

EXCERPTS
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
COLUMBIA CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER
701 EAST BROADWAY, COLUMBIA, MO
OCTOBER 8, 2020

Case Number 184-2020

A request by Anderson Engineering (agent), on behalf of Endeavor Center, LLC (owner), for approval of a major amendment to the Discovery Park Plat 5, Lot 501 PD plan to resubdivide the lot, to add two floors onto Building B for residential uses, to obtain a design adjustment to Sections 29-5.1(f)(3) a to allow a new lot line through a structure, and to obtain a design exception to Section 29-4.6 relating to entry door orientation. The site is currently located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Nocona Parkway and Endeavor Avenue.

MS. LOE: May we have a staff report, please.

Staff report was given by Mr. Clint Smith of the Planning and Development Department. Staff recommends approval of the requested PD plan major amendment to be known as Discovery Park Plat 5, Lot 501 PD Plan Major Amendment #1, the associated design adjustment for a structure over a lot line, and the associated design exception to Section 29-4.6.

MS. LOE: Thank you, Mr. Smith. Before we move on to questions for staff, I would like to ask any Commissioner who has had any ex parte prior to this meeting related to this case to please disclose that now so all Commissioners have the same information to consider on behalf of this case in front of us. Mr. Stanton?

MR. STANTON: Yeah. After kind of looking at this a little deeper. The company I'm associated with, we do a lot of business out here. I think I need to recuse myself.

MS. LOE: All right. Thank you. Any additional comments? Seeing none. Are there any questions for staff? Mr. --

MS. GEUEA JONES: I'm sorry.

MS. LOE: Ms. Geuea Jones?

MS. GEUEA JONES: You looked away from me right as I was raising my hand. I don't know if this is a question for staff or more of a comment, but I assume that when the UDC allows for shared parking allotments, they -- or not they, because the UDC isn't a person -- but the assumption is people aren't home all day every day. So when they're gone, it's used for commercial, and when they're -- when the businesses are shut down, it's used for residential. Is that the assumption that we're working on?

MR. SMITH: Correct. Yes. So that -- that operates under the assumption, like you said, that different users are going to have different peak times for parking. And so when residential uses are most needed, which is usually in the evening when they're coming home from work and overnight, commercial businesses are closing, and so the parking then becomes available. So you have a kind of this overlap of a peak time of when that parking would be utilized, and so that allows you to kind of -- kind of take credit a little bit for some of that -- the parking that the other use may actually be providing, so if that makes

sense.

MS. GEUEA JONES: If they were doing -- they're adding two floors. Correct?

MR. SMITH: Correct. Uh-huh.

MS. GEUEA JONES: If they were adding one floor, which would be 22 units, would they need the adjustment below the minimum?

MR. SMITH: Probably not. I think with the adjustment, they -- I think the parking they have on site is 83 spaces, and I think with the adjustment, they actually -- their minimum required is 72, if I -- I don't have the numbers right in front of me, but they were -- they were well under the minimum. So I think if they reduced a whole floor, they may get by without having to use the -- the reduction factor. And that -- it also doesn't take into account, they can reduce the minimum number of parking spaces by providing bike parking, and I don't think that was actually shown on the plan, but that's something they can also -- you know, is also available to them, as well.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Sure. I'm just -- I think that we're entering a brave new world where those assumptions may not still exist or be accurate.

MR. SMITH: Well, it's -- it's something -- I don't know if we would utilize those quite frequently. I think it's something we're kind of encouraged to see somebody taking advantage of those because they were intentionally placed into the UDC to -- to kind of address, you know, the overbuilt parking environment. And so, hopefully, if -- if we do get negative feedback on that, that's something we'll monitor, and maybe it needs to be adjusted in the future, but we're kind of -- I think kind of encouraged to see how it's going to play out.

MS. GEUEA JONES: I think that we're seeing more and more people having to work from home, and so they're probably not going to be gone eight hours a day.

MR. SMITH: Fair enough.

MS. LOE: Any additional questions? Mr. Smith, I was wondering, do you have the original approved plat that you could put up?

MR. SMITH: The original approved -- approved plat or PD plan? Well, the answer is the same. No, I don't have either one.

MS. LOE: PD Plan. Okay.

MR. SMITH: No. Not in here, and I apologize. Was there something specific you were looking for on it?

MS. LOE: Yes. So maybe you can go back to the one -- the amended one that you do have. So in your report, you commented that staff supports the exception for entry door orientation because of the advantages that the design provides. Can you just elaborate on that a little bit more?

MR. SMITH: I apologize. I don't remember the exact phrase. I do remember I think we were discussing --

MS. LOE: No. And I'm paraphrasing.

MR. SMITH: Okay.

MS. LOE: There was a sentence in there saying that this -- because of other attributes of this, that -- but it didn't go on to spell those out, so I made a note to ask you.

MR. SMITH: Yeah. I think the -- the advantage there would be with the parking interior, that is an aesthetic benefit, and I think we've seen this before that when you have the parking on the interior, you -- you -- there is that desire to also have access from where you have your parking at, and I think that was kind of articulated by the applicant during our discussions originally. And so that -- that does provide you to provide that direct access from the parking area into the building versus someone who parks there, if the access is on the street, now they have to walk all the way around the building. So it's -- I don't want to say there's a -- a bit of Catch 22 thereon on where you place your parking, but it does somewhat, I think, make it difficult to hide that parking from the street frontage which is -- is a design feature that -- that I think many commercial designers would want to do, and I think, in general, is a design we would like to see more going forward. But then again, you run into that problem where they do then want the access from the interior of site, not -- not the exterior from the site. But that -- that would be one of the advantages. I think where I was headed with that was with the -- the additional walkway in between the two buildings, we thought that was going to provide enough of that pedestrian connectivity for the individuals walking down the public sidewalk to safely and kind of efficiently access to the front of the building without having to walk down a -- a drive aisle or through the parking lot. So it gave them still that -- that pedestrian access that's separated from -- from the drive area, but, again, it does -- it doesn't quite meet the standard for having a door on the street side.

MS. LOE: The access between the buildings?

MR. SMITH: Right.

MS. LOE: So the reason I asked for the original PD plan is because that access was about twice as wide, the distance between the buildings in the original plan. So when they came back with the amendment, I wasn't too happy that it had gotten narrower, but we had approved it previously. But given that that's a dog yard in there for the vet, it does seem a little bit tight to me that you're bringing people in right past the veterinary dog yard. So you're right, it still went through the second time. Now that we've added a mixed use component that ostensibly would have a separate entrance anyway, I have to admit I don't support the exception any longer because I'm not sure I fully support all the parking needing to be one side of the building, but especially in the report which says that most of the traffic for this building will be pedestrian traffic coming from the neighborhood and that this is a model that they want to replicate on other corners. I have some real doubts about putting multiple-story buildings with no active entrances on the street and putting residential entrances into parking lots. So I was hoping that the staff would have some stronger advantages about why those entrances could be turned around for -- for a residential entrance. We've gone from just commercial to now 44 units are going to be coming and going from there, especially when you have that 25-foot setback off the street. I mean, I'm assuming that's a parkway that's going to have some landscaping and could potentially be a multi-modal space that could be engaging. But if you don't have eyes on the street, if you don't have some activity generated along that, it may lose

some safety factors or -- I just think we could be pushing that. That entrance on the street was a big thing in our Code, so I'm not going to give that one up lightly on this one, I don't think. All right. Any other questions for staff?

MS. CARROLL: I'll save it for comments.

MS. LOE: In that case, we'll open it up -- floor up to public comment.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

MS. LOE: If anyone has any public comment, please give your name and address for the record.

MR. WOOTEN: Good evening. Tom Wooten with Anderson Engineering; our office is at 4240 Phillips Farm Road in Columbia, and I can answer any questions you have.

MS. LOE: Are there any questions for this speaker? I see none. Thank you.

MR. WOOTEN: Thank you.

MS. LOE: No other speakers? We'll close public comment.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

MS. LOE: Commissioner discussion? Ms. Carroll?

MS. CARROLL: Yeah. I was a bit concerned about the assumption also that the majority of the traffic comes from the neighborhoods once residential is added. There are three major employers that are just across 63 from there. There's a protected sidewalk walkway from the overpass. It's about a 15-minute walk to that area. I happen to work over there. We have a number of new employees that have suggested they would be looking for a walkable place to live, and have a hard time finding something that meets their needs. I support the mixed use. I think that's a benefit. I am uncertain whether or not an added walkway makes it walkable, but I do think it's an amenity for the area.

MS. LOE: Any additional comments? Ms. Geuea Jones?

MS. GEUEA JONES: Yeah. I obviously was not on the Commission in January. I feel pretty strongly that if you want safe, walkable, vibrant streets, you need entrances from those streets. And I'm -- I'm disturbed that we are now drastically increasing the number of people coming and going and you've basically got -- I know there will be windows and stuff, but blank walls on two sides of this corner. And I'm also really concerned, I mean, up until six months ago, the UDC was appropriately assuming that people leave and go to work and then come home at night. I don't think we can assume that anymore. More and more employers are going permanently to remote work. I -- I just -- I think this is too many people without appropriate access. And while I want there to be more mixed use in Columbia, the whole reason we have planned development is so we can make these judgment calls.

MS. LOE: Ms. Russell?

MS. RUSSELL: I'm going to go ahead and make a motion, if nobody has any other comments. I move to approve -- on Case 184-2020, I move to approve the requested PD plan major amendment to be known as Discovery Park Plat 5, Lot 501 PD Plan Major Amendment Number 1, the associated design adjustment for the structure over a lot line, and the associated design exception to Section 29-4.6.

MS. RUSHING: Second.

MS. LOE: Second by Ms. Rushing. We have a motion on the floor. Any discussion on that motion? Seeing none. May we have roll call, please, Ms. Carroll.

Roll Call Vote (Voting "yes" is to recommend approval.) Voting Yes: Ms. Rushing, Ms. Russell, Mr. Toohey, Ms. Burns, Ms. Carroll. Voting No: Ms. Geuea Jones, Ms. Loe. Motion carries 5-2, with one abstention.

MS. CARROLL: The vote is six-two; the motion is carried.

MS. RUSSELL: Five-two.

MR. ZENNER: Five-two-one.

MS. RUSSELL: One.

MR. ZENNER: Abstention.

MS. CARROLL: Yes. It is five-two. Sorry. Five-two, one abstention.

MS. LOE: Thank you. Recommendation for approval will be forwarded to City Council.