



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PALISADE PLANNING COMMISSION
(Also Virtual Participation Via ZOOM)
February 16, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission for the Town of Palisade was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman Parker with Commissioners present: Hull, Wheeler, Prinster, Curry, Harbaugh (via ZOOM) and Hamilton. A quorum was declared. Also, in attendance were Town Manager Janet Hawkinson, and Community Development Director Brian Rusche and Planning Technician Lydia Reynolds attended via Zoom.

AGENDA ADOPTION

Motion #1 by Commissioner Prinster, seconded by Commissioner Wheeler, to approve the Agenda as presented.

A voice vote was requested.
Motion carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and PRESENTATIONS

A. Grand Valley Housing Needs Survey – www.research.net/r/GrandValleyHousing

Community Development Director Brian Rusche reported there is a survey being done by Grand Junction to determine housing needs in the Grand Valley and encouraged everyone to partake in survey.

B. PRESENTATION – Palisade Marketing Plan - TAB (Tourism Advisory Board) & Slate Communications

Mr. Rusche introduced Julianne Adams, Chairman of the Tourism Advisory Board (TAB). Chairman Adams introduced Ryan Burke, and Kaylene Weingard from Slate Communications who are with the new marketing agency that is working with TAB.

Mr. Burke, Slate Communications, gave an overview of the Marketing Report that was in the meeting packet. He identified target markets, new partnership with Fruita and shared other ideas in the plan.

Gail Evans, 126 Majestic Ct., suggested that the marketing campaign emphasize a slower pace that Palisade has to offer.

Don Metzler, 834 Shiraz, thought the partnership with Fruita is an asset.

Commissioner Prinster asked why cross country skiing is never highlighted. Mr. Burke noted that his agency has just started the contract last month, and they have already started collecting photos to use to highlight that market. Commissioner Curry asked how Palisade can apply a throttle or breaks to the tourism impact. Mr. Burke replied that Palisade is not for everybody and they intend to target audiences that would appreciate what it has to offer. Also, they intend to market weekdays and off season to help businesses during those times and that would also spread out the impact from tourism.

MINUTES

A. Minutes from February 2, 2021, Regular Planning Commission Meeting

Commissioner Prinster noted that a letter was included in the minutes as public comments, however, they should be removed as they were not read into the minutes, therefore should not be part of the minutes.

Motion #2 by Commissioner Prinster, seconded by Commissioner Curry, to approve the Minutes as corrected.

A voice vote was requested.
Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carl Phillips, did not think the idea of Townhomes was a good idea. He expressed concern that they lose value and HOAs don't always last.

Adrian Wisniewski stated he is currently under contract on a house in Palisade. He would like to see the cap of Short Term Vacation Rentals in the Mixed Use zone district. Mr. Wisniewski read his comments into the record and will be attached to the minutes.

Gail Evans, 126 Majestic Ct., asked where in town is the area Mr. Wisniewski was commenting about. Chairman Parker noted that this was a public comment and not a discussion item.

PUBLIC HEARING

PRO 2021-2 Bella Palizzata Townhomes – Concept Plan

Staff Presentation

Community Development Director Brian Rushe explained that a concept plan is an opportunity for the applicant to present a concept of a project before submitting the Preliminary Plat. He explained that the applicant had presented a concept plan a couple of years ago, but chose not to move forward at the time.

Mr. Rushe explained that they are presenting a new concept plan that has one less townhome (14), grouped them differently and added additional parking.

Applicant Presentation

Kim Kerk, Kim Kerk Land Consulting & Dev. LLC stated she is representing Darin Carei, the owner and developer of the proposed townhomes. Ms. Kerk explained that they took many of the comments taken from the first concept plan and made adjustments to address those concerns. Ms. Kerk noted that the existing house will be remodeled and incorporated into the Tuscan themed development. The site plan was displayed. She noted a few other developments that Darin Carie has done in the Grand Junction area. Shutters, planters and landscaping will accent the Townhomes. The Townhomes are proposed to have 1 or 2 car garages and 2-3 bedrooms. There may be some variation among the townhomes. Chairman Parker noted that it appears that the development will have duplex and fourplexes, not a five-plex as previously submitted.

Mr. Rusche remarked that this is an opportunity for the applicant to glean what concerns the Planning Commission may have, before designing the Preliminary Plat. Commissioner Prinster noted that there had been concern that there was parking shown on Shirraz Dr. and was glad to see it was removed. Commissioner Hull stated he thinks there should be at least 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and preferably a 2 car garage.

Commissioner Harbaugh stated that this zone district only allows 80% impervious surface and was concerned they didn't have yards. Ms. Kerk said there were proposing trees, shrubs and grasses. Discussion continued regarding impervious surface and area. Chairman Parker reminded the Commissoiners that this is at the concept plan phase. Commissioner Curry asked for clarification about the plans for the existing house. Ms. Kerk explained that it is still under design.

Public Comment

Gail Evans, 126 Majestic Ct. asked if it has been established that there will be townhomes there. Ms. Evans concern was that, in some townhome developmmnts, people eventually stop paying their dues and it becomes a problem for the town. She said they often become rentals, however recognized the need for this type of housing for seniors.

Don Metzler, 834 Shiraz Dr. stated he had attended the previous meetings for this previous concept plan. Mr. Metzler read his email into the record and this email will be a permanent attachment to these minutes.

Brian Moffat, 844 Shiraz Dr. asked what the square footage of the townhomes were and how much the sale price will be. Chairman Parker explained that those design questions are not part of the concept plan phase and will be addressed at the Preliminary Plat phase.

Planning Commission Discussion

Commissioner Harbaugh restated that he is concerned about the percentage of impervious surface. Commissioner Prinster expressed concern about parking. Discussion continued regarding the fact that their concerns will need to be addresses with the Preliminary Plat submittal after the design is completed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion #3 by Commissioner Hull, seconded by Commissioner Curry. Chairman Parker adjourned the meeting at 7:46 pm.

X 

Riley Parker
Planning Commission Chairman

X 

Lydia Reynolds
Planning Technician

I've prepared some thoughts that I will read from since I get a little nervous speaking in public.

Adrian Wisniewski, currently under contract on 573 E. Main Street

Thank you to the Planning Commission for your time. I would like to put forth a motion to revise the cap for Short Term Vacation Rentals or STVR's within the Mixed-Use Zoning area. This would not affect the existing STVR cap in the Low, Medium or High Density Residential areas. It is my understanding the Commission is working hard to balance the very fine line of retaining the small-town community feel that we love about Palisade alongside the ability for local businesses to prosper against the increased traffic flow that comes along with that prosperity. I have had personal experiences with STVR's damaging the sense of community within a neighborhood and it should be avoided at all costs. It is imperative to retain the small town feel while getting the most out of on those who want to use our natural resources that include mtn biking, wineries, peach orchards, hiking, cross country skiing, rafting, fishing among many others.

My proposal is that by reducing or removing the cap limit within the Mixed-use areas, it provides the best of both worlds. The vast majority of the Mixed-Use properties are adjacent to the Town Center OR are bordering a major thoroughfare. By allowing more STVR's in this zone, it would allow for added lodging near the town center but without the worry of affecting the more family centric residential areas by either damaging the neighborhood feel or adding to the existing roadway or parking infrastructure. It would provide a place for paying tourists to lodge and use as a homebase, but in a walkable format.

I also feel that the time is now to act on this alteration to the Development Code. If an amendment to the ordinance isn't made until this spring or summer, the STVR's won't be ready until it is too late in the prime tourism season resulting in the Town possibly missing out on a lot of potential income for the local businesses that are likely just barely hanging on due to the pandemic. It feels like the time is now to consider this revision so that when the warm weather arrives and the Palisade Plunge opens, the Town can prosper from it appropriately. With everyone being cooped up for so long, this spring and summer is going to be an incredibly busy tourist season. Then you add to that scenario that the Plunge is finally opening after 10 years of development, and it could be the perfect storm for a pandemic recovery.

Along with that potential, add to it that most travelers are not yet comfortable staying in hotels, but they are happy to stay in a home to themselves through VRBO or AirBnb. I worry that, without enough lodging options, many of those who are coming for the inaugural season of the Plunge, which is the most anticipated new trail in the state, will just come to use the trail and then leave town. They will be only adding to the negative affects of such a great place, without the positive. If they have a variety of lodging options, ideally they will stay in town to use the local businesses instead of just leaving town and spending their money elsewhere.

I ask the Planning Commission to seriously consider revising the current development code to add more Short Term vacation Rental lodging options to share this beautiful town with those who want to enjoy it respectfully.

Comments for Planning Commission of the Town of Palisade
February 16, 2021 (Virtual) Meeting

Subject: Pro 2021-2 – Bella Palizzata Townhomes – Concept Plan

- 1) Is there an existing irrigation line that serves the subject property? If yes, is this irrigation system/line shared with other users?
- 2) How will the landscaping and green belt(s) be irrigated and where will the tail water go?
- 3) Will there be a storm water retention pond associated with this development?
- 4) How will the issue of elevated arsenic in the soils be addressed? This environmental issue forced a past Grand Junction developer to abandon his plans to develop the property a few years ago due to high costs associated with the remediation of the soils. The environmental report and past developer proposed plans are part of the public record.
- 5) Has the developer given full consideration towards the safe egress of traffic leaving Shiraz Drive and turning left onto G road if the townhouses block a clear view looking to the northwest and G road traffic/pedestrians are proceeding easterly? A few years ago, a large real estate sign blocked this view and was unsafe for the Shiraz drivers leaving Shiraz Drive unto G road. This issue was discussed with the Real Estate company and the Town of Palisade and the sign was removed. The developer might have to consider a reasonable setback as to not block a clear view of traffic/pedestrians.
- 6) Will the existing home be left on-site and remodeled to fit the style of the townhouses. I remember the Palisade mayor and commissioners telling the developer this was NOT a good plan for a number of reasons.
- 7) Will townhouse residents be forced to park second cars and/or associated visitor cars on Shiraz Drive?
- 8) Can a fire truck adequately enter and leave the proposed cul-de-sac?
- 9) Will there be a side walk/bike lane from Palisade High School to Shiraz Drive installed as part of this development?