

GRAND JUNCTION PLANNING COMMISSION
Feb 28, 2017 MINUTES
6:00 p.m. to 7:25 p.m.

The meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Christian Reece. The hearing was held in the City Hall Auditorium located at 250 N. 5th Street, Grand Junction, Colorado.

Also in attendance representing the City Planning Commission were, Kathy Deppe, Keith Ehlers, Ebe Eslami, Aaron Miller, and Steve Tolle.

In attendance, representing the City's Administration Department - Community Development, was Dave Thornton (Principal Planner) and Scott Peterson, (Senior Planner).

Also present was Jamie Beard (Assistant City Attorney) and Shelly Dackonish (Staff Attorney).

Lydia Reynolds was present to record the minutes.

There were 13 citizens in attendance during the hearing.

*****CONSENT CALENDAR*****

1. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Action: Approve the minutes from the January 24, 2017 Meeting.

2. Hilltop Commons, Revised PD Zoning Ordinance and Outline Development Plan

Request to revised Planned Development (PD) zoning Ordinance and an Outline Development Plan (ODP) for the Hilltop Commons senior living campus on 19.9 acres in a PD (Planned Development) zone district.

Action: Recommendation to City Council

Applicant: Blythe Group and Austin Civil Group - Representatives
Location: Northwest corner of 27-1/2 and Patterson Roads
Staff Presentation: Kristin Ashbeck, Sr. Planner

3. Hilltop Bacon Campus Rezone

Request to rezone 1.65 acres from R-8 (Residential – 8 du/ac) to RO (Residential Office) for the Hilltop Bacon Campus.

Action: Recommendation to City Council

Applicant: Hilltop Health Services Corporation - Owner
Location: 1313 and 1321 Wellington Avenue
Staff Presentation: Kristen Ashbeck, Sr. Planner

4. Lusby Rezone

Request to Rezone .4 acres from R-16 (Residential—16 du/ac) to R-24 (Residential—24 du/ac)

Action: Recommendation to City Council

Applicant: Eric Lusby, owner; Vortex Engineering Inc. - Representative
Location: 1321 Kennedy Avenue
Staff Presentation: Lori Bowers, Sr. Planner

Commissioner Miller recused himself from the room for the consent agenda vote.

Chairman Reece briefly explained the Consent Agenda and invited the public, Planning Commissioners and staff to speak if they wanted the item pulled for a full hearing.

With no amendments to the Consent Agenda, Chairman Reece called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

MOTION: (Commissioner Ehlers) “Madam Chairman, I move approve the consent agenda.”

Commissioner Deppe seconded the motion. A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously by a vote of 5-0.

After the Consent Agenda vote, Commissioner Miller rejoined the meeting.

*****INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION*****

5. Mind Springs Health Comprehensive Plan Amendment, PD Zoning Ordinance and Outline Development Plan (ODP)

Request for a Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map Amendment from Residential Medium to Village Center, a Rezone to PD (Planned Development) and an Outline Development Plan for the property located at 521 28 ¾ Road.

Action: Recommendation to City Council

Applicant: Mind Springs Health - Owner
Location: 515, 521 28 ¾ Road and 2862 North Avenue
Staff Presentation: Scott Peterson, Sr. Planner

Staff Presentation

Mr. Peterson, Senior Planner, explained that the applicant, Mind Springs Health, is requesting approval of a Comprehensive Plan amendment, an Outline Development Plan (ODP), a Planned Development (PD) zone district with a default zone of C-1 (Light Commercial) for their 12.34-acre campus located at 515 28 ¾ Road, 2862 North Avenue and 521 28 ¾ Road.

Mr. Peterson displayed the Site Location Map of the area. The existing properties are located near the intersection of North Avenue and 28 ¾ Road (Wal-Mart, Grand Mesa Little League, Eastgate Shopping Center).

Mind Springs Health is a regional provider of mental health services who seeks to expand its Grand Junction campus. Its property at 515 28 ¾ Road operates under a 2004 Conditional Use Permit for an Unlimited Group Living Facility. The facility is not, however, in fact a group living facility, but an in-patient treatment facility with stays that may in some instances exceed 30 days. Nonetheless it houses patients temporarily with no intent that a patient will make a permanent home there.

Mr. Peterson explained that the applicant and City staff propose that this Conditional Use Permit terminate at such time as the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment, ODP and PD zoning ordinance become effective.

The next slide Mr. Peterson displayed was an aerial photo map of the area and noted that since 2004, the applicant has acquired adjacent properties at 2862 North Avenue and 521 28 ¾ Road for expansion. The proposal is that all three properties be rezoned to a Planned Development zone district with C-1 default standards in order to provide a flexible but consistent zoning classification for expansion of their outpatient behavioral health sciences and inpatient psychiatric hospital care campus.

Mr. Peterson presented the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map and clarified that the applicant is also requesting a Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map change from Residential Medium (4 – 8 du/ac) to Village Center for the property located at 521 28 ¾ Road. This will accommodate the proposed underlying default zone of C-1. This is necessary because C-1 is not a zone that implements the Residential Medium category. The applicant's other two properties are already designated Village Center.

The applicant has also submitted a simple subdivision application to combine all three properties into one lot for development purposes. This application is being reviewed separately as an administrative review.

Mr. Peterson exhibited the existing Zoning Map and explained that current zoning for the area is C-1, Light Commercial and R-8, Residential – 8 du/ac. The purpose of the PD zone is to provide flexibility not available through strict application and interpretation of the standards established in the Zoning and Development Code.

The Zoning Code also states that Planned Development zoning should be used only when long-term community benefits, which may be achieved through high quality development, will be derived. Mr. Peterson explained that long-term benefits include, but are not limited to the following for this application:

1. Effective infrastructure design by consolidating needed psychiatric medical services into one centralized location.
2. Reduced traffic demands from what could be developed under the current conventional commercial zoning.
3. Greater quality and quantity of private open space with 3.77 acres (31% of the site) of the total 12.34 acres as landscaped open space that provides for well designed, open atmosphere for outside activities and a visually appealing campus environment.
4. Innovative design with contemporary architecture that exceeds or matches existing buildings on-site.

The next slide Mr. Peterson presented was of a site sketch of the current campus make-up which contains five buildings was exhibited. Four are located on the property at 515 28 ¾ Road; the fifth is on property located at 2862 North Avenue.

- Building A: a two-story, 32,000 square-foot administrative office and outpatient client therapy services building;
- Building B: a one-story, 6,700 square-foot building housing an 11-bed crisis stabilization program;
- Building C: a one-story, 7,600 square-foot 16 bed inpatient unit;
- Building D: a one-story, 8,200 square-foot 16 bed inpatient unit.
- Building E: a one-story building used as office and shop space housing patient medical records.

Mr. Peterson exhibited the proposed Outline Development Plan. The Applicant intends to demolish Building C to make way for the new 63,000 sq. ft., one-story hospital building, which initially will have 48 beds for in-patient psychiatric care and will be expanded to up to 64 beds in the future.

Mr. Peterson explained that the vacant lot at 521 28 ¾ Road, acquired by the applicant in 2015, will be developed as a Respite House. The proposed building will house up to four outpatient clients to stay up to three nights under 24-hour supervision by Mind Springs staff.

In addition to the four-bedroom home, Mr. Peterson noted that an additional 4,000 sq. ft. office and group meeting facility will adjoin the residence and will support the activities of the Respite House. A new medical records office (3,000 sq. ft.) and Facilities Management Office and Shop (4,000 sq. ft.) will also be constructed on the property. Under the proposed PD zone district, the applicant is requesting the following allowed land uses: hospital/mental hospital, inpatient mental health treatment facility with stays that may exceed 30 days, a respite house, general medical and counseling offices and medical / counseling clinics.

In a straight C-1 zone district, hospitals, inpatient treatment facilities, respite care facilities require a conditional use permit; general offices and medical clinics are allowed.

Mr. Peterson noted that Mind Springs is proposing no deviations to the above dimensional standards and will meet all applicable off-street parking, landscaping, screening and buffering and other City Code requirements upon development.

Mr. Peterson explained that the primary public access to the site will be from 28 ³/₄ Road, as currently exists. The existing North Avenue entrance is not intended for general access to the entire site, but is only utilized for Mind Springs staff employees working within Building E. The proposed internal ring road is not intended for public access and will, therefore, be gated in three locations in order to limit traffic to designated staff only.

The next slide presented was an elevation drawing for the proposed hospital building that is to be developed within Phase 1. The proposed new hospital building will be a model, statewide for psychiatric hospital care, providing exterior patient recreation space, incorporating natural light throughout the building by means of roof “pop-ups” with high ceilings and patient activity space including crafts, music, gym and dining facilities.

Mr. Peterson stated that the Outline Development Plan for the Mind Springs campus additions are proposed to be developed in three phases. The following phasing schedule is as follows:

Phase 1: 48 - bed hospital building - to be reviewed and approved by January 1, 2019

Phase 2: Respite House, Offices and Facilities Shop – to be reviewed and approved by June 1, 2022

Phase 3: 16-bed hospital addition - to be reviewed and approved by June 1, 2025

Findings of Fact/Conclusions/Conditions

After reviewing the Mind Springs Health applications, the following findings of fact, conclusions and conditions have been determined:

- The requested Planned Development, Outline Development Plan is consistent with the goals and polices of the Comprehensive Plan, specifically, Goals 7 and 12.
- The review criteria in Sections 21.02.130 and 21.02.150 of the Grand Junction Zoning and Development Code have all been met or addressed.
- Applicant shall submit a site plan for review and approval administratively for all phases of development prior to establishment of allowed land uses.
- The 2004 Conditional Use Permit shall terminate on the effective date of the Planned Development zoning ordinance.

Mr. Peterson noted that the last finding (above) was not originally in the staff report and he has since added. Mr. Peterson pointed out that the applicant is proposing building setbacks which are more restrictive than what C-1 allows as well as limit lot coverage to 50% which is not required in C-1 zone districts.

Applicant Presentation

Rob Jenkins, 334 Dakota Circle, stated that he was the Architect for the project and is representing the owners, Mind Springs Health. Mr. Jenkins gave a brief overview of the current Mind Springs Health facilities and programs in the region noting that they also run 13 outpatient therapy centers in 10 northwest counties in Colorado.

Colorado West Mental Health originally built the four separate buildings that are now on the site in 2004. Mr. Jenkins displayed a site sketch and noted that they have struggled with the layout of the campus since it was built 12 years ago. The current layout of the four separate buildings does not allow for staff sharing and other efficiencies.

In 2013, Mind Springs Inc. initiated an Improvement Program/Master Plan to improve their models of care, as well as the facilities that house the care. Mr. Jenkins displayed a slide illustrating the three phases identified for the Campus Master Plan. Phase 1 was completed in 2015 and consisted of the following items:

- Update Outpatient Model of Care and Remodel Building A.
- Acquire property immediately west of the original site and remodel building on the site.
- Relocated Business Office, Facilities Management and Medical Records.
- Relocate Social Detox program to St. Mary's and develop Transitions at West Springs in Building B.

Mr. Jenkins explained that Phase 2 has the following elements:

- Develop a new hospital facility with more beds and sufficient treatment and recovery-focused spaces, with additional on-site parking and improved site circulation.
- Achieve both expandability and flexibility in the new hospital.

Phase 3 consists of the following two goals:

- Acquire property immediately north of the original site and develop a Respite House with offices and meeting rooms.
- New site to accommodate future new office and shop space for Facilities Management and Medical Records.

Mr. Jenkins stated that Colorado lags behind in psychiatric care. In the western slope of Colorado, all 32 licensed psychiatric beds are located at West Springs Hospital. There are no other licensed psychiatric beds between the front range and Salt Lake City.

Mr. Jenkins displayed a slide that forecasted beds needed out to 2030. Mr. Jenkins pointed out that by law, the hospital is not allowed to co-mingle child/adolescent with adults which further limits the amount of available beds.

The next slide exhibited was a fact sheet that highlighted elements of the Master Plan and Mr. Jenkins explained the following points listed:

- 48 Inpatient beds, designed to expand to 64 beds in the future
- One story building with building materials to match existing campus buildings
- Five Entrances – Public, Crisis, Secure, Staff & Receiving, Food Service
- Assessment and Admitting within the hospital
- Three 16-bed Inpatient Units, designed for flexibility
- Full service kitchen and patient dining room
- Gym and Activity rooms
- Central receiving, supply, and distribution
- Four interior courtyards accessible to patients, families, & staff
- Expanded on-site parking and improved site circulation

Mr. Jenkins noted that the parking for the entire Master Plan will be incorporated with the next Phase. Mr. Jenkins showed a slide that illustrates how the setbacks for the buildings will meet or exceed city code requirements as well as the parking.

The next slide Mr. Jenkins displayed and explained was the schedule for the phasing, permitting and construction of the West Springs Hospital campus.

Mr. Jenkins showed the budget and the breakdown of the elements of the 34-million-dollar project. Several slides were presented illustrating the various buildings and interior spaces.

Questions for the Applicant

Commissioner Ehlers asked if building C was going to remain while the new hospital is built. Mr. Jenkins answered that it would. Commissioner Ehlers asked how the secure entrance is provided if building C is still being utilized during construction. Mr. Jenkins explained that the current buildings only have one pedestrian entrance and do not have a lobby or waiting area. Although they were built to code, they are deficient in design for the type of use.

Commissioner Ehlers asked about the turn-around for emergency vehicles that enter the site. Mr. Jenkins pointed out a hammerhead drive that will allow for firetruck turns. As of now, the ambulances pull right up to the buildings. In the new circulation site plan, the ambulances would enter the internal parking area and are able to access different entrances, offering more privacy to the patients, their families and the public.

Chairman Reece asked what the maximum length of stay was for the Respite House residents. Mr. Jenkins replied three nights. Chairman Reece asked how they foresee the use of the Respite House impacting the adjacent residential area. Mr. Jenkins stated that the Respite House is a single story house that is a residence and not a group home. It is short term for up to 4 people. There is an office building associated with it and that will be residential in character. Mr. Jenkins noted that the employees will be parking on the hospital site and there would be very little vehicular traffic generated.

Chairman Reece asked if one of the buildings would be dedicated to youth. Mr. Jenkins pointed out that in the new hospital, a 16 bed unit would be dedicated to child/adolescents and later, Building D would then be used for children exclusively.

Chairman Reece asked what the economic impact this project is expected to have for the community. Mr. Jenkins stated that a 16-bed unit should generate a need for 30 -50 caregiving and administrative staff. Mr. Jenkins added that CDOT requires that they study the impact they will have on the intersection of North Ave. and 28 ¾ Rd. Mr. Jenkins stated that there is considerably less impact of traffic for in-patient hospital stays than there is for out-patient services.

Questions for Staff

Commissioner Ehlers stated that he believes this is a much needed service for the area, but asked if taking away R-8 property will negatively impact the availability of R-8 buildable sites. Mr. Peterson stated that there is enough R-8 sites available for development in the City and this project should not take away a significant amount of buildable R-8 sites.

Public Comment

Kenneth Harris, 1707 Cannell, stated that he remembers when they proposed this site 12 years ago. He was not in favor of the odd angles of the buildings and likes the proposed orientation for the new buildings. Mr. Harris stated that the hospital had agreed to build a fence separating the hospital use from the surrounding residential area at 521 28 ¾ Rd.. Mr. Harris noted that he drove by today and the fence was still in place.

Mr. Harris stated that his concern is that the office building associated with the Respite House was so much bigger than the house and he felt the Respite House could be put at the Regional Center. Mr. Harris felt a better use for that parcel would be a tax-

generating R-8 apartment building. He is ok with the project as a whole, but would like to see the Respite House and Office Building removed from the project.

Chairman Reece asked for any additional members of the public that would like to speak to come forward. Hearing none, Chairman Reece closed the public comment portion of the hearing.

Commissioner Discussion

Commissioner Deppe stated that she felt this was a well thought out proposal and the project is desperately needed in our community.

Commissioner Ehlers stated that the applicant has done a good job at assessing the community need for this type of facility. He applauds the efforts made to improve the campus as they plan for the future, and is glad to hear they were able to obtain funding for it. Commissioner Ehlers noted that the need for this project far outweighs his concern that the city would lose an opportunity for an R-8 development. Commissioner Ehlers stated that he is in favor of this proposal.

Commissioner Eslami agreed with Commissioner Ehlers and feels this is a much needed and impressive project.

Commissioner Tolle thanked Mr. Jenkins for his clear presentation.

Chairman Reece stated that she had some concerns about the Respite House component as she read the staff report, however overall, she does not feel this house will have much impact on the surrounding residential area. Chairman Reece felt this project is much needed and is excited to be in support of it.

With no additional questions or discussion, Chairman Reece called for a motion.

MOTION: (Commissioner Deppe) “Madam Chairman, on item PLD-2016-546, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval of the requested Outline Development Plan as a Planned Development and also to amend the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map to Village Center for the property located at 521 28 ¾ Road, PLD-2016-546, to the City Council with findings of fact/conclusions and conditions as stated in the staff report.”

Commissioner Tolle seconded the motion. A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously by a vote of 6-0.

6. Ordinance Amending Sections of the Zoning and Development Code (Title 21 of the Grand Junction Municipal Code) Regarding Group Living

Request an Ordinance Amending the Zoning and Development Code.

Action: Recommendation to City Council

Applicant: City of Grand Junction
Location: Citywide
Staff Presentation: Dave Thornton, Principal Planner

Staff Presentation

Dave Thornton, Principal Planner stated that the Planning Commission is considering the amendments to the Zoning and Development code pertaining specifically to Group Living and Household Living. The proposed ordinance repeals and replaces Section 21.04.030(p) of the Zoning and Development Code (Code) which provides standards and regulations for Group Living Facilities.

Mr. Thornton explained that over time City staff, applicants, neighbors, aggrieved parties and boards have found it difficult to understand and apply the *group living* provisions of the Code. The use-specific regulations and related definitions are confusing, duplicative, contradictory, uncertain and not well organized. For example, it is unclear what constitutes a *group living facility* as opposed to a type of multi-family housing with special amenities, like fitness facilities, activity rooms and group dining options.

To address these issues, planning staff held several workshops with the planning commission and met with a focus group consisting of individuals who own and/or manage small, medium and large group living facilities in our community to discuss how to improve the regulations. Mr. Thornton displayed a slide with a timeline of events:

Workshops

Planning Commission – March 3, 2016
Planning Commission – May 19, 2016
Planning Commission – September 22, 2016
Planning Commission – November 3, 2016
Planning Commission - February 23, 2017

Public Outreach

Focus Groups

- July 8, 2016
- September 14, 2016

Colorado Mesa University

- Review by CMU staff January/February 2017

Public Hearings with Planning Commission

- February 28, 2017

Mr. Thornton stated the proposed ordinance is the outcome of the input received through the process and displayed a slide with the following features of the amendments:

- eliminates outdated and unnecessary text,

- better organizes the text so that the requirements and processes are more clear,
- promotes the integration of group living into City neighborhoods while protecting their residential character,
- allows new types of group living that are currently prohibited (such as fraternities and sororities and dormitory style living) while creating regulations and processes to ensure adequate protection for the peace and quiet enjoyment of residential neighborhoods, and
- ensures that neighbors of group living homes and facilities have a process and a forum to register undesirable neighborhood impacts.

Mr. Thornton displayed a slide of the types of “Residential Living” proposed with these text amendments and explained that there are two categories of residential land uses in the Code: household living and group living.

The first category, Household Living centers around the family unit; it can be single-family or multi-family. Group living accommodates unrelated people living together into a single living unit.

Mr. Thornton explained that in the proposed ordinance, there are four sub-categories of group living:

- 1) fraternity/sorority
- 2) group living facility
- 3) rooming/boarding house
- 4) “other group living” which includes dormitory style living but could also include other types of non-traditional housing not yet considered.

Three of these subcategories are new - fraternity/sorority, rooming/boarding house, other group living - but address types of living we expect to see more of in the community, given demographic pressures. To preserve the character of residential neighborhoods, special (“use-specific”) standards and requirements are carried over from the previous code for *group living facilities*, with some modifications, and new ones are proposed for the first and third categories (*fraternities/sororities* and *rooming/boarding houses*). Also proposed are geographic limitations on where fraternities and sororities can be located (near the CMU campus only). The fourth category, *other group living*, will require increased parking standards and zone limitations.

The second category, *group living facilities*, has been subject to use-specific regulations since the 2001 Code was adopted. Group living facilities provide important services in our community by creating a home environment with needed in-home services for those who cannot live on their own. State law governs and regulates the delivery of the social, mental health and other professional services provided to protected individuals in the group home setting.

Mr. Thornton stated that the proposed ordinance repeals and replaces Section 21.04.030(p) of the (Zoning and Development Code) Municipal Code.

Mr. Thornton explained that the current Code prohibits groups of more than 4 unrelated persons living in a single dwelling unit unless they meet the definition of a group living facility, which a fraternity or sorority house does not meet. CMU now has two sororities (Alpha Sigma Alpha and Gamma Phi Beta) and two fraternities (Kappa Sigma and Theta Xi), and is looking to expand collegiate “Greek life” to include more organizations over the next few years. At present these chapters do not offer housing for their members, and the University’s plan is to house members on campus in special dorms. However, once formed, it is up to the fraternal organization, and not the university, whether to create *off-campus* housing for the chapter. The fraternal organization can, like any other entity, purchase, lease and manage real property for its members.

This new proposed group living category would allow fraternity/sorority housing in a limited area (in certain zone districts within 500 feet of the core campus), and require annual registration and compliance with specific standards intended to protect neighborhood character and integrity. Mr. Thornton displayed a slide showing the campus area and the 500-foot buffer.

Mr. Thornton stated that there is a process for neighbors to register complaints and for the Director to consider those when reviewing the annual registration. The process and requirements in this regard are similar to those for group living facilities. These requirements will apply only to *off-campus* fraternity and sorority houses; campus housing is not regulated by the City.

Mr. Thornton informed the Commissioners that Shelly Dackonish, Staff Attorney, has worked extensively on the code amendment and is present to answer questions.

Questions for Staff

Commissioner Ehlers noted that at the workshop, the Commissioners had inquired if the focus group members had all been contacted and had seen and approved the final language. Commissioner Ehlers asked Mr. Thornton if he had received confirmation on that.

Mr. Thornton stated that he sent an email with the staff report that same day to the members of the focus groups and there was at least one response, but there was not any negative feedback.

Ms. Dackonish stated that she had only heard back from one person and that was Cary from Ariel and she had said she had not received the email. Ms. Dackonish stated that she told her where to find it on-line and invited her to comment if she had any questions, but did not hear back from her. Ms. Dackonish stated that the focus group members were very involved with the language and all of the suggested input was incorporated into the amendment.

Commissioner Deppe asked for clarification as to who was in the two focus group sessions. Ms. Dackonish stated that Cary from Ariel, a company that runs smaller group living homes, as well as two members from Hilltop, that represent larger group living and retirement style living. It was determined that retirement group living, where there are no professional staff/caregivers, help with daily living or supervision, was not considered a group living facility. In addition, Keith Ehlers, was a member of the focus group to represent foster care concerns. Ms. Dackonish noted that it was decided that they will not require foster care homes to register as a group living facility since they function like a single family home.

Public Comment

Cary Over, 234 28 ¾ Rd., stated that she is with Ariel (small group homes company), stated that she actually did receive the email, but was unable to open the attachment. Ms. Over stated that she has now received and read the amendments and was in support of the language changes and feels there is more clarity as a result. Ms. Over thanked staff for their efforts and noted that she feels the rewrite helps to integrate the language used in the City Code with the State and Federal requirements.

With no other public comments or additional Commissioner discussion, Chairman Reece called for a motion to approve the Amendment.

MOTION: (Commissioner Deppe) “Madam Chairman, on the Group Living Code Amendment, ZCA-2012-355, I move that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of the approval for the Group Living Code Amendment with the findings of fact, conclusions, and conditions listed in the staff report.”

Commissioner Eslami seconded the motion. A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously by a vote of 6-0.

7. Other Business

None

8. Adjournment

The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.