

**GRAND JUNCTION PLANNING COMMISSION  
OCTOBER 26, 2004 MINUTES  
7 p.m. to 8:20 p.m.**

The regularly scheduled Planning Commission hearing was called to order at 7 p.m. by Chairman Paul Dibble. The public hearing was held in the City Hall Auditorium.

In attendance, representing the City Planning Commission, were Paul Dibble (Chairman), Roland Cole, Tom Lowrey, John Redifer, William Putnam, Bill Pitts and Lynn Pavelka-Zarkesh (alternate).

In attendance, representing the City's Community Development Department, were Kathy Portner (Planning Manager), Pat Cecil (Development Services Supervisor), Lori Bowers (Sr. Planner), and Faye Hall (Planning Technician).

Also present were Jamie Kreiling (Asst. City Attorney), and Rick Dorris and Laura Lamberty (City Development Engineers).

Terri Troutner was present to record the minutes.

There were 10 interested citizens present during the course of the hearing.

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**I. ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRESENTATIONS AND/OR VISITORS**

There were no announcements, presentations and/or visitors.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Available for consideration were the minutes from the September 28, 2004 public hearing.

**MOTION: (Commissioner Pitts) "I move for approval as presented."**

Commissioner Lowrey seconded the motion.

A vote was called and the motion passed by a vote of 5-0, with Commissioners Putnam and Cole abstaining.

**III. CONSENT AGENDA**

Available for consideration were items ANX-2004-175 (Zone of Annexation--Kronvall Annexation), ANX-2004-206 (Zone of Annexation--Meyers-Steele Annexation), VR-2004-183 (Vacation of Right-of-Way and Conditional Use Permit--American Linen Expansion), and PP-2004-154 (Preliminary Plan--Mesa Estates Subdivision).

Pat Cecil requested that item VR-2004-183 be continued to the November 9 public hearing. Kathy Portner indicated that since staff and the petitioner were in agreement with the conditions of approval for Full Hearing item PDR-2003-229 (Planned Development Review--Meadowlark Gardens PD Amendment), she offered that Full Hearing item for placement on the Consent Agenda, provided there

were no audience objections. She referenced an updated staff report for item PDR-2003-229 passed out prior to the evening's public hearing and said that the only changes in the staff report were to add the rezone criteria from the 1997 *Zoning and Development Code*, which had been omitted from the initial staff report, and to provide planning commissioners with a clean copy of the proposed City Council ordinance.

Commissioner Lowrey asked that item 4 from the Consent Agenda, PP-2004-154, be pulled and placed on the Full Hearing Agenda. He and others on the Planning Commission felt the item warranted additional discussion.

No objections were raised on any of the remaining items.

**MOTION: (Commissioner Cole) "I would move for approval of the Consent Agenda as amended, including items 1, 2, and 5 [ANX-2004-175 (Zone of Annexation--Kronvall Annexation), ANX-2004-206 (Zone of Annexation--Meyers-Steele Annexation), and PDR-2003-229 (Planned Development Review--Meadowlark Gardens PD Amendment)], with the continuation of item 3 [VR-2004-183 (Vacation of Right-of-Way and Conditional Use Permit--American Linen Expansion)] to the November 9 meeting."**

Commissioner Lowrey seconded the motion.

A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously by a vote of 7-0.

#### **IV. FULL HEARING**

##### **PP-2004-154 PRELIMINARY PLAN--MESA ESTATES SUBDIVISION**

**A request for approval to develop 54 duplex units on 23.486 acres in an RMF-8 (Residential Multi-Family, 8 units/acre) zone district.**

**Petitioner: Mike and Marc Cadez, Grand Bud, LLC**

**Location: 28 1/2 Road and Highway 50**

##### **PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION**

Jim Langford, representing the petitioner, overviewed the request for 108 single-family attached units. He recognized that there had been some concerns expressed over the project; however, he felt that all of the Code criteria had been met. Realizing that the current proposal represented something unique to the City of Grand Junction, he hoped that he and other representatives present for the project could allay some of those concerns. Mr. Langford contended that the site was not situated within a transitional area. With single-family uses on both sides of the property, higher density multi-family units did not seem appropriate. He acknowledged receipt of a letter of objection from Mary Anne and Bobby Denney (2859 Pinehurst Lane, Grand Junction), who wanted only single-family detached homes constructed on the site. The zoning, he maintained, would allow for townhouses or condominiums, neither of which were currently being proposed. Mr. Langford felt that duplex units represented the best development option for the site, but he stressed that the proposed units would not denigrate in appearance as other duplex units in the area had because there would be planned onsite supervision and maintenance. Introduced to staff and planning commissioners were Thomas Vickery of Mile High Group; Chad Dalton, president of land development; and Shelly Westmoorland, assistant land planner.

Mr. Dalton came forward and presented a DVD containing testimonials from persons who spoke favorably of their interactions with the Mile High Capital Group.

Commissioner Lowrey interjected that the reason for pulling the item from Consent was so that planning commissioners could get a better understanding of the project's aesthetics and what it offered to the community. He was concerned about the apparent "garage-scape" appearance of the units along internal streets. While the request may meet current Code criteria and would likely be approved, staff and planning commissioners planned on using the project as an example in drafting new criteria addressing subdivision aesthetics for future projects of a similar type.

Chairman Dibble said that he was looking for some assurances that the current proposal would result in a quality project.

Mr. Dalton said that there were five different housing design layouts within the project, and similar projects had been successfully constructed nationwide.

Jamie Kreiling cautioned against presuming project approval. No such assurance had been given to the petitioner nor had a decision on the request yet been rendered.

Mr. Vickery came forward and gave a Powerpoint presentation containing photos of various housing designs. All homes would be ranch-styled, with three bedrooms, two baths, and a double-car garage. All would have shingled roofs and come with 50-year-warrantied concrete siding. Individual yards would be fully sodded, with at least one tree planted in each front yard and additional shrubbery planted throughout the subdivision. Sprinkler systems would be developer-installed and irrigation water would be available to each lot. Two employees from their sister company, Front Range Management, would live onsite and inspect the units regularly to ensure tenant adherence to HOA covenants. A financial and criminal background check would be conducted on all prospective tenants. Mr. Dickory referenced an overhead of the project's Site Plan depicting the proposed layout of housing units; elevation drawings of several proposed home designs; and photos of another similar subdivision to show visual aesthetics and streetscaping. No two adjacent home styles would be exactly alike, and structures would be "twisted" on lots wherever possible to avoid a strictly linear appearance. All rear yard and perimeter fencing would be developer-installed and maintained by the HOA. Homes would be handicap-accessible, ANSI approved, and have 3-foot-wide doors. While most of the occupants would be renters, people from other similar developments had chosen to purchase their units. Mr. Vickery noted the proposed placement of entrance signage. He was currently working with the post office to select a suitable site for post office box clustering. A 6-foot-high masonry wall would be constructed along the site's western perimeter. He noted the location of a waterline easement and open ditch and said that the HOA would maintain that portion of the ditch area located on the site.

### **QUESTIONS**

Chairman Dibble asked for confirmation that each unit's backyard would be fully fenced at the time of construction and maintained by the HOA, which was given.

When Chairman Dibble asked about the percentage of units owned versus rented in similar projects, Mr. Dalton came forward and indicated that an average of 10-15% of units were owner-occupied. Mr. Vickery added that at a point where 66% of the units were sold, the HOA would be turned over to homeowners. Chairman Dibble asked about the percentage of units that were typically developer-owned, to which Mr. Dalton replied 10-20%. When asked about maintenance of structures (e.g., unit painting, fence repairs, etc.), Mr. Dalton said that the HOA would be responsible for handling all of those tasks on a scheduled basis.

**STAFF'S PRESENTATION**

Lori Bowers gave a Powerpoint presentation containing the following slides: 1) site location map; 2) aerial photo map; 3) Future Land Use Map; 4) Existing City and County Zoning Map; 5) subdivision plat. She provided a brief history of the site and noted the locations of street connections and the previously referenced open ditch. A 42-inch high fence would be erected around the perimeter of the proposed park area (location noted), which would be maintained by the HOA. Staff would make sure that driveway placement met established criteria. Having found that the request met both Code criteria and Growth Plan recommendations, staff recommended approval.

**QUESTIONS**

Commissioner Lowrey asked if there were planning techniques currently available to staff which would lessen the visual impacts of such a project's "garage-scaping." Ms. Portner replied affirmatively but said that none of those options were under consideration with the current project. Among the alternatives available were alley-loaded garages, clustering of homes to allow greater setbacks, etc. The latter option, she acknowledged, would change the appearance of housing units.

Chairman Dibble asked if any portion of the open ditch would be piped. Ms. Bowers noted a section of ditch traversing Tenderfoot Drive to the north which would be piped.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no comments either for or against the request.

**PETITIONER'S REBUTTAL**

Mr. Langford expressed appreciation for planning commissioner concerns and interest in the proposal. While he reiterated that some of the project's elements were rather new to the area, he felt that the development would serve as a positive example of what could be done.

Mr. Dalton offered to submit builders comments received from other similar subdivision projects, if staff wanted them.

**DISCUSSION**

Mr. Putnam recounted a visit he'd made to a museum in Washington, DC featuring building projects throughout American history. The one constant, he observed, was that there was a general objection to multi-family units, even though all communities recognized the need for them. Since Code criteria and Growth Plan recommendations had been met, it appeared that the Planning Commission's "hands were tied" in finding for approval of the proposal. However, he supported staff's researching other more aesthetic alternatives and coming up with a Code amendment that would address stated concerns.

Commissioner Lowrey agreed. While he intended to support approval of the current request, he asked staff to come up with a brief report on available alternatives that Planning Commission and City Council could consider adopting for future projects of a similar design. Specific attention should be paid to placement of garages and driveways from the street.

Commissioner Pitts agreed that the current proposal represented a new kind of development for the community. It met established criteria and could end up being a very appealing subdivision. He hoped that it would be the positive example Mr. Langford purported it to be.

Commissioner Pavelka-Zarkesh felt that staff could consider more in their report than just subdivision aesthetics; they should also consider the kind of subdivision actually being created and its resultant social impacts on the community.

Chairman Dibble commended the petitioners for keeping the density at the lower end of the allowable range and for providing tenants with features such as fencing, landscaping, open space, sprinklers, etc. In light of the kind of development that could have been placed on the property, he felt that the petitioners had tried to vary the plan as much as they could to satisfy concerns.

**MOTION: (Commissioner Cole) "Mr. Chairman, on item PP-2004-154, the request for Preliminary Plat approval for the Mesa Estates Subdivision, I move that the Planning Commission make the findings of fact and conclusions listed in the staff report and approve the Preliminary Plan."**

Commissioner Pitts seconded the motion.

A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously by a vote of 7-0.

## **V. GENERAL DISCUSSION**

Commissioner Lowrey asked for and received a consensus from planning commissioners that staff look into the issues brought forth in conjunction with the preceding item. Chairman Dibble asked that staff come back before Planning Commission with some suggestions on how those concerns might be best addressed.

With no further business to discuss, the public hearing was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.