

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Regular Planning Commission meeting– October 16, 2023

The meeting of the Town of Meeker Planning Commission was called to order by Commissioner Joy at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioners Present: Amanda Back
 Leif Joy
 Michele Morgan
 Amanda Smith

Staff Present: Carly Thomson, Town Planner
 Mandi Etheridge, Town Administrator

Citizens Present: Shawn Bolton, applicant
 John Kuersten, applicant representative
 Jeff Simonson, project engineer
 Rachel Gates

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve agenda made by Commissioner Morgan, second by Commissioner Back. All ayes, motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2023 Planning Commission meeting made by Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Morgan. All ayes, motion carried.

Public Participation

No public participation.

Public Hearing

Commissioner Joy opened the public hearing at 7:02 p.m. for the consideration of Rohn Ridge Planned Unit Development (PUD) Preliminary Plat of Meeker Terrace Minor Subdivision filing No. 1, Lot 3 and part of parcel 140912300057.

Planner Thomson thanked the applicants for being present and working with the Town on the process. Thomson reported that the Rohn Ridge PUD Sketch Plan was reviewed during a joint Planning Commission and Board of Trustees meeting held on March 13, 2023 and approved by resolution #03-2023 on March 21, 2023. This proposal is currently being reviewed as a Preliminary Plat, and the Planning Commission will provide a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees Public Hearing is scheduled for November 7, 2023. Upon approval of the Preliminary Plat the applicant then has up to 2 years to apply for a Final Plat.

Prior to the Public Hearing the application process is broken into four stages:
Staff review, Professional review, Public Notice, Staff review and report

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RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

The referral list for the application review included:

Atmos Energy
Cimarron Telecommunications
Colorado Department of Transportation
ERBM Parks & Recreation District
Meeker Fire & Rescue
Meeker Police Department
Meeker Public Works
Meeker Sanitation District
Meeker School District
Rio Blanco County Assessor
Rio Blanco County Broadband
Rio Blanco County Planning Department
Rio Blanco County Road & Bridge
Rio Blanco County Sheriff
White River Conservation District
White River Electric Association

Due to the scale and magnitude of this project the following agencies were also included for review:

Meeker Police Department
RBC Road and Bridge
RBC Sheriff's Office.

The subject property is all vacant land located between Meeker Airport and Highway 13, and northeast of Pioneers Medical Center. The subject property is accessed from Walbridge Drive by Pioneers Medical Center Drive from Colorado Highway 13. The subject property, known as Meeker Terrace Minor Subdivision Filing No. 1, was annexed into the Town of Meeker in 1985 (by Ordinance #418). Part of this site was identified by Pioneers Medical Center as the location of the new hospital site in 2013, with the facility opening in 2015.

The applicant has requested Preliminary Plat review for the Rohn Ridge Planned Unit Development (PUD). The applicant is requesting a four-phase development process. The four phases of the PUD are as follows:

Phase One (1): Single-Family Residential development which includes 14.2 acres of single-family residential lots and 19.48 acres of estate lots. Development intends to be cohesive with current Single-Family Residential Zone and Rural Residential Zone respectively. (Total 33.68 acres)

Phase Two (2): High-Density Multi-Family Residential development which may include apartments, condominiums and/or townhouse. Development intends to be cohesive the with current Mixed Residential Zone. (26.37 acres)

Phase Three (3): Mixed Use development such as commercial and/or retail and including multi-family type development. Typically, buildings with commercial/retail/offices on the ground level and residential on upper levels. (15.31 acres)

Phase Four (4): Commercial or light industrial development that supports Pioneers Medical Center as well as other local businesses or industries. Development intends to be cohesive with the current Highway Corridor Zone. (~29.08 acres)

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

The applicants intend that phases two through four would be approved through the PUD amendment process at the time of development.

Phase one will include 92 residential lots, 86 single-family residential (lots 1-86) and 6 estate lots. Lots 1-65 will be 4,500 square feet to 10,000 square feet. These small lots could accommodate small square footage residential units. Lots 66-86 will be at least 11,250 square feet and could accommodate a larger traditional residential unit. The 6 estate lots would allow for large residential units with ample parking and opportunity for outbuildings.

The applicants intend to pave the subject property in alignment with the developmental phases. During Phase One Walbridge Drive paving will be extended from Pioneers Medical Center in addition to Road 1 and Road 2 to access lots 1-86. Upon intersecting Road 1 and Walbridge Drive the road will convert to Gravel Emergency Access Road. This road will be paved during Phase Two. At this intersection Walbridge Drive will transition to a Gravel Access Road to access the 6 estate lots.

The Rohn Ridge PUD will be governed by a Homeowners Association, which will be amended for future phases. The allowable uses and dimensional requirements for the PUD are outlined in this table based on lot type. Among others the Homeowners Association will also govern the following:

- Open space in lots 1-86, Single-Family Residential area. (two proposed areas of open space)
- Parking: 2 off-street parking spaces (concrete or asphalt) provided to each residential unit
- Garages are allowed but not required
- Xeriscape landscaping will be encouraged

During the Sketch Plan review process the Town of Meeker had asked the applicants to address the following as a condition of approval: open space, trail connectivity, and secondary access. The proposed PUD plan includes that all open space in the single-family residential area will be managed by the Homeowners Association. The proposed PUD plan includes a 20-foot pedestrian easement surrounding the perimeter of the entire development. This easement does not provide connectivity to the rest of the Town. Town staff recommends exploring the creation of a Town fund utilizing a percentage of development fees to fund a trail to provide such connectivity.

The applicants performed a Level 2 Traffic Impact Study and included the results in the application. The study concludes the following:

- The existing intersection (Colorado Highway 13 and Pioneers Medical Center Drive) operates at an overall LOS (Level of Service) A and all movements operate at LOS B or better in the total traffic scenario.
- The existing auxiliary lanes will continue to serve the proposed development per the requirements of the SHAC (State Highway Access Code). No improvements are required.

The applicants have included in the application a plan for paving and providing secondary access to the development during future phases. Additionally the applicants will use the secondary access for construction to minimize the impact on Pioneers Medical Center and the associated roadway.

Mountain Cross Engineering, Chris Hale (Town Engineer) has reviewed the application and submitted comments/recommendation on the Preliminary Plat. The applicants have been provided these comments/recommendations and have submitted responses. Comments/recommendations and the

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

response have been included in this staff report. The applicant has addressed most of the recommendations, however based on the report from Mountain Cross Engineering the following conditions still need to be addressed:

1. Applicant will provide “will serve” letter from Meeker Sanitation District.
2. Applicant will provide results from fire flow test to verify adequate supply and sizing for domestic and fire demands.
3. Town should consider a transfer of water right for the Sheridan Ditch in the amount of 2.5 cfs (WDID No. 4300927) in lieu of water impact fee. {In legal review}
4. Applicant will include language regarding drainage between lots in the CC&Rs (Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions).
5. Applicant will provide results from Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) to address estimated future traffic impacts.
6. Applicant will provide explanation for traffic study ratio splits.
7. Applicant will provide CDOT permit for secondary emergency access point and construction access off Colorado Highway 13.
8. Applicant will provide Geotechnical Report for construction recommendations.
9. Applicant will provide CDPHE permit for stormwater drainage.
10. Applicant will provide “will serve” letters from utility providers.
11. Applicant will provide unique names for roads with the Town coordinating additional review with law enforcement agencies for approval.

In addition to the conditions/recommendations provided by Mountain Cross Engineering, staff recommends the following conditions:

12. Applicant will provide Letter of Credit or Surety Bond prior to signing the Subdivision Improvement Agreement (SIA).
13. Gravel Access Road will be signed with “PRIVATE ROAD - NO TOWN MAINTENANCE” at the intersection of Wallbridge Drive and Road 1.
14. Gravel Emergency Access Road will be signed with “EMERGENCY ACCESS ONLY – NO TOWN MAINTENANCE” at the intersection of Wallbridge Drive and Road 1.
15. Applicant will include in CC&Rs language to address maintenance of all gravel roads.
16. Applicant will provide a plan to address short-term rentals in the Homeowners Association guidelines.
17. Applicant will provide a plan for construction and maintenance of pedestrian/bike trail upon development.
18. Applicant will provide fiber (Rio Blanco Broadband) locations in plan.

Since receiving the application and providing public notice staff has received 0 negative comments and 1 positive comment from Virginia Love regarding the walking path and a suggestion for additional park space.

Planner Thomson then explained that the Planning Commission may choose to:

- Recommend approval
- Recommend with conditions
- Recommend with modifications
- Recommend denial
- Table for additional review

Staff recommendation is to *recommend approval with conditions* of the Preliminary Plat for the Rohn Ridge Planned Unit Development due to the following finding of fact, explained in detail in the staff report:

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

- Application meets the conditions of Meeker Municipal Code section 18.1.14 and referenced sections
- Application meets many of the goals of the Comprehensive Master Plan

Town Administration concurs with the comments and recommendations presented in this staff report.

Upon opening the public hearing for comment, it was confirmed that there were 3 (not 2) open spaces designated in the preliminary plat.

Applicant Representative John Kuersten shared that they have been working with Planner Thomson on all of the review and conditions and working with Project Engineer Jeff Simonson to address all of the technical/engineering questions and issues.

Rachel Gates with Pioneers Medical Center asked about the responsibility and maintenance of the gravel roads, and Kuersten stated that the Homeowners Association (HOA) would maintain gravel roads through Phase 1, until paved in Phase 2. Subsequent Phases will have their own plats approved and would meet those conditions. Gates continued that PMC is excited about the project and happy to be included in the process.

Commissioner Smith confirmed that the Town was aware of the additional snow removal and street maintenance needs. Smith then asked, with a majority of housing close to the airport, whether the applicant considered that in the design; Kuersten stated the topography and extension of Walbridge Drive dictated the best location for design and the demand dictated the need for residential build out in Phase 1. There was no comment from the County regarding proximity to the airport. Smith then asked about the timeline of the phases; Kuersten said that if all goes well with process and economics, construction would begin in the spring of 2024 with potential for houses by 2025. Smith asked about whether there was a plan to address the drainage ditch and its offensive odor; Simonson stated that the detention pond would naturally drain and maintenance of the detention pond would fall to the HOA. Applicant Shawn Bolton referred to the area as “Stinking Spring” and thought there was probably a lot of water with possibly high sulfur content. Initial Geotech research found ground consisted of silt, sandy loam so there was no concern.

Commissioner Back asked about whether the 5-foot setbacks in the Single Family Home zone were sufficient for safety concerns; Kuersten said that those are minimum setbacks in residential building codes and would end up being 10 feet between structures, if there were concerns they may have to have safety measures like a fire wall built into the building permit conditions, but they want to maximize space for affordable housing. Back asked about any plan for spec homes; Kuersten said they are just concerned with creating lots at this time but still looking into the possibility of adding houses. Back then asked how the HOA would be structured for different homes; Kuersten shared that one HOA would cover all residential areas. The development would encourage xeriscaping and was looking into EcoDwelling models that are a good fit for this application.

Commissioner Morgan asked about construction traffic; Kuersten stated that if the final plat is approved they would apply for a temporary access permit with CDOT for the separate construction access off CO hwy 13; the intention is to use gravel road for all construction traffic. By Phase 2 that secondary entrance would become a full access. Morgan asked what the trigger would be for Phase 2; Kuersten replied that the state of the build out and demand would drive the next phase. Commissioner Smith asked about any possible additional requirements from CDOT for the secondary access road and Kuersten said most likely with Phase 2. Commissioner Joy asked whether the traffic study already addressed those needs and

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Simonson stated that the traffic count would be determined at subsequent phases as build out occurs. Further discussion focused on secondary access road location and requirements.

Commissioner Morgan asked about water quality treatment and why the application chose to use a natural bio swale; Simonson stated that Town code does not require water quality treatment, only a detention pond and that is what application uses. He continued that the design includes drainage improvements that meet Town code and with the possibility to include an outlet that allows extended detention time to help with debris and filtration, a simple fix to help filter and create clean water.

Commissioner Smith asked whether size of development would ever require its own waste treatment system; Simonson stated that population would have to increase to nearly 10K to trigger a whole new facility and there are a lot of other options to control water quality, drainage, and waste water that would meet the regulations of Meeker Sanitation.

Commissioner Morgan asked about the condition of transfer of water right on Sheridan Ditch; Applicant stated that there is uncertainty whether the right actually exists to be considered; Morgan did not feel that the trade would be valuable to the Town; Staff confirmed that the condition was under legal review currently.

Commissioner Morgan then asked about the Sanitation District recommendations; Simonson replied that the requirements are standard and that they would be met, including slope and velocity. The design does meet minimum standards for the Sanitation District.

Morgan confirmed that residential water taps will be ¾" taps into housing units, with applicants stating that there would possibly be a request for 1" taps for larger homes. Applicants also stated that fire flow tests would ensure that water pressure and volume would be sufficient for the development and that the Meeker Water System could accommodate capacity.

Morgan asked about the size of the smaller lots and it was confirmed that they have 45 feet frontage. Kuersten stated that the design is proposing mountable curb, gutter, and sidewalk which is sloped to avoid curb cuts for driveways. Kuersten shared a layout of an EcoDwelling home as an example of how the setbacks and small lots would still accommodate home footprint. Discussion followed regarding similar types of developments regionally and Kuersten shared that he currently has several projects in Rifle and one in Parachute; the goal is for affordable housing to meet 30% of AMI and meet needs of community.

Commissioner Morgan "I think it's a great experiment" and expressed approval of the project.

Commissioner Joy clarified that the gravel roads would be dedicated via plat but not accepted by the Town.

Joy then asked about whether Short Term Rentals (STR) were addressed in the PUD and Kuersten stated that they would like to allow STR permitting but have it managed by the HOA to provide flexibility for change as demand requires. Commissioner Back clarified the intention of the STR is to help with transient hospital workers and meet the housing demands of the hospital and community and Kuersten shared that the HOA language would be crafted to meet that intention.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Joy asked whether the HOA would govern all lots; Kuersten stated there may be multiple HOAs depending on Phase build out.

Joy applauded the applicant for “stepping out” and expressed support for the project.

Commissioner Joy asked for any additional comments from the Commission. Hearing none, Joy closed the public hearing at 8:02 pm and asked for a motion. Motion to recommend approval with listed conditions except for #3 of Rohn Ridge PUD to the Board of Trustees made by Commissioner Smith. Second by Commissioner Morgan. All ayes, motion carries.

Commissioner Joy adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.



Leif Joy, Chairman

12/18/23

Attest:



Mandi Etheridge, Town Administrator