



HOUSING COMMISSION MINUTES

Regular Meeting
October 27, 2004
5:30 pm

City Council Conference Room, First Floor
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025-3483

CALL TO ORDER

Elza Keet called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Administrative Building City Council Conference Room.

ROLL CALL

Housing Commission Members Present:

Elza Keet, Chair; Carol Louchheim, Vice-Chair; Anne Moser; Clarice O'Neal

Housing Commission Member Absent: - John Donald

Staff Present: Justin Murphy, Development Services Manager, Sarah Jones, Contract Planner; Gretchen Hillard, Housing and Redevelopment

A. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

B. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS – None.

C. BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Derry Lane Development - 580 Oak Grove Avenue - study session

Jim Pollart of the O'Brien Group introduced himself, Rob Steinberg, Dick Block and Michael Bruner. Justin Murphy introduced himself and Sarah Jones, Consultant Planner. Jim Pollart explained the status of the Planning application, which requires a General Plan amendment and a rezoning. The proposed project is 135 apartments and 17,000 square feet of commercial on 3.49 acres. The density of the apartments is about 40 units to the acre, conforming approximately to the R-4 zone. The building is 40 feet high and has 100 percent Floor Area Ratio (FAR). The commercial portion has a 30-foot height and 75% FAR, conforming to the C-4 zone. Anne Moser asked who would manage the apartments. Jim Pollart said that the O'Brien group will manage them for five to 15 years.

Elza Keet stated that the development appeared very dense. There are not any homes like this in Menlo Park. Justin Murphy stated that 2160 Santa Cruz has this density, and Glenwood Inn next door has a similar density. It has been a long time since a proposal has been received for a rental development. She stated the units are tiny, and that there are ground level units. Rob Steinberg addressed design issues and the orientation of the apartments on different sides of the building. Jim Pollart described what happens if the road gets depressed and the railroad tracks are raised, as proposed. He said the railroad noise is addressed by the hall design. The Oak Grove side will have lower level retail and second floor commercial uses. The public plaza on Oak Grove may have a restaurant next to it. Rob Steinberg said the project looks like a

collection of buildings from El Camino Real. The development will be a transit oriented, walkable community.

To provide parking, each unit will get one stall, and the option to rent a second stall. There will be 315 parking spaces. 1.5 parking spaces for one bedroom apartments, two for two or three bedroom units, plus 1/3 space per unit for guests. There will be some storage in the garage for each unit.

On the BMR units, Elza Keet said that the distribution of the bedrooms is all right, but very dense. The proposed development may reduce the quality of life in Menlo Park. A swimming pool or tennis courts would be preferable to the green area. 685 to 690 square feet is rather small for an apartment.

Jim Pollart responded that the size is not out of the range of what you find in other luxury apartment communities. This is a high density project. It is well designed. People who live there will have a high quality of life. It provides a different lifestyle choice. The market rate units will rent for \$1.80 to \$2 per square foot, so a one bedroom will be around \$1,400 to \$1,500 per square foot.

Carol Louchheim said that the number of BMR units is OK, and should be distributed throughout the development. Jim Pollart said he did not know where they'd proposed to locate them yet. Clarice O'Neal asked if the neighbors would accept this design? Once before we proposed an apartment building on Oak Grove and it wasn't accepted. Jim Pollart said that there will be a business center with a conference room that can be reserved and a fitness center, which will be accessible to children as well as adults. Anne Moser asked if the doorways would be wheelchair accessible. Jim Pollart said they'd be three feet wide, which is a code requirement. She asked about bike racks. Jim Pollart said there'd be one locked storage location for bikes in the garage for residents. Also all units would have a terrace or a balcony. The building codes address noise and vibration, so the needed protection would be there. This would mean beefing up the walls and windows. A Commissioner asked where would kids play? Jim Pollart said there were three green spaces, the largest 40 feet by 200 feet of lawn. It is not designed for kids, but it is secure and green. The project site is three blocks from Burgess recreation center. Carol Louchheim asked if their target market is young singles, work people and graduate students. Jim Pollart said it is. Elza Keet pointed out that there are 400 names on the City's Waiting List, and many are one and two person households.

The Commissioners thanked the Derry team for their time and information. Jim Pollart said that they would return with the draft BMR Agreement, including the proposed locations for the BMR units.

2. Approval of September 1, 2004 Minutes Elza Keet stated that she wanted to be sure that her statement that she wanted the strategy for the BMR Plan to be approval to allow BMR units to be adapted to the needs of the people on the Waiting List, such as converting a two bedroom unit into a one bedroom unit or a three bedroom unit, as needed. With that change the Commissioners approved the September 1, 2004 minutes. (M/S Keet/Louchheim, 4-0)

D. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Housing Commissioners needed to volunteer for future months for Loan Advisory Committee. Elza Keet volunteered for November. Clarice O'Neal volunteered for December and Carol Louchheim volunteered for January. Anne Moser tentatively volunteered for February, stating she was unavailable February 12 through 19.

2. Identification of possible additional meeting date in early November. The Commissioners identified Wednesday, November 17 as a possible additional meeting date, with Tuesday, November 16, a less desirable second.
3. Monthly Report on the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program for September 2004. The Commissioners reviewed the report.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gretchen Hillard
Housing and Redevelopment Manager

h:\housing commission\minutes\04\1027.doc