

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
FOREST GROVE COMMUNITY AUDITORIUM**

May 1, 2017–7:00 P.M.

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1. CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chair Ruder called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Planning Commission Present: Carolyn Hymes, Sebastian B. Lawler, Lisa Nakajima, Dale Smith, Phil Ruder and Hugo Rojas.

Planning Commission Excused: Tom Beck

Staff Present: Jon Holan, Community Development Director; James Reitz, Senior Planner; Marcia Phillips, Planning Commission Coordinator

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2. PUBLIC MEETING:

2.1 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS: None.

2.2 PUBLIC HEARING:

A. File # 311-16-000197-PLNG - Site plan approval and design review of Stonewood Center, a proposed commercial and office complex consisting of four buildings totaling 45,280-square-feet, a restaurant with drive-through, parking and landscaping located at 3650 Pacific Avenue (Washington County Tax Lots 1S305AB00501 & 1S305AB00504).

Vice Chair Ruder opened the public hearing at 7:06 p.m., read the hearing procedures, and asked for disclosure of any conflicts of interest, ex-parte contacts, bias, or abstentions. There were none except for Commissioner Nakajima, who reclused herself. She explained that she is part owner of the Ace Hardware store adjacent to the proposed development, and wished to give testimony. Commissioner Nakajima stepped down from the dais and sat with the audience. Vice Chair Ruder called for the staff report.

For the record, Mr. Reitz stated that staff received a letter from I. E. Construction, which mainly pertained to the drive through (Handout # 1). He said the applicant's architect provided more information about the project (Handout # 2). Mr. Reitz gave a PowerPoint presentation showing slides of the area and location of the project. He also showed additional slides provided by the applicant's architect. Reitz explained that the applicant submitted revisions including a change from angled parking stalls to perpendicular parking stalls.

Mr. Reitz showed slides of the pedestrian walkways, and explained the revisions staff recommends. He showed the drive through as proposed, and explained the queuing and traffic issues due to its location near the Pacific Avenue access. Reitz showed the proposed landscape plan, and stated that staff is pleased with the overall concept, except the trees are too crowded. He explained that staff suggests the same number of trees, but spreading them throughout the site so the trees are not competing with each other for nutrients and water. Reitz said staff suggests more columnar trees along Pacific Avenue to allow room for the bus stop and a sign without crowding. He showed the location of the proposed trash enclosure, and explained that staff suggests it be moved to somewhere other than the front of the lot. Reitz showed elevations of the proposed buildings from different angles, and stated that the design looks good. He pointed out that there is a lot of glazing and awnings for weather protection.

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Mr. Reitz read through the proposed approval conditions. He explained that staff suggests perpendicular parking stalls instead of angled so they can be accessed from either direction. He said the perpendicular stalls are shorter than the angled stalls, which frees up three feet for more landscaping or widening of walkways. Reitz said staff suggests the expansion of the walkway on the south side of Building # 1 and the north side of Buildings # 2- 4 by at least three feet each, for a minimum width of 21 feet and 12 ½ feet respectively. He said staff suggests no drive-through accesses permitted next to the Pacific Avenue driveway, and explained that the access will need to be approved by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) since Pacific Avenue is under their jurisdiction.

Reitz said staff suggests walkway connections be provided from the Pacific Avenue sidewalk at both ends of Building # 1. He said these walkways should have an unobstructed width of at least five feet and should include weather protection canopies or awnings. Reitz said staff also suggests a walkway connection from the Fir Road sidewalk to the walkway on the north side of Buildings # 2-4, and this walkway should have an unobstructed width of at least five feet. He said staff suggests the walkways on the south and west sides of Building # 1 and the north side of Buildings # 2-4 should be widened by eighteen inches to allow for vehicle overhang with no additional curb stops required. He explained that curb stops can be a tripping hazard.

Mr. Reitz said staff suggests at least 25% transparency on the Pacific Avenue façade of Building # 1 end unit tenant spaces, and at least 25% of Building # 1's east and west facades. He stated that staff suggests additional façade enhancements facing Pacific Avenue including the use of brick and other alternative materials, additional colors and the continuation of the awnings proposed for the opposite side of the building. Reitz stated that the Pacific Avenue façade looks good, better than a parking lot, but it could be better.

Mr. Holan explained that Forest Grove has a two track design system with the Development Code and the Design Guidelines, which encourages the design of buildings to compliment the “look” of Forest Grove. He stated that this area is the front door to Forest Grove, and that is why staff has offered the two options for the Commission to consider for the north elevation facing Pacific Avenue: install glazing or provide a more enhanced design.

Mr. Reitz continued to read through the proposed conditions of approval. He said staff suggests tree spacing in the landscape islands should generally comply, and additional landscape islands should have a minimum inside dimension of eight by eight feet. Reitz said staff suggests nine columnar trees along Pacific Avenue spaced about thirty feet apart, and that the Sargent cherry trees be replaced with large trees from the City's approved list. He said there should be additional trees on the south side of Building # 1 and the north side of Buildings # 2-4. Staff suggests tree wells that have a minimum interior dimension of five by five feet, and be installed at grade level with tree grates required. Reitz said staff suggests that, if curbed, short fencing (18 inches tall) should be installed to prevent pedestrian encroachment and soil compaction.

In response to a question from Vice Chair Ruder, Reitz discussed the proposed fence along the south side of the property abutting the apartments. He explained that the fence would obscure the backside of Buildings # 2-4, but it creates an opportunity for graffiti, and suggested the lower portion of these buildings be faced with a material that helps deter graffiti.

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In response to a question from Commissioner Rojas about parking, Mr. Reitz discussed the parking issues. He explained that between Ace Hardware and the proposed project, 233 spaces are required, but with the 10% reduction that brings it down to 210 spaces. If a 25% reduction is allowed, the number of required spaces would be 175. The site indicates only 169 spaces are available. Reitz explained that there is a 10% reduction due to the proximity of mass transit. He said the applicant's response suggests complimentary uses with shared parking, and agrees with the perpendicular parking stalls which will add ten additional stalls. Reitz explained this is why staff proposes a continuance for further study of the parking situation. He said staff met with the applicant and his architect that afternoon to discuss revisions, and staff believes this is a good start, but would like to see a study done by a transportation engineer. Reitz explained that staff does not feel comfortable using the applicant's architects proposed revisions as the basis for developing a finding.

APPLICANT:

A.C. (Buzz) Avery, 27752 Country Lane, Laguna Niguel, CA, 92677. Mr. Avery said that he is the developer of the site, and introduced his architect.

Barry Newdelman, Associates Architects, 2340 SE Tamarak, Portland, OR. Mr. Newdelman explained that this project is a small "anchorless" shopping center (except for Ace Hardware) with a proposed coffee shop and drive-through. He said the applicant is agreeable to most of the conditions of approval. He said the landscaping has been revised to comply with three issues of concern; parking, the look of the north elevation of Building # 1, and the drive entrance. Newdelman said the applicant agrees with the perpendicular parking, which increases the number of stalls by ten, allows expansion of the concourse area, and the applicant is agreeable to additional landscaping in the concourse area. He said the project needs 238 stalls per the Development Code, but the applicant is asking the Commission to consider 194 stalls, or the applicant would have to agree to modify the size of one building to make more room for parking. Newdelman explained that there is a high parking turnover rate of 15-30 minutes due to the types of stores, so there is no need for as much parking.

Mr. Newdelman said the applicant is cognizant of the traffic conflict at the Pacific Avenue entrance. He said the applicant would be agreeable to at least a fifty foot barrier to "force" drivers to turn right out of the drive-through and travel to the interior of the site to avoid left hand turns across three lanes to get to Pacific Avenue. Newdelman suggested a "lamb chop" barrier to force safer turns in and out on Pacific Avenue, and he said the applicant is agreeable to any traffic control devices (stop sign, flashing light, etc.).

Mr. Newdelman said the north elevation of Building # 1 is not a normal shopping facility because the back of the building faces Pacific Avenue. He said typically the back of the building is used for employee restrooms, mechanical and electrical pipes and wires, etc. and having glass on the back of the building leaves more room for break-ins and burglaries. Mr. Newdelman referred to the material board which showed samples of the exterior siding and masonry to be used. He said the back of the building can look good using materials and architectural features. He said this area is not highly used by pedestrians due to the location, but that could change over time. Newdelman discussed the shadow effect as a feature using canopies over the doors in the back.

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In response to a question from Vice Chair Ruder, Mr. Newdelman discussed the increased width of the walkways, and relocation of the trash enclosure by moving it back twenty feet and adding a roof. Newdelman explained that the applicant cannot comply with the walkway on the east side of Building # 1 if the drive-through is located there.

Skip Rotticci, 3305 Cedar Court, Lake Oswego, OR, 97034. Mr. Rotticci gave a brief history of his experience in planning pedestrian friendly shopping areas, and said he was involved in planning Orenco Station in Hillsboro. He said the applicant has done a pedestrian friendly façade in a pedestrian unfriendly area. He stated that the 50% glazing is for the front of a building with delivery doors in back. Rotticci said the applicant has used architectural features to make the back of the building facing Pacific Avenue look pedestrian friendly, but the glazing is problematic due to the back of the building being the janitorial type area. He stated that customers coming to specialty retail are in and out in 15-20 minutes. Rotticci said if there was a grocery store customers would take 30 minutes or more. He said this quick turnover in parking should allow for fewer parking stalls.

In response to a question from Vice Chair Ruder, Mr. Rotticci said there is some glazing on the back of buildings at Orenco Station. He said New Seasons is a good example of the use of architectural features without glazing to make it look pedestrian friendly.

In response to a question from Vice Chair Ruder, Mr. Holan said staff concurs that use of architectural features goes a long way in meeting the requirements. He showed a picture of the elevation supplied by the applicant and said the applicant could use color and other features like overhangs to give a more pedestrian feel, and if there were more detail than the elevation shown, staff would like to consider it.

PROPONENTS: None.

OPPONENTS: None.

OTHER:

Lisa Nakajima, co-owner of Ace Hardware, 3602 Pacific Avenue, Forest Grove, OR. Ms. Nakajima said Ace Hardware is thrilled to have additional retail coming to Forest Grove. She said her concern is the Pacific Avenue access. Nakajima said Ace Hardware has large trucks visiting the site, and does not agree with having any type of impediment in the entrance such as the “lamb chop” that would make it difficult for these big trucks. She said Ace Hardware owns and maintains their own parking spaces, and while they are willing to share during the hours Ace is closed, Ace Hardware has extensive hours of operation, and does not want to do anything that would be a detriment to their customers. Nakajima said Ace Hardware has been there for almost seventeen years with the Villager Apartments adjacent to their site, and every night 8-10 parking spaces are occupied overnight even though there is signage against doing this. She said the east side of their parking lot seems to have become a “park and ride” so there is parking at that end of the lot pretty much all day long. Nakajima said it is her hope that when the development is built, there will be some kind of an agreement to enforce signage that states no parking from midnight to five o’clock or the cars will be towed. She said there was benefit to the coffee shop, but she prefers to go with the ODOT recommendation of nothing within 50 feet, and she emphasized that

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there should be no raised “lamb chop” or other traffic barrier to impede large vehicles that come to the Ace facility and preferred striping.

REBUTTAL: There was no rebuttal from the applicant.

Vice Chair Ruder said it sounded like everyone is on the same page, but the Commission just needs more information from the applicant. He left the public hearing open, and continued it to the June 19th meeting. The applicant asked for direction from the Commission.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Vice Chair Ruder said the north façade of Building # 1 needs more glazing or architectural features.

Commissioner Hymes said she would be agreeable to more architectural features and awnings like Orenco Station. Commissioner Rojas agreed.

Vice Chair Ruder said this is the gateway to town, and foot traffic will increase with the 192 apartments next door and new retail. He said glazing would compromise usability of the tenant spaces. The Commission agreed.

Vice Chair Ruder said Ace Hardware is open for business a lot so parking there is often not available. He stated that the Commission needs more parking information from the applicant.

Commissioner Lawler attested to the fact that the east side of the Ace Hardware parking lot has become a park and ride and a place for overnight parking.

Commissioner Smith said he believes Buildings # 2-4 being built will be a deterrent to this type of parking.

Mr. Avery asked for a consensus from the Commission on the south side fence.

Mr. Reitz said it could be a 6-8 foot fence, but not solid materials which restricts climbing over and graffiti. There was a brief discussion of possible materials.

Vice Chair Ruder said he would not hold the line at a four foot or six foot fence, and was willing to leave the fence materials and height to the property owner. He summarized by stating the Commission wants to see the ODOT analysis on the drive-through window. Ruder said he agrees it would be difficult to make that drive-through window work in that location.

Mr. Reitz showed a slide of the site, and pointed out the property lines. He said the driveway in question is actually owned by the Forestplace Apartments, so the Commission could not adopt a condition that says to put a physical barrier down the driveway because it does not belong to the applicant. He said at this point what staff would be looking for is a formal proposal from the applicant as to how that would be addressed, and ODOT would look at it, but there is also the need for the consent of the adjoining property owner.

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Vice Chair Ruder summarized by stating that the Commission needs more analysis on the driveway and the applicant needs to work with the adjoining property owner, and there needs to be more parking analysis. He said sounds like the Commission is friendly to the idea of architectural details on the north façade of Building # 1 and is not going to demand glazing.

Commissioner Lawler made the comment that there is no ideal place for the trash enclosure. He encouraged the applicant to look at ways to disguise it.

Commissioner Smith agreed that moving it back from the front of the property and covering it helps a lot.

2.3 ACTION ITEMS: None.

2.4 WORK SESSION ITEMS: None.

3.0 BUSINESS MEETING:

3.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 27, 2017 meeting. Commissioner Lawler seconded. Motion passed 6-0. Commissioner Lawler made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 3, 2017 meeting. Commissioner Smith seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

3.2 REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS/SUBCOMMITTEES: None.

3.3 DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Holan said the May 15th meeting will be a public hearing on a partition that has an extraordinary situation, and the staff report will be presented on the Westside Planning Project to get it started. He said a special meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 30th to take public testimony on the Westside Planning Project. He said if needed the hearing can be continued to the June 5th meeting.

3.4 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING: Next meeting will be held on May 15, 2017.

3.5 ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Marcia Phillips
Planning Commission Coordinator