introduced herself and invited questions. Commissioner Carlson mentioned this appears to be a large practice and asked whether the building was designed to accommodate additional growth. Ms. Walker replied that they have capacity to grow at this site; they have outgrown their existing space at the Conifer building on the Sky Ridge campus. They are planning the new space to add more staff and doctors. She said the practice differs from others in that there are multiple parts within the practice. Some see patients regularly, while others provide various hearing test services, and others that perform procedures in the office. There are patients coming and going often at the site so the parking turnover is high. Commissioner Carlson said she supports the parking variance for the reasons described by the applicant--50 parking spaces is not excessive considering there can be up to 30 staff working at peak hours.

Commissioner Carlson asked how they address hazardous waste. Ms. Walker said they have a private company come in and remove it from the site.

Commissioner Carlson commended them for their landscape plan relative to water conservation, including an all drip irrigation system and landscaping to reduce heat islands. She also stated that the outdoor patio area for staff was a thoughtful design.

Commissioner Spencer indicated he had no questions.

Commissioner Rodriguez asked about the Xcel easement and whether it was existing or a result of the proposed development. It is existing. Mr. Jones elaborated that Xcel has standard requests for easements and there are ongoing discussion with Xcel to try and get utilities located in the right of way. Commissioner Rodriguez asked if variances are handled on a case-by case basis when easements appear on private properties. Mr. Jones indicated it is

case-by case depending on the nature of the development and location of utilities.

Commissioner Steele said he was very supportive of the project and commended the applicant. He understands the need for the parking variance. He inquired about the distance of the trash enclosure from the building and asked about the location of the trash enclosure on the adjoining property. Ms. Walker indicated that the cleaning service will take the trash out, and that the trash enclosure for their center is proposed directly across from the trash enclosure for the daycare center to the south.

Commissioner Heskin said the project was well designed with nice materials. He asked about the material of the coping around the roof corners. Cody Weaver, Senior Architect for Davis Partnership Architects, said it would be a metal coping.

Chair Kirchner agreed it was a very nice project and well presented. He appreciated the landscape and irrigation plan to conserve water, as well as the use of energy-efficient light fixtures.

Mr. Weaver provided an overview of the project, describing the context of the area, design objectives, site considerations, and materials. He showed various views of the site and building.

Commissioner Heskin asked about the pedestrian connections from the handicapped spaces. Mr. Weaver responded that the sidewalk that runs north/south in front of the building has stairs to the north of the entrance to take up grade, but that there are no stairs to the south of the entrance.

Commissioner Heskin moved to approve the application, including the two variances requested by the applicant, and with the condition that Public Works has final approval. Commissioner Carlson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Kirchner called for a 5 minute recess at 7:05 pm.

The meeting was reconvened at approximately 7:10.

**7. "Treo Apartments" Use by Special Review Pre-application, Park Meadows Filing 2, 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Lot 13 A1**

Ms. Kelly First introduced the application, summarizing the request, including its size and location. She stated that staff supported multi-family residential here, as multi-family development would create more of a walkable neighborhood in the Entertainment District, and would bring additional people to support businesses in the area. Ms. First stated that staff did not support a variance to building height that would pierce the maximum zoned hard ceiling elevation of 5,860 feet above

sea level, as there were no other tall buildings in the area. She cited additional potential issues related to access, parking and loading, stormwater detention, traffic, and park and school dedication. She stated that the purpose of the meeting was to bring the concept forward to see what issues the Planning Commission may have. Ms. First noted that the Planning Commission's comments will not be binding and no formal recommendation will be made. Should the applicant go forward, the Use by Special Review and Site Improvement Plan applications will be heard by the Planning Commission and City Council.

Randy Coakley, Development Manager for Draper and Kramer, described his company that is based in Chicago, and their history with quality mixed-use projects. He said they would build and manage the project.

Joe Lear, Associate Partner with Davis Partnership Architects, described the project. He said it would be complementary to the area in terms of the use and what is envisioned for redevelopment of the area. Immediate adjacency to community spaces helps enliven spaces. It is in a walkable location to many businesses and amenities. The traffic study showed no impacts and no need for improvements aside from some possible re-striping. There would be 70% 1-bedroom and 30% 2-bedrooms. Parking ratios would be met if guest spaces are calculated at .25 spaces per unit.

He described the access points, detention, and how they are meeting and exceeding setbacks. The setback from Yosemite will help mitigate the mass of the building and can accommodate additional right of way requested by the City. Service areas would be coordinated with orientation of adjoining properties and would be screened. He said there is about 14 feet of grade change across the site. The building would work with the grade and be stair-stepped.

Height has been modified since the original submittal so that no part of the building will puncture the hard ceiling elevation established by the zoning. He reviewed concept designs from various vantage points. He described the use of various materials and focal points at the corners. He generally described the location of amenity areas and landscaping.

Commissioner Heskin stated he liked the general idea of the project. The Comprehensive Plan addresses compact, pedestrian-friendly development. His primary concern is the massing of the building, which they are starting to address with varying materials, but it would be preferable to have some variation in the height, provided it could comply with the height limitations.

Commissioner Heskin asked about the access to the project and whether it was a public street. Maximus Drive is a private street that has a public access easement on it. Primary entry from Maximus would be shifted south east of

existing location, and would maintain flow-through traffic. The garage would be lower than the surrounding units.

Commissioner Heskin noted that a number of projects in the area are not patronized in the evening. The residential use will enliven that. He felt the massing makes it look like a huge structure. If they could reduce the massing, it would help it to fit in the context of the area better. He suggested there are a number of ways to work on that from a design standpoint.

Commissioner Steele said he had positive familiarity with Draper and Kramer from past experiences. He said it would be a very prominent project. He said he has mixed feelings. He likes the idea of integrating residential into the Entertainment District and supports the walkability. He noted that Draper and Kramer is experienced with rental rather than ownership, but is happy to hear they would continue to own and maintain the project. Commissioner Steele noted that the breakdown of rental versus ownership in the City is skewed toward rental. One-third of residential units in the City are multi-family. To add 250 more units, it would bring the percentage to 36% of the housing stock as multi-family. He is concerned that so many residents, here for maybe only a year, are not committed to living here over the long-term and there are turn-over impacts on the community at large. He said the community would be far better served by an ownership product.

Commissioner Steele also expressed concern with the building scale and height, noting there are no residential projects in the City greater than 4 stories, with the exception of MorningStar Senior living. Other taller buildings are commercial or office uses. He supported varying the stories to break up the mass. He has a hard time envisioning how tall this would be, along with the scale and massing. The images presented were encouraging but still he is concerned with the long expanse of units and balconies along Yosemite Street. He asked about the setback compared to the existing building. The apartments would be about 15 feet closer than the closest point of the Treo building along Yosemite Street.

Commissioner Steele was pleased that the parking would be internal to the project and not highly visible. The location of the amenities was clarified as being on the roof at the northeast portion of the parking. Commissioner Steele expressed concern about outdoor storage of bikes and barbeques on balconies. The applicant replied that they provide internal storage and that management policy would prohibit storage of bicycles on balconies.

Commissioner Carlson shared similar observations with the other Commissioners. She noted that a 5-story apartment project is a good fit near the light rail, on a major street such as Belleview, or in an urban area like Cherry Creek, but at this location it feels excessive. She said she is not sure the City is ready for this level of urbanization on Yosemite. She noted that MorningStar doesn't feel overwhelming because of the variations in height and asked if they

would be open to considering that approach. She thanked the applicant for describing the amenities for the building, since they are competing with apartments that offer rooftop decks, pools, and community centers. She asked the applicant to confirm whether a pool would be included on the rooftop deck; the applicant confirmed there will be a pool and deck. She said similar projects in Golden offer community gardens; if they could offer residents planters on the roof for this purpose, or in public areas, that would be a nice feature.

Commissioner Carlson asked whether the applicant would consider offering some retail and services on the first level for the residents. She also agreed with Commissioner Steele's comment that an ownership product would be preferred, and broadening the range of housing types offered in Lone Tree. She asked whether the applicant will provide affordable housing, as affordability is a big issue in our community. Mr. Coakley said they are discussing it and have not made any decision at this stage.

Commissioner Carlson said that traffic volumes in the area are high in the morning and on weekends, and she would be interested in looking at the details of the traffic study that indicated there would be no impacts. She summarized by saying this looks like a tasteful high-quality project, but 5-stories feels excessive for this location.

Commissioner Spencer said he had mixed feelings. He concurs with statements made thus far by other Commissioners. He felt Lone Tree is getting to a critical mass of rentals and that is concerning, and that the City needs more ownership units. He said he feels that massing is a concern here. He feels that MorningStar looks massive compared to its surroundings. He wondered whether the area schools could handle additional students. He said that should be studied further. On the other hand, he has lived in big cities, including Chicago, and he thinks the area needs the residents to support the businesses in the area. He concurred that retail at the ground level would be a good idea for them to study. He said the project was creative and innovative.

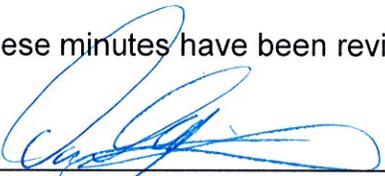
Commissioner Rodriguez said that he also has mixed feelings, noting that a thoughtful, compatible project would be welcome at this site that has been vacant for so long. He shares concern regarding massing and traffic. He would like to see more information about what efforts have, or will, be made to get input from the surrounding properties. He would like clarification on whether it meets the building height requirements and what, if any variance process, would be afforded in the process if needed. He would like to see the actual traffic study and underlying data behind it, as well as a finding from City staff on the traffic analysis. He was surprised that their study indicated there would be "no impact." He thinks there will be some impacts but he looks forward to considering the project further.

Chair Kirchner noted that there is a rise in grade and the applicant confirmed they would take the grade down a bit. He confirmed that all aspects of the building will fall under the hard ceiling elevation. The applicant responded affirmatively. He likes the design and architecture but feels that 5 stories is too much for this area and that it should come down further. He suggested that the process would go much smoother if they reduced the massing and height, even if they are under the maximum height zoned. There is nothing that approaches that height in this area with exception of small area of iFly. He would be interested in how the height compares to the Forsstrom building. He felt they would need to revisit the mass and height due to its prominent location. He thinks a 5-story will be a hard sell in the community.

**8. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Kirchner asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Rodriguez made the motion to adjourn and Commissioner Heskin seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 pm.

These minutes have been reviewed and confirmed by

 (name), on 6/14/2016 (date)  
 DAVID L. KIRCHNER