

**GRAND JUNCTION PLANNING COMMISSION
JUNE 24, 2003 MINUTES
7:00 P.M. to 10:05 P.M.**

The regularly scheduled Planning Commission hearing was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chairman Paul Dibble. The public hearing was held in the City Hall Auditorium.

In attendance, representing the City Planning Commission, were Dr. Paul Dibble (Chairman), Roland Cole, John Evans, John Redifer, Richard Blosser, William Putnam and Travis Cox. Bill Pitts was absent.

In attendance, representing the City's Community Development Department, were Bob Blanchard (Community Development Director), Pat Cecil (Development Services Supervisor) and Lisa Cox (Senior Planner).

Also present were John Shaver (Assistant City Attorney), and Rick Dorris and Eric Hahn (Development Engineers).

Terri Troutner was present to record the minutes.

There were approximately 33 interested citizens present during the course of the hearing.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No minutes were available for consideration.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRESENTATIONS AND/OR VISITORS

There were no announcements, presentations and/or visitors.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

Offered for placement on the Consent Agenda were items PFP-2003-092 (Preliminary/Final Plan--Grand Mesa Center Revised Plan), ANX-2003-093 (Zone of Annexation--Marchun Annexation), and FPF-2003-076 (Preliminary/Final Plat--Rimrock Marketplace 3 Subdivision).

Rick Dorris asked that item PFP-2003-092 be pulled from Consent and placed on the next regularly scheduled public hearing agenda (July 8, 2003). No objections were received on the remaining two items.

MOTION: (Commissioner Cole) "Mr. Chairman, I would move that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented with the exception of the Final Plan for the Grand Mesa Center, Revised Plan, and include that it be continued to the July 8 meeting."

Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously by a vote of 6-0, with Commissioner Cox abstaining.

IV. FULL HEARING

RZ-2003-028 REZONE & PRELIMINARY PLAN--FUOCO ESTATES

A request for approval to rezone 13.57 acres from Residential Single-Family Rural (RSF-R) to Planned Development (PD); and to approve a Preliminary Plan for 58 patio home lots on 9.83 acres and the dedication of 3.74 acres to the City for a park.

Petitioner: Fuoco Grandchildren's Trust--Robert Fuoco

Location: East of Dewey Place

PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION

Ted Ciavonne, representing the petitioner, referenced an aerial photo of the site and noted the variety of zonings surrounding the property. The Growth Plan recommended a Residential Medium-High land use category, which would permit the petitioner to develop the property to a much higher density (8-12 units/acre) than the 5.86 units/acre currently proposed. The proposed density, he felt, would provide a good transition from the lower densities to the east and the higher densities to the west. Mr. Ciavonne explained that the City had long been interested in the property to facilitate area-wide stormwater detention. However, the City's budget had precluded acquisition of the entire property. As a compromise for the lower-than-recommended density request and PD zoning, the petitioner offered to improve and donate a 3.74-acre park to the City, which would be used for detention as well as for recreational purposes. An easement would be granted to the Grand Junction Drainage District across the open space to facilitate maintenance. It was originally thought that the adjacent park located in Fall Valley Subdivision would also be dedicated to the City, but the Fall Valley Homeowners Association had expressed strong opposition to that option.

Mr. Ciavonne referenced the Preliminary Plan and noted proposed accesses into the subdivision. The proposed subdivision would be constructed in two phases. The petitioner had expressed agreement with all staff requirements; however, latitude on the width of the proposed pedestrian path was requested. City standards required construction of an 8-foot-wide path; the petitioner felt that a 6-foot-wide path would be adequate. Based on a letter received by staff from the City's parks planner earlier that day, it appeared as though some flexibility may be possible.

STAFF'S PRESENTATION

Lisa Cox offered a Powerpoint presentation which contained the following slides: 1) site location map; 2) aerial photo of the site; 3) Future Land Use Map section; 4) existing City and County zoning map; 5) Preliminary Plan; 6) background information; 7) project information; 8) consistency with City standards overview; and 9) findings of fact/conclusions. She confirmed that when the property was annexed in August of 2000, the County's RSF-R zoning had been retained; however, the City's Growth Plan recommended a Residential Medium-High (8-12 units/acre) density for the property. The City had been reluctant to permit a lower density on the subject property because very few parcels within the City limits were designated as suitable for higher densities. However, allowance of the proposed lower density was permitted in exchange for the open space referenced by Mr. Ciavonne. The PD zone request would have an underlying default zone of RMF-8. Improvements costs for the park would be the sole responsibility of the developer and included park benches, bollards, irrigation system, trees, pedestrian trails, turf, etc. Fencing along the rear property lines of proposed lots located directly adjacent to the open space would also be provided by the developer. She briefly recounted discussions undertaken by City staff and the Fall Valley Homeowners Association with regard to dedication of its park but there had been no interest expressed by the Association.

Staff had originally recommended denial of the request based on the petitioner's non-compliance with the City's trails width requirement. Earlier in the day she'd received a letter from Sean Cooper, City Parks Planner, who said that depending on the final design of the trails plan, some latitude in trail width might be possible. It was unclear at this point whether the proposed trail would connect to the Fall Valley trails system, or exactly where on the property the proposed trail might be located. The petitioner had then agreed to comply with the City's minimum trail width requirements, whatever that turned out to be. With resolution of that criterion, staff withdrew its initial objection and recommended approval of both the rezone and Preliminary Plan requests.

QUESTIONS

Chairman Dibble referenced Mr. Cooper's letter mentioned by staff and asked Ms. Cox to summarize key points. Reading from the letter, she said that Mr. Cooper had acknowledged that without a final design, it was not known whether the trail would be located on top of the stormwater detention facility or inside of it. The primary reason for requiring the 8-foot width was to facilitate vehicular traffic for maintenance purposes, and City parks staff would need to be able to access the park from several locations. If the trail were ultimately

located in the bottom of the detention facility, it may be possible that two of the 8-foot-wide trail segments could be utilized as a V-pan section to carry away drainage. If the trail were located on top of the facility, a 6-foot-wide trail may be appropriate, provided that there were still portions of the trail constructed to the 8-foot width to accommodate vehicular traffic.

When asked by Chairman Dibble if there would be any interconnectivity of trail segments throughout the subdivision, Ms. Cox replied negatively. She noted trail and sidewalk locations that would connect a cul-de-sac with the park area. There would also be bicycle paths delineated along the roadway. There were no plans to delineate or separate the proposed park from the adjacent Fall Valley Park.

Commissioner Redifer asked if all improvements costs would be borne by the petitioner, to which Ms. Cox replied affirmatively. Once installed, however, the City would then be responsible for maintenance.

Commissioner Evans asked if fencing would be provided along the north and east property lines, to which Ms. Cox responded negatively. She added that the Grand Junction Drainage District had not been in favor of erecting fencing along its Beehive Drain to the east, and the City did not support the installation of fencing along the northern property line.

Commissioner Cole asked if staff anticipated any problems resulting from the lack of any clear delineation between the two park areas. Ms. Cox said that concerns expressed by the Fall Valley Homeowners Association included loitering, maintenance, and the increased liability expected with its pond. The Association was also concerned about Fuoco Subdivision residents utilizing the facilities belonging to Fall Valley residents. The Association, she said, could always opt to install signage or use another means of delineation.

Chairman Dibble asked if the Fall Valley park was turfed, to which Ms. Cox replied affirmatively.

Eric Hahn came forward and stated that while there was no final design, it was likely that grading would be done to create berming along the property line, which would help delineate the two parks.

Chairman Dibble wondered how vehicular parking would be handled. Mr. Hahn said that people driving to the park would have to park their vehicles on the street. No problems with on-street parking were anticipated.

John Shaver noted the absence of any mention of water rights conveyance in the proposed ordinance. He recommended referencing it as an ordinance amendment in any motion made. Ms. Cox affirmed that the petitioner had intended to transfer water rights to the City for park irrigation, and that a sprinkler system would be installed for park watering.

Commissioner Blosser expressed concern over the lack of parking available for a public amenity. Ms. Cox said that even though the park would be dedicated to the City, it would likely serve as more a subdivision amenity than a community-wide amenity.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

FOR:

There were no comments for the request.

AGAINST:

Scott Borden (no address given), representing the Fall Valley Homeowners Association, reaffirmed that Fall Valley residents preferred not to dedicate its park to the City and preferred not to share it with Fuoco Subdivision residents. They felt strongly enough about it that they intended to install fencing at the property line to separate the two parks, although he felt that the petitioner should be willing to absorb the cost. The Fall Valley Homeowners Association, he said, paid a lot of money for liability insurance covering its pond. With Fuoco Subdivision residents likely to utilize Fall Valley amenities, he felt that the petitioner or new subdivision

residents should be willing to participate in insurance costs. Mr. Borden also objected to the proposed density and felt it to be incompatible with Fall Valley's density. He was also concerned about the increased traffic to Saffron Way and thought that vehicle headlights would be shining into the bedroom windows of residents whose homes were situated nearest the subdivision's intersection. He recommended installation of speed bumps or other traffic calming devices to slow traffic traveling between the two subdivisions. He wondered if the Saffron Way access could be relocated to the radio tower property.

Clay Clemenson (no address given) said that lots to the east were situated topographically much higher than those of the Fuoco property. He expected that his and other residents' views would be impacted by the development. He also felt that a density closer to 4 units/acre would be more compatible with property densities to the east.

Chris Clark (615 Meander Drive, Grand Junction) agreed that lots to the east of the subject property were probably 30 feet higher in elevation. He appreciated the petitioner's willingness to donate a park site, but the project's density still seemed too high to be compatible with the surrounding area. He felt that the Growth Plan's recommendation for higher densities on the property was an error and didn't reflect the actual built-out densities of surrounding properties. Mr. Clark agreed with previously stated concerns regarding traffic impacts and felt that subdivision residents would be negatively impacted by so much on-street parking. He hoped that subdivision lighting would be minimized at night, and he also wondered how his livestock would be impacted by the adjacent park and subdivision. He felt that to have so many lots utilizing potable water for irrigation was a poor use of water, especially during drought years. He thought he'd heard that Ute Water had pressurization and water delivery issues in the area. Mr. Clark thought that the development may also impact local school enrollments.

Gerald Reed (646 Gold Leaf Court, Grand Junction) concurred with previously stated comments, adding that he was also concerned about any adverse impact to his property's value as a result of the development. He agreed that the petitioner should be responsible for costs associated with erecting a fence to separate the two parks. Fall Valley had an agreement with a local trash hauler, which limited trash hauler frequency to the subdivision to one day per week. With traffic accessing Fuoco Subdivision primarily via Saffron Way, this would result in many more trash haulers traveling that road throughout the week. He asked that the petitioner consider a similar trash hauler agreement to limit the amount of hauler traffic traveling through the two subdivisions. He also thought that routing the primary access through the radio tower property was preferable than directing it through Fall Valley.

Amelia Languin (no address given) expressed her opposition to so much additional traffic traveling in front of her home. She felt that she might experience difficulty in getting to her postal box located along Saffron Way because of so much expected on-street parking.

Les Wilkenson (630 Shadowood Court, Grand Junction), a handicapped Fall Valley resident, said that his primary concern was safety. Increased traffic would pose an increased danger to him. In addition, he didn't want residents from other subdivisions using the Fall Valley Park.

PETITIONER'S REBUTTAL

Referencing an aerial photo of the site, which also depicted the proposed lot configuration, Mr. Ciavonne noted that lot sizes of the proposed subdivision and those in Fall Valley were not that dissimilar. The Planned Development zone was a negotiated tool. Much of the higher density required by the City had been forfeited in favor of a less dense project; however, the City still required that the density be close to 6 units/acre. The donation of, and improvements to, a park would provide the subdivision and surrounding area with a nice amenity. Street connection locations had been determined by City engineering staff and were not negotiable. Fencing would be installed along the rear property lines of lots 1-3 and along the rear property lines of those proposed lots abutting the park. It was possible that the proposed pedestrian path could serve to delineate the boundary between the two parks; however, at the very least, grading would help to define it. He didn't feel that

erecting a fence to separate the two parks was necessary. The park would provide the area with a significant drainage detention amenity.

Mr. Ciavonne said that he would adhere to the City's lighting standards, which would ensure that any required lighting was directed downward. The circuitous internal streets would do much too slow traffic; he did not feel that speed bumps were warranted. With regard to headlights shining into bedroom windows, persons whose homes were situated on corner lots had to realize that that was always possible. All available water shares would be transferred to the City for park maintenance. He felt that forcing residents to use potable water was a deterrent because of the costs involved. He did not feel that surrounding property values would be adversely affected by the development, and in fact, they could improve given the proximity of a public park. Mr. Ciavonne asked for clarification on the referenced Fall Valley trash hauler agreement, which was provided.

Cliff Hansen, also representing the petitioner, said that he preferred developing to lesser densities, and he was accustomed to providing parks and open space. The proposed development represented a compromise between City requirements and the preferences of nearby residents. He reminded those present that the City had required a much higher density for the property. He said that if the City required installation of fencing between the two parks, he would agree to provide a 42-inch open, earthtone-colored, plastic fence, which would be placed on top of berming. Ms. Cox said that the Parks Department was responsible for oversight of park property. She was unsure whether the department would want a fence there, since there would be additional liability and maintenance issues. Additional discussions with the City's parks planner would be undertaken.

QUESTIONS

Commissioner Cole asked if off-street parking had been provided for each lot, to which Mr. Ciavonne replied affirmatively.

Commissioner Blosser asked if there would be a stop sign installed at the Saffron Way intersection into the Fuoco Subdivision. Mr. Hahn answered that the City would require one.

Chairman Dibble asked about liability in conjunction with park property. Mr. Shaver said that once dedicated, liability would fall to the City.

Chairman Dibble asked if there were any safety concerns as a result of increased traffic between the two subdivisions. Mr. Hahn expected no dramatic increases in traffic in conjunction with the development. If residents perceived a problem at some future point, they could contact the City's Engineering Department with specifics.

Ms. Cox added that the school district had received a review packet, but to date no comments had been received back from them by staff.

Commissioner Putnam asked Mr. Shaver if there were any state regulations in place to prevent residents in one subdivision from using the amenities of another subdivision. Mr. Shaver responded negatively, adding that erecting a fence may actually invite trespass.

DISCUSSION

Commissioner Cox felt that the developer had done a great job with the proposal. While he personally would have preferred a higher density, the request represented a nice compromise and would provide a good density transition for the area. He appreciated the petitioner's donation of a park to the City and felt that area residents would benefit from having it.

Commissioner Blosser concurred. The property could have been developed at a much higher density. The proposed density was a nice compromise, and the plan was a good one.

Commissioners Cole and Evans agreed with previously stated comments.

Chairman Dibble commented that developers normally came before the Planning Commission asking for increased densities. Area residents would benefit from both the park's recreational amenity and its use as a detention facility.

Commissioner Putnam agreed, adding that a well-designed development and park would be far more preferable than a parcel filled with weeds and dust.

MOTION: (Commissioner Cole) "Mr. Chairman, on item RZ-2003-028, the request for a recommendation to rezone from RSF-R to Planned Development with an RMF-8 default zone district, I move we forward the recommendation of approval to City Council, including the water rights conveyance as spoken of by our attorney, finding that the request is consistent with the goals and policies of the Growth Plan and all applicable sections of the Zoning and Development Code."

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

MOTION: (Commissioner Cole) "Mr. Chairman, on item RZ-2003-028, request for recommendation to approve a Preliminary Plan for Fuoco Estates, I move that we forward a recommendation of approval to City Council with the finding that the request is consistent with the goals and policies of the Growth Plan and all applicable sections of the Zoning and Development Code."

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

A brief recess was called at 8:38 P.M. The public hearing reconvened at 8:48 P.M.

PDR-2003-086 PLANNED DEVELOPMENT REVIEW--AMENDEMENT TO ST. MARY'S MASTER PLAN

A request for approval of changes to St. Mary's Hospital Master Plan regarding parking and a medical education center.

Petitioner: St. Mary's Hospital--Keith Estridge

Location: 2635 North 7th Street

PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION

Dan Prinster, representing the petitioner, began by saying that since no agreement had yet been reached with neighbors concerning the Mira Vista and Patterson Road entrance, that facet of the request had been withdrawn pending future resolution. He offered a Powerpoint presentation (hard copies passed out to planning commissioners and staff) containing the following slides: 1) agenda; 2) overview and update of the 2000 Master Plan; 3) map depicting St. Mary's-owned properties included in the 2000 Master Plan; 4) Master Plan goals; 5) original three phases to the plan; 6) original site plan; 7) issues related to the proposed amendments; 8) site plan depicting the 7th Street access for the Madden & Farrell buildings; 9) site plan depicting the existing parking lot on the west side; 10) St. Mary's Park: extension of lease and expansion proposal; and 11) summary.

Mr. Prinster overviewed the goals of the Master Plan and reviewed the elements of the first phase that were completed, either wholly or in part. Plans for phases two and three had not yet been undertaken.

Rob Jenkins, also representing the petitioner, continued with the presentation and noted on the master site plan the specific areas affected by the requested amendments. Under consideration was expansion of the parking area adjacent to the Holy Family School site, which would provide an additional 203 parking spaces, some of which would be gated for staff use, with other lots available for public use. The second proposal included

relocation of the parking garage to a point bounded by Center Avenue, the new Wellington Avenue, and 7th Street. The garage would still be comprised of four levels, with half a level located below grade. An elevator would be installed inside the parking garage, which would bypass the steep grade between the hospital and garage. A bridge from the garage to the main hospital building would safely convey visitors and staff between the two buildings. When this parking was combined with the new parking to the east, the net gain exceeded 500 spaces. Construction of the parking garage would replace two existing buildings--the information services building and the Saccomanno Educational Center. The third proposal included relocation and expansion of St. Mary's educational services to a point further north (shown on site plan).

The original plan required the closure of the driveway leading to the Madden & Farrell buildings. However, St. Mary's staff determined that it still needed the entrance, at least temporarily, to provide an alternate access to the existing parking areas near those two buildings. The entrance had since been widened and made safer, and there had been no accident history associated with leaving the driveway open. While he agreed that the access would eventually have to be closed, he hoped that there could be some mutual agreement reached between the petitioner and the City on just when that would have to occur. Mr. Jenkins noted an error on the site plan shown as green space when, in fact, the area was being used for parking.

Mr. Prinster added that St. Mary's would agree to extend its lease with the City on the park to the year 2005. It had been slated to expire in December of 2003. Since there had been several requests to include the green space at the former Holy Family School site, he asked that the lease description also be adjusted to match the current site plan and include the green space on 7th and Bookcliff.

QUESTIONS

Commissioner Cole asked for clarification on the delay for consideration of the Mira Vista road amendment. Mr. Prinster said that discussions with residents were still ongoing, with no resolution having yet been reached. When asked if all the homes to the east of Mira Vista Road belonged to the hospital, Mr. Prinster replied that all but two were owned by the hospital. He added that no additional parking would be provided at that end of the hospital campus. It was felt that with more development and expansion occurring to the south and east, the parking garage and nearby lots would better facilitate expected parking needs.

Commissioner Cox asked about bus circulation. Mr. Prinster noted the existing route and pullout on the west side of the main hospital building.

Commissioner Redifer asked if there were any elements of current amendment requests that would impact Mira Vista plans, to which Mr. Prinster replied negatively.

Commissioner Blosser asked representatives if they had a preferred timeframe in mind for closure of the Madden & Farrell building driveway. Mr. Prinster asked that closure be deferred pending development of the Holy Family School site. He was unsure of the timeline but felt that it might be another 7 years out.

STAFF'S PRESENTATION

Lisa Cox offered a Powerpoint presentation which contained the following slides: 1) background; 2) consistency with 2000 Master Plan; 3) recommended site plan; 4) consistency with Growth Plan; and 5) findings and conclusions. The site's PD zoning had an underlying default zone of B-1. The original Master Plan had been approved under the old Code. She affirmed that the non-closure of the Madden & Farrell building driveway was inconsistent with the original 2000 Master Plan. Since this was the first time she'd heard about the park's lease extension and revision, she asked Mr. Shaver whether it was appropriate to discuss that element without prior review. Mr. Shaver agreed that it warranted further discussion but felt that since it didn't impact the site plan, its inclusion with other amendment requests was appropriate.

Ms. Cox reiterated staff's preference to close the Madden & Farrell building driveway immediately. That would ensure consistency with the original Master Plan and comply with TEDS requirements to close all excess

access points along major and minor arterials. Staff supported approval of the three requested amendments conditioned upon the immediate closure of the Madden & Farrell building driveway on 7th Street.

Rick Dorris presented an overhead slide of the City's Major Street Circulation Plan and a page from the TEDS manual that supported closure of the Madden & Farrell building driveway. He also presented an aerial photo of the driveway entrance and illustrated turning movements from 7th Street into the site. The intersection was currently full movement, and the slowing of traffic to enter the site from 7th Street would hinder traffic flows northbound along 7th Street, increasing the risk for accidents.

When asked by Commissioner Blosser whether engineering staff preferred closure of the driveway prior to or directly following development of the Holy Family School site, Mr. Dorris said that it should be closed prior to development, although staff preferred that the entrance be closed immediately.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

FOR:

There were no comments for the request.

AGAINST:

Donna Bayer (299 Bookcliff Court, Grand Junction) felt that the City was approving the development and expansion of St. Mary's Hospital in piecemeal fashion. She felt that once a plan was approved, it shouldn't be changed.

PETITIONER'S REBUTTAL

Mr. Prinster said that Ms. Bayer had made similar comments at neighborhood meetings. He and others had considered a number of alternatives to address the hospital's expansion needs while still considering the concerns of neighbors. If staff insisted on the immediate closure of the Madden & Farrell building driveway, he asked that latitude be given in redesigning the alternate entrance off of Bookcliff, and that there be no subsequent requirement to close and/or realign existing curb cuts off of Bookcliff until the complete redevelopment of the Holy Family School site was undertaken. Ms. Cox and Mr. Dorris indicated that that might certainly provide an equitable solution, and they would entertain further discussions.

DISCUSSION

Commissioner Cole felt the overall plan to be a good one, with proposed amendments making sense. He felt that closure of the Madden & Farrell building driveway should be undertaken immediately, leaving the specifics of how that would best occur up to planning and engineering staff. There was sound reasoning in limiting access points on major and minor arterials.

Commissioner Cox agreed and also expressed support for the request.

Chairman Dibble expressed his appreciation for all the thought and care that continued to go into St. Mary's planning. The added parking would provide a significant benefit to the hospital and to the community. He agreed that the 7th Street access must be closed to conform with TEDS requirements.

Commissioner Putnam concurred with previously stated comments.

Mr. Shaver suggested that the motion include tying the closure of the 7th Street access to an actual development project "trigger" and that it denote whether the closure would be tied to the beginning or the completion of the project. Mr. Shaver recommended the latter.

MOTION: (Commissioner Cox) "Mr. Chairman, on item PDR-2003-086, request for approval of proposed amendments A, C and D to the existing 2000 Master Plan for St. Mary's Hospital, I move that we approve subject to staff conditions, that the 7th Street access be closed upon completion of the parking lot at the Holy Family site, with the findings and conclusions as outlined by staff above."

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

With no further business to discuss, the public hearing was adjourned at 10:05 P.M.