

**CITY OF BLAINE**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**Thursday, December 14, 2017**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Calvin Armerding - Chair**

**A. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM**

**B. ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Steve Hrutfiord, Richard May, Calvin Armerding, Kevin Owens, Sue Sturgill, and Larry Wonnacott

**ABSENT:** John LeBrun

**STAFF:** Community Development Director, Michael Jones  
Community Planner II, Alex Wenger  
Community Planner I, Maddie Ottley

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MAY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OWENS TO EXCUSE COMMISSIONER LEBRUN, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY (5-0).**

Commissioner Sturgill arrived at 7:02 PM.

**C. AUDIENCE COMMENTS:** None.

**D. PUBLIC HEARING:**

Dakota Creek Apartments

Mr. Wenger summarized the project and applicable permits, which includes development of 41 multifamily units on 2.16 acres, located within the Planned Commercial zoning district.

Mr. Wenger noted the public comment period has been opened for about a month, and 13 new comments were received since the last Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Wenger highlighted the most reoccurring concerns expressed within the public comment which includes traffic, open space and playground area, and environmental impacts.

Mr. Wenger detailed some of the proposed open space and amenities for the development. Mr. Wenger also noted several conditions the Commission could create regarding play areas and environmental protection.

Mr. Wenger then presented two traffic study scenarios regarding trip generation resulting from "Mid-rise Apartments" vs. "Apartments". Mr. Wenger presented trip generation information regarding the two models and noted the difficulties of traffic flow due to the BNSF railway location.

Mr. Wenger added that through the SEPA process, staff will most likely require the applicant to pay a pro-rated share, which will all be allocated for traffic improvements at the Bell Road and Peace Portal Drive intersection. Mr. Wenger also noted a traffic impact fee will also be collected for each unit.

Mr. Wenger then provided the new public comments to the Commission, and entered the traffic generation information into the record.

Andrew Krzysiek – Applicant – Highlighted the different variances being requested including height and parking setback, and noted some of the on-site amenities for residents. Mr. Krzysiek noted architectural design created to increase livability.

Kelle Rankin-Sunter – 492 F Street – Ms. Rankin-Sunter expressed her concern for potential negative environmental impacts, area for children to play, number of parking spaces, and encouraged use of native species for landscaping.

Kimberly Akre – 2677 Bell Road – Ms. Akre noted she is the owner of True Value hardware store and described her experiences with existing neighborhood children at her business location, and asked the Commission to take into consideration the addition of more children to the neighborhood without adequate play facilities. Ms. Akre also expressed her concern for traffic safety and potential hardship on her business resulting from development of project.

Commissioner May asked Ms. Akre several questions.

Heino Sunter – 492 F Street – Mr. Sunter expressed his concern for the density of living units next to Dakota Creek, and asked the Commission to deny the height variance request. Mr. Sunter also noted his concern regarding traffic and parking for the development.

Jane Harwood – 2486 S Bakerview Park Drive, Ferndale - Asked the commission to compare this proposal to other similar developments like in Ferndale. Ms. Harwood also expressed her concern for the lack of visitor parking and child safety. Ms. Harwood also noted her adjacent property could serve as a park for the development if bought by the applicant.

Cindy Sproull - 2434 Earls Court – Noted other developments are occurring in the same areas which will contribute to more traffic and children. Ms. Sproull also questioned how the zoning works for this development, permit procedure, and expressed her concern for the environment and proper stormwater protection.

Mr. Wenger responded to some of the concerns, primarily regarding permit procedure, zoning and state requirements, how the traffic models are generated, potential conditions the Commission could impose, required landscape buffering, and planned infrastructure improvements.

Chairperson Armerding inquired if the Commission would like a study session.

Commissioner Owens inquired about how the pro-rated charge would work and precedence.

Mr. Wenger responded.

Mr. Jones further clarified the pro-rated money collected would be ear-marked for upgrades at the Bell Road and Peace Portal Drive intersection, while general Transportation Impact Fees generated from each unit can be used for street infrastructure projects City wide. Mr. Jones also clarified the City and County work together to address traffic concerns in common areas.

Commissioner May asked the applicant about feasibility of the project if the height variance was denied, and only three stories were able to be conducted.

Mr. Krzysiek noted the project would subsequently lose about 10-12 units, but was not able to speak to feasibility because he is not the project proponent.

Commissioner Owens clarified that at the last meeting Mr. Neil Latta indicated without the variance the project would not be feasible.

Commissioner May inquired if additional parking could be accommodated on site.

Mr. Krzysiek noted the City of Blaine has some of the most stringent parking requirements compared to other jurisdictions at 1.8 spaces per unit compared to the City of Ferndale who requires 1.5 spaces per unit.

Commissioner May asked staff to research information regarding intersection improvements at the Bell Road and Peace Portal Drive intersection, and if any conversations had been had with local legislators regarding the problem.

The Commission agreed to email concerns and questions to staff to research.

The Commission then scheduled a study session for January 11, 2018 at 5:30PM.

**E. NEW BUSINESS:**

Highway Commercial (HCc) Petition Memo

Mr. Jones presented an informal petition staff received from property owners within the Highway Commercial Subzone C zoning district to reduce the front setback requirement from 15 feet to zero feet.

Mr. Jones listed the several ways in which zoning text amendments can be initiated, one of those being a majority vote of the Planning Commission.

The Commission and staff then discussed the petition, and several suggestions were made to staff in processing the proposal including adding language regarding building orientation, and limited design standards.

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER OWENS, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER HRUTFIORD, TO INITIATE A ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT TO REDUCE THE FRONT SETBACK REQUIREMENT WITHIN THE HC(C) ZONING DISTRICT, APPROVED (5-1).**

**F. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

Downtown Development – Boardwalk

Mr. Jones provided the Commission with information regarding past boardwalk designs along Peace Portal Drive and construction of plazas in 2005. Mr. Jones noted since development of the plans, no segments of the boardwalk have been constructed. Mr. Jones then added that a current renovation of a building downtown would trigger development of a portion of the boardwalk, and is anticipating the applicant to ask for a variance from this standard.

Mr. Wenger noted the project will be reviewed by the Planning Commission due to the requirement of a Shore Substantial Development Permit.

Board, Commissions, and Committees Recruitment

Mr. Jones highlighted that several volunteer positions are open on the Park and Cemetery Board, Planning Commission, Public Works Advisory Committee, and Blaine Tourism Advisory Committee.

December 28, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting

The Commission determined there would not be quorum for the December 28, 2017 Planning Commission meeting, and subsequently canceled the meeting.

**G. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MAY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OWENS, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 9, 2017 AS CORRECTED, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY (6-0).**

**H. ADJOURNMENT 9:00 PM.**



Calvin Armerding, Chair

Michael Jones, Staff

Planning Commission minutes of December 14, 2017, to be approved at the January 11, 2018  
Planning Commission meeting.