

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
September 11, 2017**

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Great Falls Design Review Board was called to order by Chair Dani Grebe at 3:01 p.m. in the Rainbow Room in the Civic Center.

ROLL CALL & ATTENDANCE

Design Review Board Members present:

Dani Grebe, Chair
Tyson Kraft, Vice Chair
David Grosse
Kevin Vining

Design Review Board Members absent:

None

City Staff Members present:

Tom Micuda, Deputy Director P&CD
Erin Borland, Planner II
Leslie Schwab, Planner II
Dave Dobbs, City Engineer

Others present:

Jana Cooper, TD&H
Neil Fortier, NeighborWorks
David Saenz, NeighborWorks
Sophia Sparklin, Spark Architecture

MINUTES

Mr. Kraft moved to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2017, meeting of the Design Review Board. Mr. Grosse seconded, and all being in favor, the minutes were approved.

**NEW BUSINESS
Great Falls North Apartments- Resubmittal
1800 Division Road**

Erin Borland, Planner II, entered the staff report into the record for the proposed construction of a new apartment complex that includes six three story garden style apartment buildings. Ms. Borland explained this project was approved by the Design Review Board (DRB) earlier in the year, but due to a major layout change, DRB review is required again.

The original site plan included nine buildings; however, the new proposed site plan has only six. Building materials and color schemes have stayed the same, and a full material and color palette are included in the staff report. Ms. Borland explained one of the concerns of the original submittal was the lack of windows on the buildings facing the public right of way. The current submittal addresses those concerns by breaking up the large three story walls with various heights of landscaping. Parking, stormwater, lighting, landscaping, and particular building locations were reviewed. Ms. Borland said staff recommends approval of the resubmittal.

PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION

Jana Cooper, TD&H, offered to answer any questions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Mr. Kraft asked if there would be covered parking in the center aisles, and Ms. Cooper said yes.

MOTION: That the Design Review Board approve the Design Review Application for the proposed Great Falls North Apartments, located at the corner of Smelter Avenue Northwest and Division Road, as shown in the conceptual development plans contained within this report and provided by the Applicant, subject to the following conditions of approval:

- A. The proposed project shall be developed consistent with the conditions in this staff report, all codes and ordinances of the City of Great Falls, the State of Montana, and all other applicable regulatory agencies.
- B. If after the approval of the conceptual development plans as amended by this Board, the owner proposes to expand or modify the conceptual development plans, the Director of the Planning and Community Development Department shall determine in writing if such proposed change would alter the concept for one or more review criteria. If such proposed change would alter the plan, the proposal shall be resubmitted for review as a new application.

Made by: Mr. Grosse
Second: Mr. Kraft

VOTE: All being in favor, the motion carried.

Beargrass Villiage PUD 3rd Avenue South and 14th Street South

Erin Borland, Planner II, explained this particular project is unique, as Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) are not normally brought before the DRB. Staff felt that due to the unique characteristics of this project, DRB review was needed before Planning Board review and final

City Commission approval in order to get feedback on the site plan and proposed design standards. Ms. Borland explained the process of a PUD to the Board.

The proposed project sits on the site formerly occupied by Kranz Floral, now vacant due to building demolition. The purpose of the rezone to a PUD is to provide a cluster of single-family units all connected by pedestrian walkways and a central courtyard that will provide daily gathering space for residents. The proposed ten single-family homes plus two 2-unit townhomes will face inward, creating a sense of community for the neighbors to enjoy.

Ms. Borland reviewed the proposed PUD development standards, and how those differ from the current R-3 Single-family high density zoning standards. She explained staff is looking for DRB recommendations specifically regarding the orientation of primary building entries, and the proportion of doors and windows on a first floor façade facing the public streets adjacent to this project. Staff recognizes the innovative design of the pocket neighborhood, and wants to ensure the design does not create the effect that the pocket neighborhood is turning its back on the larger surrounding neighborhood.

Ms. Borland said staff is excited about this project, and recommends approval with any recommendations the DRB may bring forth.

PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION

Neil Fortier, NeighborWorks, said landscaping is a forethought, not an afterthought with this project. He provided representative photographs showing the typical look of a "Pocket Neighborhood" concept.

Sophia Sparklin, Spark Architecture, said she understands one of the concerns with these pocket neighborhoods is a wall going up around the development, and wanted to ensure the Board that this plan was developed so that will not happen. She encouraged discussion and expressed agreement with staff that the DRB needed to have involvement with this project prior to Planning Board and City Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Mr. Vining asked whether there were covenants within the development that require the future property owners to upkeep the property, yard, etc. Mr. Fortier said a homeowner's association will be in place to take care of maintenance, landscaping, and snow removal.

Mr. Grosse expressed concern about setting a precedent with requiring Board review of a type of development not typically considered by the DRB, and Ms. Borland encouraged the Board to consider this particular project only. There was discussion on the DRB being able to write specific design standards for this particular PUD.

Ms. Grebe said the community entry moment being showed on the site plan needs to be significant and possibly have less landscaping at those entry points. There was discussion on the possibility for different orientation of the some of the units facing the streets.

There was discussion on the window and door coverage on the facades facing the public right of way, and what type of flexibility could be incorporated into the design standards of the PUD. Mr. Kraft said it's important that the windows be relatable from one home to another, and that public and private entry points be identifiable. Identifying the amounts of window glazing and the amount of landscaping for the homes, particularly on corner lots, will be important.

Ms. Grebe said she would like to see fenestration for homes towards the street, variability in orientation and materials, between 30 and 50% of the homes along the street should have a feature acknowledging the street, a community entry moment with a through walkway and a low fence. She also expressed the desire to see climate appropriate vegetation and landscaping incorporated as well.

MOTION: That the Design Review Board recommend approval to the Planning Advisory Board/Zoning Commission as shown in the attached submittal provided by the Applicant and contained within this report, subject to the conditions of approval:

- A. The proposed project shall be developed consistent with the conditions in this staff report, all codes and ordinances of the City of Great Falls, the State of Montana, and all other applicable regulatory agencies.
- B. If after the approval of the conceptual development plans as amended by this Board, the owner proposes to expand or modify the conceptual development plans, the Director of the Planning and Community Development Department shall determine in writing if such proposed change would alter the concept for one or more review criteria. If such proposed change would alter the plan, the proposal shall be resubmitted for review as a new application.
- C. All outdoor lighting fixtures and placement shall be reviewed and approved through the Planning and Community Development Department.
- D. All mechanical units and transformer pads shall be screened with landscaping from the public way.
- E. The applicant will develop design standards for the PUD proposal to meet the recommendations set forth in Exhibit 28-1.
- F. The applicant incorporate the recommendations made by the Design Review Board.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Schwab updated the Board on the status of Batteries + Bulbs and the Town Pump carwash.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Kraft moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Grosse. All being in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.