

PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
July 13, 2021 AT 6:45 PM
CORDOVA CENTER COMMUNITY ROOMS A & B
MINUTES

Prior to the meeting, Chair Nancy Bird informed staff that she would be calling into the meeting due to an outbreak of COVID-19 cases and requested that Vice Chair Mark Hall act as the chair for ease of facilitating the meeting.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair **Mark Hall** called the Planning Commission Public Hearing to order at 6:45 PM on July 13, 2021 in Cordova Center Community Rooms A & B.

2. ROLL CALL

Present for roll call were Chair **Nancy Bird** and Commissioners **Tom McGann, Mark Hall, Chris Bolin** and **Sarah Trumblee**. **John Baenen** and **Trae Lohse** were absent.

Staff present was City Planner **Kevin Johnson** and Public Works Director **Sam Greenwood**.

John McGrew and **Glenn Gellert**, the applicants for the Swell conditional use permit were present. Additionally, five members of the public were in attendance.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

M/McGann S/Bolin to approve the agenda.

Upon voice vote, motion passed 5-0.

Yea: **Bird, McGann, Bolin, Hall, Trumblee**

Absent: **Baenen, Lohse**

4. APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Record excused absence for John Baenen and Trae Lohse from the June 10, 2021 Regular Meeting

M/Trumblee S/Baenen to approve the consent calendar.

Upon voice vote, motion passed 5-0.

Yea: **Bird, McGann, Bolin, Hall, Trumblee**

Absent: **Baenen, Lohse**

5. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

Trumblee stated that she was contacted by a resident regarding the Swell project and that they had requested information on how they could participate in the meeting. **Trumblee** said that she forwarded the information onto the planner. No commissioner expressed concern of a conflict.

Bird stated that she was contacted by Barb Jewell requesting call in information which she provided to Barb. No commissioner expressed concern of a conflict.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Hall said that three letters were received related to the Swell development. The letters were from the *Sheridan's*, The *Newlun's* and the *McDaniel's*. Each commissioner confirmed that they had received each letter.

7. COMMUNICATIONS BY AND PETITIONS FROM VISITORS

- a. **Guest Speakers - None**
- b. **Audience comments regarding agenda items**

Tommy Sheridan said that he was concerned about the process for a conditional use permit and public involvement. He supports the need for affordable housing but requests the commission consider placing additional conditions to address the concerns he raised during the public hearing.

Barb Jewell said she understands others concerns regarding stormwater and she is confident that the city will ensure those issues are mitigated and they have done in the past. She also requests that units designed for single occupancy residents are provided.

8. PLANNER'S REPORT

Johnson explained the following:

there had been heavy traffic from the public requesting information about easements, land purchases, subdividing, and acquiring building permits.

Signatures had been acquired for the Peterson plat, and still awaiting signatures for the Beedle plat.

The lease and use agreement for the 5-mile garden has been sent for FEMA review.

The discussion on land disposal public noticing would be put on the agenda for the August 10th commission meeting.

9. NEW/ MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

- a. **Conditional Use Permit – Swell Multifamily Homes on Lot 8A, Block 5, V. Young Sub.**

M/McGann S/Trumblee to approve the conditional use permit request by Swell, LLC for townhouse development on lot 8A, Block 5, of the Vine and Young subdivision as described in the application and to adopt and incorporate the findings and special conditions contained in the staff report.

Trumblee said that she is concerned about the drainage on that lot as the existing house struggles with the current water coming across the property. She expressed concern about the increase in traffic from 15 units if each unit has two cars. Trumblee also requested clarification on the income limitations as she believes there is a missing housing option for those in the middle-income range.

Gellert explained that the rules of the funding for this project require that they rent to those making 60% or less of the area median income, which would allow someone making 70 thousand dollars a

year or less to rent the units. **Trumblee** asked if there would be single bedroom units. **Gellert** said that their units are designed for two and three-bedroom units.

McGann believes that adding a condition to the project to require a site plan review would allow the city to address the concerns that the public and the commission has with the project. He also added that after going through the comprehensive plan update it has become apparent that the community needs housing and that this project would help address that.

Bird agrees with McGann's recommendation that a requirement for a site plan review be placed on the project, and that a condition should be added to allow the buildings to be three stories. Bird asked if the commission should postpone making a decision on the project. **Johnson** explained that city code requires that the commission make a decision within 30 days of the public hearing. A special meeting would need to be held prior to the next regularly scheduled. **Gellert** added that they have a deadline to submit a pre-application packet to the Alaska Housing Finance at the beginning of August and they need to have some indication that the project is supported so they can meet that deadline. **Bird** said she understood and expressed that she believes that action should take place at this meeting.

Hall pointed out that the zoning district limits buildings to a max of 35 feet high and two and half stories. He believes that a condition should be added that they buildings may be three stories but still limited to 35 feet in height. **Hall** also said that this property could potential be developed into eight to 14 lots that could have a tri-plex on each lot. This would create a much larger impact in terms of traffic and stormwater, and he believes that this project is a good fit for its size compared to the other possibilities.

Bolin stated that he agrees with the public's comments regarding concerns about stormwater as he has experienced this living in the area.

M/McGann S/Bolin to amend the motion by adding a condition that a site plan review be conducted.

Upon voice vote, amendment passed 5-0.

Yea: Bird, McGann, Bolin, Hall, Trumblee

Absent: Baenen, Lohse

Bird asked if the site plan review would go through an administrative process or be brought back to the commission for their review. **Johnson** explained that as the site plan review was not required by code but was instead being added as a condition, the review could be either administrative or go through the commission. **McGann** indicated that the intent of his motion was for the site plan to be a drainage review that is done administratively.

M/McGann S/Bolin to amend the amendment for requiring site plan review as an administrative review by the City Planner and be specific to a site drainage plan providing detail on how onsite runoff will not negatively affect neighboring properties or the downstream drainage area with no building permit being issued until the plan is approved to the satisfaction of the City Planner.

Upon voice vote, amendment passed 4-1.

Yea: McGann, Bolin, Hall, Trumblee

Nay: Bird

Absent: Baenen, Lohse

M/Hall S/Bird to amend the motion by adding a condition that the project be allowed to build structures up the three stories while retaining the max 35-foot height limit of the zoning district.

Upon voice vote, amendment passed 5-0.

Yea: Bird, McGann, Bolin, Hall, Trumblee

Absent: Baenen, Lohse

Hall asked if each commissioner agrees with the findings for the approval criteria as presented by staff. Each commissioner stated that they are in agreement with the staff's findings. Bird did add that she believes that traffic changes should be pursued in the future by working with the State as it is a State owned and maintained road.

Hall called for a vote on the main motion as amended

Upon voice vote, the main motion, as amended, passed 5-0.

Yea: Bird, McGann, Bolin, Hall, Trumblee

Absent: Baenen, Lohse

10. PENDING CALENDAR

Hall said that after speaking with staff they would monitor the ongoing COVID outbreak and that if cases continued to rise the August meeting may be held virtually via Zoom.

11. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Tommy Sheridan asked for clarification on if the conditional use permit was just approved with the inclusion that a site drainage plan is required to be approved by the planner without further public meetings. *Hall* confirmed that that was what was approved.

12. COMMISSION COMMENTS

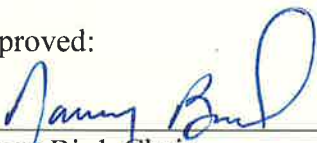
Trumblee welcomed the new planner along with *McGann, Bolin, Bird,* and *Hall*. Bolin stated that he is excited to see the multifamily development being. Bird said that she is also excited for the project but did believe that there could have been more public participation. Hall also expressed his enthusiasm for the project.

13. ADJOURNMENT


M/Bolin S/McGann to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:20 PM.

With no objection, the meeting was adjourned.

Approved:



Nancy Bird, Chair



Kevin Johnson, City Planner