

September 6, 2017

City of Redmond Planning Commission  
411 SW 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Redmond, OR 97756

**RE: Dry Canyon at Redmond - Applicant's response to comments/questions/public testimony at August 28<sup>th</sup> public hearing.**

Greetings Commissioners:

The following is a response to the questions from the Planning Commission and the comments received during public testimony at the August 28<sup>th</sup> public hearing which was continued until September 11<sup>th</sup>. The responses below are grouped by topic. Please accept these into the formal record on this matter and distribute to all members of the Planning Commission prior to the continued public hearing on September 11th.

**1. City of Redmond Adopted Land Use Plans.**

- In 2006 the City of Redmond adopted an expanded Urban Growth Boundary and shortly thereafter adopted the Northwest Area Plan (an element of the City of Redmond Comprehensive Plan) to guide development in the area within which the subject property is located. These adopted plans, which have been in place for over 10 years, were subject to an extensive public planning process that included stakeholder and public advisory committees, review by the Redmond Urban Area Planning Commission, and adoption by the Redmond City Council. All property owners within the NAP area were provided with public notice of the project and afforded the opportunity to comment at multiple public meetings, and then at formal public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council.
- The applicant is required to conform with the basic elements of the NAP, with the provisions therein allowing for flexibility to provide a cohesive neighborhood design. Thus, the R4 and R5 zoning designations (and resulting multiple housing types), the neighborhood park dedication, the trail dedications (including a now legal/public, improved/paved access into the Dry Canyon for all residents), the street alignments, the densities and the overall arrangement of land uses was pre-determined when the NAP was adopted. Again, aside from the flexibility provided in the NAP intended to allow for a cohesive neighborhood design based upon the Great Neighborhood Principles (also adopted by the City), the elements listed above are required in order to develop the property.
- The comments provided by neighbors to the property about the zoning designations, densities, street alignments and other basic elements of the project are unfounded in this discussion as the applicant has no choice to develop other than what was pre-determined through adoption of the NAP and other City land use plans as described above.

- The Planning Staff has reviewed the proposal with regard to the basic elements of the NAP and has found that the project conforms with the City adopted plans and the resulting development will be what the City intended in 2006/07.

## **2. Need for Planned Unit Development and the exceptions to the basic standards of the Redmond Development Code.**

- The Northwest Area Plan, along with the Master Plan requirements and Great Neighborhood Principles, all require dedication of parks, open space, trails, art, alleys, schools, civic spaces, etc., with no direct reciprocal benefit for the land area that is required for such stated therein. The applicant understands and endorses that such dedication and development is for the benefit for the entire community, and accepted this when creating development plans for the property – the applicant's overall desire is to create a community that meets a need in Redmond, is truly desirous to live in and is a long term asset to the City. However, what also applies to the property is the underlying density requirement for the R4 and R5 zones – a required finding for approval is that the proposal meets the intended density requirements of the City of Redmond Comprehensive Plan, and Northwest Area Plan.
- When trying to meet all requirements, especially the dedication of the public Neighborhood Park (which is inherent to this property and not others in the surrounding area) and trails (including a now legal/public, improved/paved access into the Dry Canyon for all residents), it is a very difficult – if not impossible - task to try and meet all individual development standards to the letter of the law without the exception allowances afforded through the PUD process. With no flexibility in such standards, some basic requirement of the Development Code will not be able to be met – especially in cases like this where parks, trails, art and/or other such amenities are shown on City plans that are not applicable to other properties.
- Such dedications require land area that compromises the applicant's ability to meet the City adopted density requirements by creating more and/or larger lots (as some of the public commented on) – this development is dedicating roughly 16% of the land area to such amenities. If the applicant were to design more lots at larger sizes, the required densities would not be able to be met.
- The 12 acres of open space/park (16% of the land area) at 7.7 units per acre (which is the average density in the development) is 92 potential residential units that are not available. As a result, in order to meet density requirements for the zones as intended by the Northwest Area Plan, and to build homes at sizes that people desire, exceptions are necessary – these include the requested reduced lot sizes, reduced road widths, and setback exceptions as proposed herein.
- Therefore, the City's desire to create a minimum density and also dedicate open space (through the Master Plan/GNP/Area Plan standards) are diametrically opposed and result in either the density not being met or the open space requirement (or some other standards) not being met. Thus, the flexibility provided through the PUD process is necessary to meet the City requirements and create a desirable neighborhood.
- These types of requirements, without flexibility, can also significantly raise land/lot/home prices in Redmond.

- When addressing the PUD criteria with regard to the requested exceptions (which are applicable to some lots but not all – including minimum lot sizes, setbacks, right of way widths, lot frontages), it is very important to look at how each of these as combined contribute to the whole of the development – how it all fits together as a community and neighborhood – with all the separate but required elements arranged in a convenient practical design that serves the new residents, as well as the residents in surrounding neighborhoods. The observation must be the implementation of the criteria holistically as to what they create and the overall benefit, versus the specificity of the individual elements. It is not practical to look at the individual criteria as solely separate achievable elements.
- There have been three other previous (recent) developments reviewed and approved by Redmond within the UGB – Triple Ridges, Obsidian Trails and Maple Meadows – all of these approved projects were done by different developers and all of these are PUD's – all of these projects sought similar exceptions to the basic Development Code standards for similar reasons as included herein for the subject project. All of these other developments have varying lot sizes, setbacks, home styles, etc... that contribute to what the developer was trying to create – this variety is what is intended by the flexibility allowed by the PUD code. In those decisions, the collective benefit of the requested exceptions were looked at holistically as to how they contribute to a better project. The findings for these approved projects concluded that these other developments, as will the subject proposal, all offer a variety of home styles, amenities and living options that may be desirable for some, but not others – this is what was intended by the code – to provide options that are not monotonous and meet a variety of citizen needs. The applicant is asking for consistency in applying the PUD section of the code to this proposal and not holding this development to a substantially different standard than what was applied to those referenced above.
- Ultimately, an individual's desire to buy a large lot with a large home, a small lot with a small home, a townhome, to live in an apartment or other type of neighborhood is the choice of the purchaser/renter. They know what they are buying into and are making that conscious choice – including lot sizes, setbacks, recreational amenities, proximity to schools, shopping, work, etc.... These all come into consideration by the individual purchaser. The proposed development again offers something different and unique for Redmond, while at the same time providing the special neighborhood elements that are desirous for the City.
- Section 8.0700 of the Redmond Development Code (Variances), which precludes the variance to minimum lot sizes, is for a "city standard" subdivision where none of the amenities you see in this proposed development are required or ever proposed. Conversely, that section of the RDC actually references that lot sizes can be varied by virtue of a master plan (as is proposed herein) – on the premise that a master plan is the tool by which the varied lot sizes can be considered as appropriate with regard to the overall design. The basic lot sizes, as well as other basic subdivision requirements, only provide a minimum degree of development protection. Conversely, a master planned community that includes the arrangement and provision of all the amenities that resident's desire (as proposed herein), is allowed and encouraged by the Code.

- The neighborhood proposed herein, with the lot sizes and amenities that are included, have been proven locally, regionally, statewide and nationally to be some of the most desirable, have retained their livability and retained property value for the purchaser and city. These are the assets that the community desires.
- The Planning Staff has reviewed the proposal with regard to the PUD standards and has found that the project conforms with the City adopted development code.

### **3. Lot sizes, parking arrangement and townhomes.**

- Included with this letter are graphic representations showing detail for the townhome lots. These are attached/common wall townhomes proposed for the smaller lots (37.5 feet wide) shown on the tentative plan. These smaller lots will not have detached single family residences, and are very typical of lot sizes inherent to townhome development currently being constructed in Redmond today (I think there was a misconception at the public hearing that the smaller lots would include detached SFR development). The graphics show the arrangement of lots, alleys with rear lot vehicular access/driveways, the availability of parking on the front facing street, and townhome elevations that will be built.
- Notwithstanding the townhome lots that will have rear alley access, there are only 14 townhome lots (8 that back up to Spruce Avenue; and, 6 that are the northern most lots) that have garages in the front as a matter of necessity due to their location along the perimeter of the site (the attached elevation drawing is a model that is currently being built in Redmond today). These lots, which are 37.5 feet wide, will have driveways that are 18-20 feet wide, leaving 17.5 to 19.5 feet of uncompromised area for on-street parking (which is the length of a typical parking space per city standards). In these instances, though, the townhomes across the street will be alley loaded which will provide for additional on-street parking on both sides.
- The graphics illustrate that there will be ample vehicular parking and room for maneuverability, and that the townhomes (which are common wall single family homes) will be attractive and of a size to meet a specific demographic need (as required by the NAP and Great Neighborhood Principles).
- The Planning Staff has reviewed the proposal with regard to the Master Plan, PUD, and Great Neighborhood standards and has found that the project conforms with the City adopted development code.

### **4. Street standards.**

- There were questions by the citizen commenters and Planning Commission at the public hearing about the street widths and adequacy for vehicles and parking.

- The only exception requested for streets is a reduction in the right of way width (from 60 feet to 50 feet). The 10 foot reduction in the right of way width (effectively 5 feet on either side) aids in allowing the lot sizes to remain a little larger and for the applicant to meet the density requirements as described previously in this letter.
- The street widths (meaning the pavement widths within the dedicated right of way) will be 36 feet, which is the maximum width the City will allow. This width allows for two way traffic and parking on both sides of the street. Additionally, the street sections will include sidewalks that will lie within public access easements adjacent to the dedicated right of way on both sides. Thus, all vehicular maneuverability and parking requirements will be met, and pedestrian access will be provided for.
- The Planning and Engineering Staff has reviewed the proposal with regard to the street design and development standards (including the traffic generation thereon) and has found that the project conforms with the City adopted requirements.

## 5. Single Family Home and Multi-Family Dwelling Designs.

- Section 8.0141 of the Redmond Development Code (Architectural Design Standards for Single Family Dwellings and Duplexes) includes the following as its Purpose and Intent statements:
  - *Purpose. The purpose of the Architectural Design Standards for Single Family Dwellings and Duplexes is to promote and sustain:*
    - *A. High quality development throughout a variety of housing choices;*
    - *B. A diversity of individual styles that incorporate positive design characteristics throughout the City; and,*
    - *C. Excellence in architectural design that:*
      - *1. Enhances the visual environment and character of the community;*
      - *2. Preserves and protects property values, as well as public and private infrastructure investment;*
      - *3. Conveys a sense of balance, integrity and character among all neighborhoods throughout the City; and,*
      - *4. Elevates the attractiveness and quality of life in Redmond.*
  - *Intent. The intent of the Architectural Design Standards for Single Family Dwellings and Duplexes is to:*
    - *A. Maintain flexibility for a variety of architectural style to be developed throughout the City;*
    - *B. Establish a basis for architectural character for each dwelling, regardless of architectural style;*
    - *C. Continue to allow innovations in design that recognize emerging technologies such as solar and wind power, telecommunications, and environmentally conscious construction methods;*
    - *D. Provide an integral relationship between the quality of the dwelling and the quality of the public and private infrastructure of the neighborhood; and,*

- *E. Promote quality design characteristics that will enhance the long-term desirability of the dwelling, neighborhood and community as an attractive place to live.*

- The above listed provisions of the Redmond Development Code were adopted to provide protection for the visual appearance, property values, existing development and overall aesthetics in the City of Redmond.
- The elevations submitted for the single family homes in the southern, age restricted portion of the development are the exact designs that will be built. These are all single story homes with a variety of styles and architectural elements that exceed the basic single family residential design standards included in the Development Code.
- All homes proposed to be built, will be subject to the standards included in Section 8.0141 of the Redmond development Code – all designs must and will conform with the standards included therein or the City will not issue building permits.
- All Multi-Family Dwellings that are proposed must also be reviewed through a separate Site and Design Review process – a land use application is required, and public review and comment is afforded. This review process also includes specific design elements (similar to those inherent to single family dwellings) that must be met for all buildings. Land use approval, and subsequent building permits, cannot be issued until plans meet all requirements.

## **6. Transportation.**

- A separate letter from Joe Bessman, Transight Consulting, the traffic engineer for the project, has been submitted to address the transportation elements of the project as raised by staff and the public. Please see that letter with regard to those elements.
- Notwithstanding the aforementioned letter from the applicant's traffic engineer, it should be emphasized that the street extensions and overall design are based on the City of Redmond Transportation System Plan, the Northwest Area Plan, the Redmond Development Code, and the City Standards and Specifications. Additionally, the existing development pattern (with roads stubbed to the eastern property boundary through the existing neighborhood – as approved and required by the City through past land use review and approval for those developments) contemplated and require the connectivity included in this design. Thus, the applicant had no choice to not provide the connectivity to the existing neighborhood – or the project could not be approved.

**Conclusion** - The applicant believes that the information provided above helps provide clarity on some issues (such as the relevance and applicability of the City adopted

plans), and additional justification to design the project under the PUD standards in order to illustrate the need for the collective impacts of the proposed exceptions as they allow for the complete neighborhood design to be achieved. The applicant would like to emphasize that every effort has been made to design and create a true neighborhood that provides for all elements that are desired of future residents, and also provides amenities for existing neighbors. The applicant believes that the design will blend seamlessly into the surrounding development pattern intended by the City of Redmond Comprehensive Plan and Northwest Area Plan as adopted in 2007.

**Condition of Approval** - Lastly, the applicant agrees to the imposition of the following condition of approval regarding the construction process and access to the property:

- *All construction access to the property shall be from either NW Quince Avenue or NW Spruce Avenue within the project boundaries, as accessed from Northwest Way on the western boundary of the site. No construction access shall be taken from NW Quince Avenue or NW Spruce Avenue through the adjoining neighborhood to the east. All construction staging shall occur on the subject property.*

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



James Lewis, Project Planner











