

**AGENDA REPORT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
February 4, 2021**

SUMMARY

A request by A Civil Group (agent), on behalf of West Rock II, LLC (owners), for approval of a rezoning and development plan to be known as the, "Midland PD Plan." The applicant is proposing 12, single-family attached units with vehicular access onto Green Meadows Road. The 1.45-acre property is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Green Meadows Drive and Green Meadows Circle. **(Case #61-2021)**

DISCUSSION

The applicants are seeking to rezone their property at the northwest corner of Green Meadows Road and Green Meadows Circle, from R-1 (One-family Dwelling) to PD (Planned District) to facilitate the construction of 12 attached single-family homes. The proposed PD plan depicts these units arranged around a centralized parking area, in pairs, with each unit located on its own platted lot. Each individual lot is depicted having a 25 foot front yard, 20 foot rear yard and a 5 foot minimum side yard setback. The eight northern structures front toward Green Meadows Circle and the four southern units front toward Green Meadows Road and have their primary entries facing the street. Each unit includes a one-car garage that is entered from the rear via the common driveway and parking area. A total of 24 surface parking spaces (12 tandem and 12 visitor) are provided onsite for residents and visitors.

Rezoning Considerations

City Staff has reviewed a number of proposals for this property and each new proposal has been responsive to public, staff, and Commission comments. The current plan reflects the applicant's attempt at address the majority of those comments and is believed more consistent with the surrounding land use characteristics that prior submissions. In November 2019, the applicant applied for a concept review relating to the site's development and it was determined that the use of a planned district was appropriate.

Many site factors, like limited access, the shape of the lot, and the location of the property near the entrance to the Green Meadows and Greenbriar-Trail Ridge neighborhoods play a role in limiting development options on the property. Planned districts are intended to allow for innovation and flexibility in design, to encourage creative mixes of complimentary uses, and to promote environmentally sound and efficient use of land.

During the concept review, the potential project density and maximum number of dwelling units were also discussed. It was concluded that a reasonable number of units would be approximately 12, which would yield a density of approximately 8-9 dwelling units per acre. This development density is generally considered consistent with the surrounding development patterns which consist of a church, multiple single-family neighborhoods and multi-family developments, and two heavily trafficked intersections.

Staff considers the subject site a transitional property providing demarcation between the more intense development to the south and east and less intense development to the north and west. Given this belief, the site is a candidate for greater development density and that the use of the PD zone allows such development to be more “tailored” for that purpose. The proposed development plan offers an opportunity for the site to fulfill its transitional purpose while at the same time being respectful of the context in which it would be constructed.

Staff acknowledges that there is the opportunity to develop the site under its R-1 zoning; however, believes that such a development would not necessarily be functional given the site’s characteristics and development limitations relating to access as well as other regulatory compliance requirements. The PD plan and accompanying Statement of Intent are considered, at this time, to likely be the most efficient use of the land, which also addresses the majority of concerns previously expressed by the public and staff.

Development Plan Considerations

The attached PD plan depicts 12 dwelling units flanking, to the north and south, a central driveway accessing Green Meadows Road. Each dwelling unit includes a single-car garage which accounts for one-half or 12 of the required 24 parking spaces to support the proposed use. Pursuant to the UDC tandem parking is permitted within one and two-family development. Given this standard, each private driveway associated with the 12 dwelling units has a tandem parking space on its individual lot thereby providing the remaining 12 parking spaces required by the UDC for the type of development proposed. While the plan depicts a central driveway and additional parking spaces for resident use, the development is not by definition considered a multi-family development given each dwelling unit is proposed to be platted on its own individual lot.

As noted above, there are 12 additional parking spaces for guests of the development’s residents. Provision of these spaces is not required by the UDC as this project is not deemed to be a multi-family development. This extra parking is included in response to comments from staff and neighboring property owners, who are concerned about the possibility of overflow into the neighboring public streets. Green Meadows Road has a high volume of traffic at peak times, and Green Meadows Circle serves a number of homes, and also sees heavy cut-through traffic during peak hours. Additionally, four required bicycle spaces are also provided on the PD plan, at a centralized location.

It should be further noted that the additional parking along the Green Meadows frontage is connected to the surrounding sidewalk network via an onsite sidewalk spur. Per Section 29-4.3(b)(2) of the UDC there are no accessible space requirements for single-family developments; therefore, staff does not view the limited connection to only one side of the development’s exterior sidewalk network as a violation of any regulatory standard contained within the UDC. However, it should be noted that if a Building Code requirement does require accessible spaces the applicant would need to address that matter at the time of building permitting and final site plan approval.

Another element of the development that requires specific acknowledgment relates to the proposed setbacks shown on the PD plan. The proposed setbacks have been revised from previous proposals to better accommodate site characteristics such as its proximity to Green Meadows Road and the intention of creating individual lots for each of the dwelling units and a single common lot (Lot C1).

Pursuant to the provisions of the UDC relating to PD developments, the setbacks for such developments are to comply with the Form and Development Standards of Article 4. Specifically in this instance the setbacks applicable to lots for each dwelling unit and the common lot are to mirror those of the R-2 district as shown in Table 4.1-1 of the UDC unless otherwise requested to be modified as a design exception as part of the PD rezoning. It should also be noted that there are permissible encroachments into the required setbacks provided other applicable regulatory standards are followed such as screening and buffering.

As noted previously, each dwelling unit lot will have a 25 foot front yard, 20 foot rear yard and a 5 foot minimum side yard setback. Given these proposed setbacks, the side and rear yards are one (1) and five (5) feet, respectively, less than that required for a standard R-2 attached single-family development. The setbacks for Lot C1 are proposed at 25' front and 6' rear. There are no side yard setbacks on the lot given its triangular shape. Based on these proposed setbacks, Lot C1 would have a 19' reduction in its rear setback.

It should be further noted, that each unit includes a front porch which protrudes, to varying degrees, into the required front yard areas. The properties along Green Meadows Circle extend six feet beyond the building line, and those on Green Meadows Road extend three feet. This is a standard provision of the UDC of which the applicant wishes to take advantage. The reduced protrusions on the Green Meadows Road frontage take into account previous comments regarding the proximity of structures to the busier roadway, and potential future right-of-way dedications.

The proposed perimeter buffer along the western boundary of the site is consistent with that required when a parking area is within 6' of a property line. It should be noted that prior to adoption of the UDC in 2017, PUD developments were required to maintain a 25' perimeter setback. This requirement; however, was eliminated when the UDC was adopted given enhancements in the screening and buffering standards of the code.

Staff finds that the proposed setbacks inclusive to the requested reduction in side and rear setbacks are appropriate, given the triangular shape of the property and the necessity for maintaining sufficient onsite maneuvering room as well as additional guest parking spaces. The placement of parking within 6' of the western property line coupled with the installation of a "Type 2" screening buffer is consistent with requirements of the UDC and is viewed as being acceptable.

Design Exception Considerations

A total of three design exceptions are required for approval of the proposed PD plan, which pertain to setbacks and access. The proposed access to the subject site is from Green Meadows Road. Given the single-family nature of this proposal, this access is not permitted by Appendix A, Section A.9 of the UDC, due to Green Meadows Road being classified as a collector. Staff; however, is supportive of this access arrangement given input from adjoining property owners specifically requesting access not be taken from Green Meadows Circle, and due to overall site constraints. Nearby neighborhoods are almost exclusively accessed from the east via Green Meadows Circle; particularly for those homes located on Greenbriar Drive and Melody Lane. Restricting access to the proposed development as shown will assist in minimizing potential increased traffic impacts on those neighborhoods from the new development.

An additional design exception pertains to parking located in the required front yard. Portions of the two spaces closest to the entrance of the property extend into the required front yard up to 12 feet. Section 29-4.3(f)(3) states that vehicles shall not be parked in a required front yard, except on a driveway, and that parking cannot be arranged perpendicular to the driveway. The applicant seeks to provide adequate visitor parking on the property, and as such, hopes to utilize the easily accessible space to meet that anticipated need. The entry drive functions more as a parking lot aisle, as opposed to a private driveway.

A vegetative buffer, which includes the property signage, is included on the landscape plan as a means of softening the visual impacts of the parking and driveway entrance, when viewed from Green Meadows Road (Buffer 1). Additionally, screening is provided nearby to conceal the rear of the easternmost unit, Unit 8, shielding the rear of the structure from the roadway (Buffer 2). Given the provision of this additional landscaping, community input, site functionality, and the unique characteristics of the property, staff believes parking in this location is appropriate and that the spaces in question are necessary.

The final design exception relates to the previously-stated setback issue along the property's western lot line specifically within Lot C1. The requested 19' reduction in the required rear setback is driven by the shape of the property and necessity to maintain sufficient onsite maneuvering area for vehicles. The reduction in the setback is proposed to be mitigated by the installation of a Level 2 screening buffer within the proposed 6 foot setback. This buffer area would include a 4 foot landscaped area and a 6 foot tall screening device. Typically there would be no screening or buffering required between the adjoining uses. It should be noted; however, that the parking proposed within the reduced setback is permitted per Section 29-4.3(f)(3)(iv) of the UDC given the proposed landscape screening. Given site constraints and the provision of additional screening and buffering to create a physical and visual barrier in this location, staff supports this design exception.

Conclusion

Staff believes the requested PD zoning is appropriate for this location due to its site limitations and the opportunity it affords the developer to use creative solutions to mitigate contextual impacts. Staff is supportive of the proposed density as stated during the 2019 concept review meeting. This density and proposed housing type are responsive to the site's context and comments the applicants received regarding previous proposals for the property. For instance, additional parking has been provided to address concerns voiced by neighbors, buildings now front to public streets, and building mass has been reduced.

Staff does acknowledge; however, that the plan falls short of successfully incorporating enhanced amenities and open space which are two of the several purposes for why a property should be considered for rezoning to a PD district. While open space has been provided it is generally set aside for stormwater mitigation and may be unusable by residents when inundated. However, given the site's constrained area and the need to meet other development requirements what has been provided does afford visual relief within the development and is not inconsistent with features that would otherwise be expected on sites containing similar constraints.

This proposal supports the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan by introducing and providing opportunities to construct varied housing types within this location of the City. In conclusion, staff believes this proposal to be a realistic and resourceful solution to a difficult site. Many development proposals have been reviewed for this property, and the current proposal appears to be the applicant's good faith effort to address previous concerns.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the requested rezoning from R-1 to PD, the associated PD plan, and design exceptions.

ATTACHMENTS

- Locator maps
- Proposed Statement of Intent
- Proposed *Midland PD Plan*

HISTORY

Annexation date	1964
Zoning District	R-1 (Single-Family Residential)
Land Use Plan designation	Neighborhood District
Previous Subdivision/Legal Lot Status	Lot 202, Rock Bridge Christian Church Plat 2

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Area (acres)	1.45
Topography	Generally flat, slight slope to the east
Vegetation/Landscaping	Turf/Natural
Watershed/Drainage	Perche Creek
Existing structures	Vacant

UTILITIES & SERVICES

All utilities and services provided by the City of Columbia

ACCESS

Green Meadows Road	
Location	South side of property
Major Roadway Plan	Major Collector
CIP projects	N/A
Sidewalk	Sidewalks constructed

Green Meadows Circle	
Location	North side of property
Major Roadway Plan	N/A
CIP projects	N/A
Sidewalk	Sidewalks constructed

PARKS & RECREATION

Neighborhood Parks	Rock Bridge Park
Trails Plan	N/A
Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan	Both access roadways are Green Routes

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

All property owners within 200 feet and City-recognized neighborhood associations within 1,000 feet of the boundaries of the subject property were notified of this pending request on January 12th. 11 postcards were distributed. An advertisement was also placed in the Columbia Daily Tribune on January 19th.

Public information meeting recap	Number of attendees: N/A (No mtg held due to COVID-19) Comments/concerns: General inquires received
Notified neighborhood association(s)	Green Meadows NA, Village South HOA, Crescent Green HOA, Greenbriar-Trail Ridge NA
Correspondence received	None at the time of this report.

Report prepared by Rusty Palmer

Approved by Patrick Zenner