

GRASS VALLEY DEVELOPMENT
APPLICANT'S SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE RESPONSE

Background

On March 2, 2018, the Applicant submitted applications to the City for approval of a Development Agreement, including its attendant master plan, short plat and Site Plans. These applications relate to a proposed mixed-use development on the south side of NW 38th Street in Camas, Washington. The combined applications include an extensive narrative identifying all of the project's applicable regulatory criteria, as well as, a demonstration, based upon the evidence contained within this record, that the project is compliant with and satisfies the regulations applicable to this project. A related, but distinct component of this project (and all other commercial or multifamily projects in the City of Camas), as provided by the City's code, is the City's Design Review process. Design Review criteria are not normally addressed in an application for Site Plan Review that does not contain an attendant Design Review application. However, to the extent that such design criteria relate to portions of the master plan or to allegations of the project's neighborhood opponents in the City of Vancouver, the Applicant is providing this supplemental response.

The Applicant is, concurrent with this supplemental Response, submitting a Design Review application which includes all of the project's commercial buildings and one for the multifamily component of the project. Each of the Design Review criteria applicable to any portion of the project are addressed in the Design Review applications, including the items discussed in this Response for the purposes identified above.

The southern portion of the multifamily component of the project was originally designed in compliance with the City's code. Understanding that there was a single family subdivision to the south, the Applicant's original design minimized the impacts to the south through the use of landscaping, and increased setbacks and shielded lighting. That design is attached hereto as Exhibit 1.

After submission of the applications, residents of the subdivision to the south of the project registered loud concerns to the City and the Applicant about the project. In response, the Applicant's team met with the residents of the subdivision to hear their concerns. In short, they wanted the buildings closest to their property lines to be reduced in height and to be moved farther away from the property line. The Applicant's original design provided setbacks from the neighboring subdivision in excess of what the City's code requires; it also met all of the applicable screening and landscape buffering requirements.

While discussed much more extensively in the Applicant's Design Review applications, there are three provisions contained either within the City's code or the City's Design Review Manual (DRM), (CCC 18.19.050(3)(a)(ii); 18.19.060(A)(4) and the DRM Design Principles for multifamily development) that address the development of multifamily dwellings adjacent to single family dwellings. Boiled down these three provisions state that: "stacked houses abutting or located in single-family residentially zoned areas shall be designed to mitigate size and scale differences."

Discussion of Design Changes

After meeting with residents of the subdivision, the Applicant spent considerable time and resources developing design alternatives that would further mitigate the concerns of the development to the south. The design changes can be readily seen in the attached Exhibit 2. In general, the southerly three buildings have been substantially reoriented to reduce the number of south facing windows and decks. The buildings have been moved northward so they are approximately forty feet north of the south property line, far in excess of the City's required fifteen foot setback. A substantial green space/natural buffer has been created between the buildings and the south property line. Substantial

landscaping far exceeding the City's code requirements is proposed for the south property line together with a site obscuring fence.

The Applicant's redesign to address the neighbors concerns is not without detriment to the Applicant's project. To achieve these design changes, zonal parking was compromised such that some residents will have to park farther from their homes. The project loses some of its interior open space and active play area between the buildings. That open space is now at the very south end of the project. The effect of this is to have smaller active open spaces between the buildings. The open green space, now moved to the south property line, is far less convenient for residents and their children.

The quantification of the Applicant's design changes is provided below. The references to "submitted" and "revised" refers to the originally "submitted" design and the "revised" plan submitted concurrently with this Response and the Applicant's Design Review applications.

- Lowered site grading to reduce heights of southern buildings
 - Building 5
 - Submitted: Approximately 39 feet above existing grade
 - Revised: Approximately 34 feet above existing grade
 - Building 6 (Please note that Building 6 is stepped and has two finish floor elevations)
 - Submitted (East side): Approximately 39 feet above existing grade
 - Revised (East side): Approximately 35 feet above existing grade
 - Submitted (West side): Approximately 38 feet above existing
 - Revised (West side): Approximately 35 feet above existing grade
 - Building 7 (Please note that Building 7 is stepped and has two finish floor elevations)
 - Submitted (East side): Approximately 41.5 feet above existing grade
 - Revised (East side): Approximately 38 feet above existing grade
 - Submitted (West side): Approximately 43 feet above existing
 - Revised (West side): was approximately 36 feet above existing grade
- Reconfigured southern building footprints to increase privacy of backyards
 - Building 5
 - Rotated approximately 45 degrees to align with the east property line to reduce the visual impact of the building along the south property line.
 - Shifted 14 feet to the north (from 21 feet to 35 feet) to provide a larger green space between the building and the south property line.
 - Building 6
 - Shifted 18 feet to the north (from 17 feet to 35 feet at the narrowest point) to provide a larger green space between the building and the south property line.
 - Building 7
 - Rotated approximately 36 degrees to provide further separation between the building and the south property line.
 - Shifted 17 feet to the north (from 18 feet to 35 feet at the narrowest point) to provide a larger green space between the building and the south property line.
 - Buildings 8 and 9

- Shifted approximately 10 feet to the north to accommodate the adjustments to Buildings 5, 6, and 7 and to provide further separation from properties to the south.
 - Aligned Building 8 to be directly north of building 6 to reduce the visual impact
- Southernmost east/west drive aisle
 - Shifted north approximately 16 feet to accommodate the adjustments to Buildings 5, 6 and 7.
- Parking Buffer
 - Placed an additional parking between Buildings 5 and 6, with one garage at the south end of each block of parking to act as buffer
- Enhanced landscaping to increase privacy of backyards along the southern property line
 - Added approximately 32 cedar trees, along with other deciduous trees and evergreen and deciduous shrubs, along southern property line to provide a natural buffer to lower density residential uses as directed by Camas Design Review Manual “Standard Design Guidelines – Landscaping & Screening”
 - 8-foot tall trees will be installed to limit visibility of backyards.
- Added 6-foot fence to provide physical buffer
 - To mitigate any security concerns, a fence will be added along the southern property line.

Two other design changes that have been reflected on the revised site plans are as follows:

- Addition of a “Welcome to Camas” sign and a “Grass Valley Apartments” sign along the frontage of NW 38th Avenue.
- Addition of a north/south pedestrian walkway from Building 3 to the south property to provide pedestrian access to a proposed parking lot on the Fisher Creek Campus.

Conclusion

While the purpose and effect of the City’s existing code provisions, e.g. landscape and setbacks, is to mitigate size and scale differences between adjacent developments. While all development creates impacts to surrounding development, the revised design of the “stacked houses abutting... single-family residentially zoned areas”, extensively mitigates those impacts and differences through building orientation, reduced height, increased distance and extensive landscaping and fencing.

