

**MINUTES**  
**CARBONDALE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**  
Thursday October 10, 2019

**Commissioners Present:**

Michael Durant, Chair  
Ken Harrington, Vice-Chair  
Nick Miscione  
Jeff Davlyn  
Nicholas DiFrank (1<sup>st</sup> Alternate)

**Staff Present:**

Janet Buck, Planning Director  
Mary Sikes, Planning Assistant

**Commissioners Absent:**

Jay Engstrom  
Jade Wimberley  
Marina Skiles

**Other Persons Present**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Michael Durant.

**August 29, 2019 Minutes:**

Ken made a motion to approve the August 29, 2019 minutes. Nicholas seconded the motion and they were approved unanimously with Jeff abstaining.

The Commission gave Mary kudos for the minutes.

**Public Comment – Persons Present Not on the Agenda**

There were no persons present to speak on a non-agenda item.

**PUBLIC HEARING – Sopris Lofts – Major Site Plan & Conditional Use Permit**

**Location: 1201 Colorado Avenue**

**Applicants: 1201 CO Avenue Holdings, LLC**

One letter was distributed from Raul Gawrys, Architect.

Janet said that this is an application for a Major Site Plan Review and Conditional Use Permit. She stated that the Planning Commission is required to hold a public hearing and recommend approval of the request or recommend denial. She said that the Commission may also continue the public hearing.

Janet said that the property is located at the northeast corner of Highway 133 and Main Street.

Janet explained that a mixed use building is proposed on the property. She said that the portion of the building along Highway 133 and Main Street includes 3,881 sq. ft. of general commercial. She said that the balance of the building is comprised of 18 efficiency apartments and 9 two-bedroom units for a total of 27 units. She stated that they would all be rental units.

Janet stated that a public plaza at the corner of Highway 133 and Main Street is proposed. She said in addition, there would be a public trail along the east side of the property from Main Street to Colorado Avenue. She stated that there would also be a 10 ft. wide bicycle/pedestrian trail along Colorado Avenue. She said that the RFTA bus stop would remain in its present location.

Janet stated that the proposal meets the zoning parameters in the UDC such as setbacks, lot area per dwelling unit, etc. with one exception which she will cover in a bit.

Janet said that it also complies with the development standards such as private common open space and bulk storage.

Janet explained that the Tree Board reviewed the application and was generally in favor of it. She said that they included a list of recommendations. She said that she met with the applicants yesterday and that they seemed to be amenable to revising the plans to meet those recommendations.

Janet said that the UDC allows for a 15% reduction of required parking for developments in the MU zone district and a 20% reduction for residential development if the property is located within 300 ft. of a transit stop. She stated that this development meets both criteria. She said in addition, the UDC allows a 20% reduction for commercial uses if the development incorporates a transit stop, which this one does.

Janet outlined the following:

With the reductions, the required parking is 39 spaces.

The proposal is for 47 parking spaces on-site and on Colorado Avenue as follows:

Total on-site	30 spaces
Colorado Avenue	17 spaces

Parking along Colorado was discussed during review of an earlier application as well as with this applicant. It was agreed that having the bike path in front of the parking rather than behind it seemed like a safer alternative. The parking was then shifted to the north with the trail between the development and the parking spaces.

Counting 9 of the 17 spaces on Colorado Avenue toward required parking would require Alternative Compliance approval.

There are several other areas where the applicant is requesting alternative compliance.

One is the landscape strip along Highway 133 and Colorado Avenue. The one for Highway 133 is due to the requirement that all development shall be buffered from Highway 133 by a 10 ft. wide landscape strip. Buildings and parking may not be located in this buffer area. The applicant is requesting Alternative Compliance in order to place the plaza in this setback area. Another complication is the UDC only allows a 10 ft. setback so that the building cannot be set back further to accommodate the plaza area. This is a conflict in the code which should be addressed in future amendments. Staff is recommending approval of the alternative compliance.

The landscape strip along Colorado Avenue is required to be 5 ft. wide. The proposal is for one that ranges from 3 ft. to 6 ft. This is due to the Town's desire to have an 8 ft. path along Colorado.

Housing - the UDC requires that 20 percent of the rental units be deed restricted as affordable dwelling units. In this case, five units would be required. The proposal is to deed restrict five efficiency apartments which is in compliance.

### **Code Sections Requiring Additional Discussion**

Janet stated that there are a number of code sections which need additional attention and she explained the following:

Screening - The plans do not show the solar panel and mechanical equipment. There should be a cross section from the south side of Main Street and from the north side of Colorado Avenue to demonstrate that the equipment would be adequately screened.

Pedestrian Connections – The UDC requires pedestrian connections to the transit stop.

The Building Official also indicated that the building code requires that accessible routes shall coincide with or be located in the same area as a general circulation path. There is a concern about ADA compliance for trail connections from the commercial area to the trail on Highway 133.

The Building Official also pointed out there are several ramps associated with this project, both inside and outside the building. If the slope is steeper than 1:20 (5%), handrails would be required on both sides of the ramp.

UDC Section 5.5.3.B.2. requires a pedestrian crosswalk from the northeast corner of the building to the easterly drive. This should be included on the site plan.

Building Height - The allowed building height in the MU zone district is 35 ft. My staff report noted that the building height was in compliance with the UDC. However, since I wrote the staff report, I understand that the height shown on the plans was measured from average grade. The UDC requires that it be measured from existing grade.

Building Design – A number of concerns relate to the design standards in the UDC. I listed the various code sections in the staff report but to summarize:

A long, continuous roof forms should be avoided. Long roof lines be varied by providing different heights or varying roof orientation.

The UDC states that buildings on street corners shall recognize the importance of their location by:

1. Concentrating tallest portions of buildings at intersections where they may “frame” the corner.
2. Employing architectural features such as angled facades, prominent entrances, stepped parapet walls, or other unit features.

UDC Section 5.7.6.D.2. requires that ground floor facades incorporate pedestrian friendly design features such as arcades, display windows, entryways, awning or other features.

Another code section states pedestrian activity should be encouraged on the street. Buildings should incorporate human-scaled features at ground level, i.e., articulated entries, canopies, recessed entries, changes of color and material or texture.

The design of a new building or addition shall incorporate architectural features, elements and details that are designed for pedestrian scale and pedestrian-oriented accesses.

The UDC states buildings shall feature visually prominent primary building entrances. Buildings shall incorporate a combination of two or more of the following techniques:

- a. Canopy, portico, archway, arcade, or similar projection that provides architectural interest and protection for pedestrians;
- b. Prominent tower, dome, or spire;
- c. Peaked roof;
- d. Projecting or recessed entry;
- e. Outdoor features, such as seat walls, landscaping with seasonal color, or permanent landscape planters with integrated benches; or
- f. Other comparable techniques.

The guidelines in UDC Section 5.7.6. has supplemental standards for buildings 10,000 sq. ft. or greater which address horizontal and vertical articulation. These are measurable standards which address changes in wall plane and dividing the building mass into smaller components.

Janet said that one other concern is the treatment of the building façades adjacent to the covered parking area as the facades present a blank face toward Main Street and Colorado Avenue.

Janet said that when this property was rezoned to mixed-use, that the ordinance stated that if the development didn't commence in one year, it would revert back to previous zoning. There is a request to amend that to retain MU.

Nicholas asked who the letter was from that was handed out.

Janet said that it was from Raul Gawrys, Architect. Nicholas noted the letter didn't have Raul Gawrys' name or signature.

Nicholas asked if the height was counting the grade change of seven feet. He asked if Staff was ok with the average, as figured.

Janet read the definition of building height from the UDC and she passed around a drawing from page 300 of the UDC. She said that it was measured from existing grade, not average grade.

Nick asked if the lot was ever excavated and was it at historic grade.

Janet suggested that the applicant address this during their presentation.

Michael suggested a variance might be needed.

Janet said is it a unique condition in Carbondale.

Nick said that the commercial space would be lowered on the first level.

Michael asked if the community housing requirements are broken out by categories 1-3.

Janet explained that, in the community housing guidelines, that with rentals there are only Category 1, 2 and 3 units and that there is no Category 4. She said that we pull the sequencing from on code.

Riley Soderquist introduced himself, Jack Schragger, and his team, which included Yancy and John of Sopris Engineering, Doug and Julie Pratt of The Land Studio, and Michael Noda of neo studio. He said that he is a resident of the valley.

Doug Pratt of The Land Studio explained the site plan and said that there were setback challenges trying to meet the intent of the code due to the maximum 10 ft. setback and required 10 ft. landscape strip.

Doug said that the requirement for the play area is 400 square feet and their proposal is 450 square feet. He said they didn't want the play area up against the parking lot. He

noted that they will move the handicap access closer to the building, as requested by the Building Official.

Doug continued by saying that they were trying to keep as much landscape as possible on the corner. He said that they wanted to use the alternative compliance of the code for the strip of landscape near the bike trail on Colorado.

Doug said that the Tree Board provided recommendations. He said that there will be a connection path from Main Street to Colorado Avenue on the east side of the lot. He said that there has been discussion regarding a bus stop access as well as another access at the end of the building. He said that there would be an easement for the path from Main Street to Colorado Avenue. He said that the ramp is ADA compliant from the building to Colorado and it is at 8% grade, which would require railings.

Doug said that there would be three designated crosswalks with markings.

An architect from the team said that they have researched the history of the grade and that it has been challenging.

Michael and Daniel, the architects from the team, said that they used the average grade, which they used for the built model. Michael said that the retail is compromised, with eleven feet to the south and twelve feet to the north.

Michael, from the team, explained the elevations and designs of the buildings. He noted the five components of the building, the articulation, and the various roofs, including a shed roof. He said they would entertain community art work and murals on the masonry walls, adjacent to parking. He noted that every unit has a balcony or patio.

Ken said that an eight foot wide trail is the bare minimum in width and he asked if the vegetation to the south was in a raised bed or was it flat. He said it mattered when on a bike.

Doug said that it was flat and not raised.

Ken asked what the difference in grade was from the bus stop to the wall at the parking lot.

Doug said around a 5% grade. He noted there were transformers and utilities that made it challenging.

Ken asked if there would signage for the retail units.

Michael, from the team, said that there would be signs based on the sign code. He said that the proposed store front would have multiple entrances.

Ken suggested that the area with art could be framed in tile.

Doug said that we could use tile and that we will have a discussion with the team regarding the commissioned art.

Ken asked if it would be painted with durable paint.

Doug said that the beauty would be in the aging patina of the art.

Ken said that there was a disconnect between the park area and the residential buildings.

Doug explained that they were trying to keep the park in the sunnier area of the lot.

Michael said that having the park near the round-about was a concern.

Jeff asked the applicant if they knew the status of the access control plan at Colorado Avenue and Highway 133 in that there was a plan to close the street. He asked how this would change with more traffic and that cars would be going through the shopping center.

Doug explained that this application doesn't trigger an access permit from CDOT. He said that Yancy from Sopris Engineering will be at the next continued meeting.

Ken asked about the trail on Colorado Avenue going further past this project.

Janet said that it could be feathered into Colorado going east as there was no sidewalk to the east.

Nick asked if there were any alternatives to the seven soft story parking spots. He said that the corner was not being activated and that it could be better utilized.

Doug explained that the reason was for screening and to create art on the elevation.

Nick said that he was concerned about the volume of traffic near the play area on Highway 133. He said that he thought that the southeast corner was a missed opportunity. He noted it was a great presentation.

Nicholas said that he echoes Nick and that he appreciates the attention to details. He asked about the rooftop access.

Michael, from the team, said that two units would have access to the roof but that it was not a publicly used space. He said that the balcony can be enlarged an extra five feet and we can make it shared.

Nick noted that it was a natural foot path along the east side of the lot and that there wasn't any foot traffic on the west side of lot.

Michael said that in the Comp Plan this project would be New Urban, with the building as close to the highway as possible and parking set back from the highway. He said that if the park were to the southeast it would be shaded in winter and there is a three story building to the east. He said that he too is concerned about the location of the play area.

Ken asked if there was a park requirement?

Doug responded that playground equipment was required.

Janet said that the criteria was under the multi-family guidelines.

Ken asked if left as open space, does it meet the requirements.

Doug said that it would be a natural play area with rocks and stone animals.

Jeff asked about the snow storage in the landscaped area east of the play area and what the requirement was.

Doug said that he was not aware of a code and that they figure 1/6 of the parking or 400 square feet.

Janet said that the code reads that the play area shall be developed.

Michael, from the team, said that their company did the play area in Boulder on Pearl Street using stone or concrete animals.

Doug asked the Commission for as much direction as possible that you can give us, non-compliance, concerns or things that you support.

Nick said that he is concerned about the building conforming to height as defined in the UDC.

Janet said that the height would be reviewed by the Building Official at building permit so it is important to get it right now.

Michael said that Staff will agree or not agree with grade. He said new renderings shown tonight spruced it up. He said it looked like a different building than what was shown on the application.

Michael, from the team, said that it was from a human's view, not a bird-eyes perspective.

Nicholas said that he was concerned with the building design at the round-about and asked if there was a way to frame the corner. He said that now it is the lowest portion of the building. He said that there is uniqueness and character with the setback as well. He said that it is the most prominent corner, the facade is calm, at the lowest point, and in the framing it seems as if something was missed.

Michael, from the team, said that gives us good direction. We can make it special, we can add parapets or cornices with southwest perspective. He said that we still think one story is correct.

Nicholas said that may not be enough. He said don't make it too busy or cluttered either; keep the simplicity.

Michael, from the team, said that we can keep the brick element and make the corner special. He said that we can take the cobble out and landscape all the way to the road.

Michael said that when we created New Urban, that this is the building we wanted. He said that we appreciate all of your hard work, we know that you will take our suggestions to heart.

Janet said that tonight was really helpful and that she thought of one thing for the plaza area: benches and street furniture.

Nicholas asked if there could be emphasis on showing the movement through the development.

#### **Motion to close the comment portion of the public hearing**

Ken made the motion to close the comment portion of the public hearing. Nicholas seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Further discussion ensued regarding the next date certain.

#### **Motion to Continue the Public Hearing**

Ken made a motion to continue the public hearing to November 14, 2019. Nicholas seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

#### **Staff Update**

Janet said that she has had so many meetings with a lot of activity in the downtown.

Janet said that the Town Center property is being looked at for a smaller developments.

Janet said that City Market is moving along.

Janet stated that Thompson Park needs to get their subdivision completed at the next meeting for Parcel 2 as they have a deadline.

Janet told the Commission that she appreciates their patience and that it was a hard summer.

### **Commissioner Comments**

Nick said that the Historic Preservation Commission (CHPC) is drafting an amendment to change the HCC and OTR zone districts' reviews with the CHPC from advisory to a requirement, which could be of relevance to the current review process happening.

Michael, Ken, Nicholas and Nick will not be able to attend the next P&Z meeting.

### **Motion to Adjourn**

A motion was made by Jeff to adjourn. Nicholas seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.