



City of Ukiah, CA Design Review Board

MINUTES

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2
3 **Regular Meeting**

October 11, 2012

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5 **Ukiah Civic Center, 300 Seminary Avenue**

6 **1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Hise called the Design Review Board meeting to order at 3:00
7 p.m.

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9 **2. ROLL CALL Present:** Tom Liden, Alan Nicholson, Howie Hawkes,
10 Nick Thayer, Tim Hise, Chair

11 **Absent:**

12 **Staff Present:**

Kim Jordan, Senior Planner

13 Jennifer Faso, Associate Planner

14 Cathy Elawadly, Recording Secretary

15 **Others present:**

16 Scott Nilsen

17 Clay Johnson

18 **3. CORRESPONDENCE:** None

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20 **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** - September 13, 2012

21 **M/S Nicholson/Liden** to approve the September 13, 2012 minutes, as submitted. Motion carried
22 (5-0) with Member Thayer abstaining.

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24 **5. AUDIENCE COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

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26 **6. NEW BUSINESS:**

27 **6A. Preliminary Review Talmage Road Multi-Family Residential Project (File No: 12-16-**
28 **PRE-PC-DRB).** Design Review Board pre-application review of a multi-family residential
29 development at 582 Talmage Road, APN 003-160-57.

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31 **Senior Planner Jordan** gave a staff report.

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33 **Clay Johnson** gave a project description as referenced in the site plans (attachment 6):

- 34 • The design of the project is conceptual at this point.
- 35 • The project would construct 18-multi-family units on the site for a total of 19 dwelling units
36 including the existing residence. The new units would be located in buildings that contain
37 one or two apartments. The apartments will be one-bedroom units that include a garage.
- 38 • The site is flood plain and floodway, so the units were designed with all of the living
39 space above the garage.
- 40 • The walls of the structures will be split-face CMU is on the ground level dues to flood
41 concerns.
- 42 • Buildings face either north or south to take advantage of passive solar/shade
43 opportunities and provide for energy conservation as much as possible.
- 44 • Each unit has a well-covered porch upstairs that provides for some outdoor area.
- 45 • The units were designed to be simple and flexible for ease of living and convenience.
- 46 • The site layout provides for adequate on-site circulation for tenants and emergency/utility
47 vehicles and is configured to address potential noise impacts from the freeway.
- 48 • The access road runs along the eastern edge of the property providing a buffer between
49 the units and the freeway and allowing an area for tree planting. Both will provide a buffer
50 for noise from the freeway.
- 51 • Parking is provided along the access road.

- There can be no construction of any kind in the floodway area. As such, this area is designated on the site plans as an 'open space/recreational area.' At the pre-application meeting, the Planning Commission suggested a community garden for this area.
- Each building has two units with a common stairway that runs between the units. The stairway is behind the door and provides access to the garages so tenants do not have to go outside to access the garages.
- The project intent is to provide for a secure/comfortable and aesthetically pleasing residential living experience.
- The Planning Commission provided some valuable input relative to the project design and site layout and suggested flipping the units to allow for an improved pedestrian orientation/access, a better sense of community/neighborhood. And more private open space, and more attractive project.
- Each unit has a garage. The entry hall has an exterior door that goes out to the street as well as two doors to each garage so the tenants each have their own locks. To get to a unit, a tenant walks through a common area.
- Solar panels will be part of the project. 50% of the roof area is facing directly north and south to take advantage of solar.

Member Hawkes:

- Sees value for a tenant to have secure and private garage.
- Supports that the building materials are durable and that the decks are waterproofed.
- Asked about mitigation measures for sound proofing from freeway noise.
- Asked about plans for sidewalks.
- Supports providing for as much pedestrian orientation and access as feasible.
- Likes the concept of live/work with residents living upstairs and having a business downstairs.

Member Liden:

- The storage area could be junk collectors and recommends eliminating this fenced area. Also, the overhang over the garage would be a 'junk' collecting space and this space could be better utilized. Could incorporate this space into the garage.
- Altering the design of the garage would change the floor plan of the building.
- Asked about fencing for the project.
- Asked about plans to renovate the existing building.
- Likes the idea of flipping the floor plan from an aesthetic and safety perspective. This concept provides for a nice presentation path to the complex and front entrance. With a change in the design configuration there is better use of space, giving way to more private space and less opportunity to store junk.
- With regard to the project being located in the floodplain inquired as to the location of the closest parking that is above the flood plain in the event during flood conditions tenant's cars must be moved.
- It may be the garage will flood. Recommends constructing the garage shelving off the floor level.
- Likes the project.
- Appears the project would not be child-oriented. There may be a single-mother, one child situation residing in the units. The units are only one bedroom and not large enough for family living.
- If there is a play area for children, it is likely some people would not want their units near this facility.

Member Nicholson:

- Asked about parking for the site.
- Likes the concept of a community garden. Gardens usually have fencing. Since fencing is not allowed in the floodway, questions how this would work. Recommends the applicant

- 1 meet with the community garden project coordinator to see if a community garden is
2 doable in the 'open space/recreational area.'
- 3 • Need to provide a garbage/recycling plan.
 - 4 • Does not like the separate structures for storage. Preference would be to incorporate into
5 the unit to make better use of space. If the designated storage area is part of the final
6 design, use materials that tie in with the unit.
 - 7 • Likes the "flipped unit" recommended by Planning Commission which would create some
8 connectivity and yard space for the tenants. As it is now, the only front yard is the
9 asphalt/paving on the parking lot.
 - 10 • Having a front yard that goes into a green space provides for social interaction and
11 supports flipping the plans to allow for more of a pedestrian orientation and open space.
 - 12 • There is no community common area. Would like to see a defined common area to make
13 the site more tenant/pedestrian friendly.
 - 14 • The addition of window awnings would create more interest as well as reduce HVAC use
15 for summer cooling and heating in the winter. Adding a trellis may be another
16 consideration for shade screening purposes.
 - 17 • Has some issue with parking along the sidewalk. The goal of Ukiah is to make Ukiah a
18 more walkable/biking pedestrian-friendly community. The strip between the freeway and
19 the new access road has the potential for the creation of more parking. Could remove
20 parking from the west side and more to the east with 'pull-outs. Eastside could be all
21 parking, but it would be better with some planting islands between some parking stalls.
 - 22 • Likes the plans, but flipping them to create more of a pedestrian access with front doors
23 would be a more favorable approach. In this way, the units would be closer to the street
24 allowing for more open space in the back and providing for a nice project presentation
25 overall.
 - 26 • Recommends the final site plans include information about the building elevations and
27 floodway.
 - 28 • There could be garage access at the bottom landing of the stairs and have the stairs
29 open.

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Member Thayer:

- 32 • Supports the landscaping provide for water efficiency/conservation. It is likely the project
33 is subject to 'WELo' Requirements. If this is the case, would ask that the project have a
34 dedicated meter for irrigation that is separate from each unit and used for landscaping
35 purposes.
- 36 • Very supportive of having a community garden because the community benefits. With
37 this, provide for parking considerations and determine who will be using the space and
38 what the arrangements will be.
- 39 • The project, as designed, contains a lot of asphalt.
- 40 • Possible problem if people cannot park in the driveway they could block other cars for
41 people wanting to get in their garages even if the car is parked only for a brief time.
- 42 • Possibly reorient the stairwell to allow access from both sides. As designed with stairwell
43 in the middle cuts up the space too much. Would like to see this space better utilized for
44 tenant use.
- 45 • Likes the idea of a common space. Would like to see totally private space outdoors.
- 46 • If the paving is done correctly and the portico over the front door is done provides for a
47 public setting.
- 48 • With the tenants possibly being older, younger couples, or single persons creates a
49 formal element that needs to have access points into it. Again, would like to see this
50 space more for the tenant's use.
- 51 • Recapture space for inside storage such that outdoor private space could be enlarged
52 and be able to take advantage of the extra area.
- 53 • Emphasized the importance of utilizing space well.
- 54 • Consider common collector areas for garbage, such as end of each driveway.

- 1 • Provide for more of a 'dressy' entranceway from the entry and driveway apron to the
- 2 garage to get away from the sort of 'apartment complex look.' Possibly allow for more of
- 3 a domestic appearance.
- 4 • Review the screening for the site and allow for preservation of the Oak trees remaining if
- 5 they are serviceable. Also review the shade possibilities for the paved areas not just for
- 6 the buildings.
- 7 • Be able to clearly identify drainage basins and incorporate into the landscaping.
- 8 • Landscaping should be professionally maintained and should be professionally designed
- 9 from the beginning.
- 10 • The design has a 'tree house' effect. The vestibule is a public space where people would
- 11 not be leaving personal items. Could a change be made to the outside of the building to
- 12 keep the entry clear to the front door? Is it possible to expand the concept and move it to
- 13 the outside of the building so there are essentially two separate buildings? Understands
- 14 this could be 'pricey.'
- 15 • Is fine with the garage entrance with stairwell left open and with the public front door at
- 16 ground level or, could eliminate the center vestibule in favor of the stairwell being outside.
- 17 • Relevant to the City Master Tree List, use 'residential tree list' for this project.

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19 There was discussion about permeable paving and feasibility with regard to this project.

20
21 **Chair Hise:**

- 22 • Understands the open space/recreation area is part of the property to be used by
- 23 tenants. A garden would be possible here. Most gardens are neighborhood gardens
- 24 rather than 'community gardens.' Because of this, parking should not be a concern.
- 25 • Supports the garden area be located in the 'open space/recreational area' shown on the
- 26 site plan.
- 27 • The 4-unit building to the south does not line up like the other buildings and questioned
- 28 why the building is pushed back. Bringing the units more in alignment with the other units
- 29 provides for more space that could be landscaped and utilized for a child's play area that
- 30 is more protected and safe and more easily supervised than something that might be out
- 31 by the street. There will probably be some children living in the complex. Children should
- 32 not be playing near the street. The better approach would be for children to leave their
- 33 unit and go directly to a play area.
- 34 • Likes the "flipped building" plan. Has seen this before and it works well. Provides for
- 35 sense of community. Also, provides a front entrance, and still allows people to enter the
- 36 units using the garage entrance in the back.
- 37 • The storage areas should either become part of the garage or do something different.
- 38 What will likely occur in these areas is ultimately the collection of debris and leaves. This
- 39 space could be better utilized. It will eventually look like 'no-man's land.' While the
- 40 storage space is a good idea, attach it to the garage/incorporate it into the building.
- 41 • The design and materials selected for the units look good. Likely the masonry wall will be
- 42 constructed 1-foot above flood level.
- 43 • Change the design of the entryway to the units. Does not see any the reason or benefit to
- 44 the entry as designed. As designed, there are safety concerns since someone could be
- 45 trapped in this area and cannot see if anyone is in the area/stairwell prior to entering the
- 46 area. In terms of safety for people to have to come into the vestibule before going up
- 47 stairs, this could present a hazard since it is not open or visible to neighbors or the public.
- 48 This could create an unsafe space, especially for woman/children since they could be
- 49 locked in this area with someone and no one is able to see them. The stairwell should be
- 50 open and visible to neighbors or other persons if someone calls out for help. Recommend
- 51 removing the door/vestibule allowing for this area to be open and stairs leading to the
- 52 individual units. In this way, people can see who is in the stairwell and know who is there
- 53 before the door closes behind. This design would also provide for an easier exit.
- 54 Practically speaking, how does a visitor get to the unit since the door would be locked?

- 1 Is there an intercom? Does the tenant run down the stairs and let guests in? Most
2 apartments here have outdoor/open stairways that lead directly to the unit.
- 3 • Agrees with Member Nicholson there could still be garage access at the bottom landing
4 of the stairs and have the stairs open.
 - 5 • With regard to egress from the second story unit, a person gets down to the stairwell but
6 is still not out of the building. The door could be jammed so there are many things that
7 could happen in that space. There are some practical things that could be done without
8 setting up a dangerous place for children because just by opening the door people are
9 still not in the safety of their unit.
 - 10 • Keep the stairway open to each front door with entry clear to the front door like people do
11 with the front entry to their home.
 - 12 • Agrees with Member Thayer - the garage entrance is fine with the stairwell open and the
13 public front entrance at ground level but could consider eliminating the vestibule and
14 leave the stairwell open outside to the street.
 - 15 • Affordability will be driven by costs.

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17 **Clay Johnson:**

- 18 • When looks at flipping the floor plans will look at storage area and possible modification
19 to the site plan.
- 20 • As shown on the floor plans the garage is actually a shorter length than the building in
21 order to provide covered outdoor space for tenants.
- 22 • Relative to fencing, there is a collection of fences from multiple properties on the western
23 side of the site. The intent is to build a fence in this location. There is fencing on the other
24 side of Doolin Creek since there are other buildings in this location. There is no fencing
25 on the project side of the Creek. Because this open space area is located in the floodway
26 of Doolin Creek no fencing is allowed.
- 27 • Durable materials will be used.
- 28 • More trees will be planted to help mitigate noise impacts from the freeway. The Planning
29 Commission recommended planting trees directly to the east and west of each of the
30 buildings to help mitigate sound from the freeway and screen from morning/afternoon
31 sun.
- 32 • The buildings have no east or west facing windows. The intent is to construct walls that
33 are from 8 to 10 inches thick to provide adequate insulation for energy conservation
34 purposes and sound proofing.
- 35 • Common walls are only at the ends of the kitchen because the central stairwell is located
36 between the units.
- 37 • The intent of the stairwell as designed with a door is so tenants can get to the garage
38 without having to out into the public. Assumes the tenant will lock their doors. Essentially
39 each complex is an apartment having two different tenants in each unit. Will consider
40 concept that the garage entrance have no door to the stairwell and the front entrance to
41 the units be at ground level.
- 42 • The Planning Commission recommended extending the sidewalk to the end of the
43 property.
- 44 • Will discuss renovations to existing buildings with the property owner.
- 45 • Will look into the possibility of providing a community garden.
- 46 • Has no knowledge about the appropriate place to park vehicles during flood conditions. Is
47 not a civil engineer. The site appears to be flat.
- 48 • The reason the 4-unit building is pushed back is because there was not enough depth to
49 add another series of buildings. These units are pushed back to be farther from the
50 freeway and to allow for more landscaped area.
- 51 • There is an associated expense and structural consideration of having a 'hinge' in the
52 masonry wall in order to allow it to be 1-foot above flood level. This aspect is currently not
53 part of the plans and will need to be worked out.

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55 **Staff:**

- 1 • Compliance with WELO and Cal Green was not reviewed as part of the staff prelim. A
- 2 formal application would be reviewed for consistency with the WELO and any Cal Green
- 3 requirements. Likely that the project is subject to WELO requirements.
- 4 • As far as live/work scenarios, tenants can have the equivalent of a home occupation and
- 5 there are many things that qualify as home occupations.
- 6 • The parking requirement for a one bedroom unit is one space and the project is in
- 7 compliance with the parking. There is no street parking since there is no street frontage
- 8 for the Project so parking for guests/visitors needs to be provided on site.
- 9 • It is not uncommon to have at least one single parent and a child residing in the complex.
- 10 This might be very attractive for this person, particularly in the proposed location which is
- 11 close to shopping, services and transit.
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13 **7. MATTERS FROM THE BOARD**

14 **Member Thayer:** Recommends the DRB have a joint meeting to check in with Planning

15 Commission. Would like to know what the Planning Commission would like from the Board when

16 reviewing projects and how the current process is working.

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18 **Staff:** Planning Commission is complimentary of the work done by the Board and has not

19 indicated that anything is missing in the review or comments provided. Planning Commission

20 does rely on the comments from the Board and asks applicants how they have complied with

21 DRB recommendations. Will keep this item on the agenda as an opportunity to check-in with the

22 Board to see if a joint meeting should be scheduled or maybe a member of the Board could

23 speak at a Planning Commission meeting.

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25 There was discussion about when is the appropriate time to complete the design guideline

26 checklist for a pre-application project.

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28 **8. MATTERS FROM STAFF**

29 There will be a City Council General Plan discussion on October 15, 2012 at the City Conference

30 Center. DRB are encouraged to attend.

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32 **9. SET NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNMENT**

33 The next meeting will be Thursday, November 8, 2012. The meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

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Cathy Elawadly, Recording Secretary

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