

PLAN COMMISSION
City of Hartford
January 11, 2016

PRESENT: Chairperson Dautermann, Members Anderek, Stapleton, Regan, Rusniak, Henke, Kuepper

ALSO PRESENT: City Planner Justin Drew

Call to Order – Chairman Dautermann called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers of Hartford City Hall, 109 N. Main Street.

Minutes - Motion by Regan, second by Henke approving the minutes of December 14, 2015. Motion carried.

Appearances – Mark McCune requested Plan Commission input on when he should speak regarding Red Oak Apartments. It was decided that he would speak during the agenda item review.

Review of the Certified Survey Map for Quad Graphics Property Located East of Goodland Road and South of Constitution Avenue

Executive Summary Review:

Four tax parcels make up Quad Graphics' approximately 150 acre site. The main plant is located at 1900 West Sumner Street and the CR/T (ink plant) is located at 1951 Constitution Avenue. The main plant and the CR/T plant are separated by the Rubicon River. Quad Graphics has determined that the land they own west of the CR/T plant and adjacent to Goodland Road is superfluous and wants to split off three lots that could be sold for development. Lot 1 would be the lot where the main plant and the CR/T plant are located and would be approximately 117 acres. Lot 2 would have frontage on Constitution Avenue and would be 15.2 approximate acres. Lots 3 and 4 would have frontage on Goodland Road and would be approximately 10.1 and 7.9 acres respectively. All of the lots would retain M-4 Industrial Park Zoning and would meet the area (40,000 square feet) and width (120 feet) requirements of the M-4 District. Lot 2 is narrow at the Right-of-Way, but widens substantially.

Lots 3 and 4 could utilize private sanitary grinder pumps and connect into the existing force main on the west side of Goodland Road. However, it is against City policy to connect laterals directly into force mains. Force mains are pressurized vessels dedicated to moving sanitary flow from lift stations to the nearest gravity sewer. However, there is a sanitary manhole located on Goodland Road about 300 feet south of Constitution Ave. Lots 3 and 4 could still utilize private sanitary grinder pumps and connect into this sanitary manhole.

Staff recommended approval of the Certified Survey Map.

Plan Commission Discussion:

Mr. Drew reviewed the executive summary. Chairperson Dautermann requested questions or comments. Mr. Kuepper asked for clarification on force mains and grinder pumps. Mr. Drew responded.

MOTION by Kuepper, second by Anderek to recommend approval of the Quad-Graphics CSM as reviewed. Mr. Regan asked if the City had been in touch with Quad-Graphics to explain how some of the requirements might affect marketing efforts. Mr. Drew noted that no contact of this type had taken place, but the City wanted all information to be on the record. Motion carried.

Site Plan Review: Amendment for Wilson Heights Apartments Located at 820 and 860 East Loos

Executive Summary Review:

The Plan Commission approved the Site Plan for this project in June of 2015. It consisted of seven multi-family buildings with 12 units in each building. The four structures closest to South Wilson Avenue are under construction. However, as the final engineering of the retaining wall adjacent to Northview Highlands was completed, it became apparent that the proposed retaining wall was not economically feasible. David Decker has now submitted a plan amendment for the two easternmost buildings. Rather than two 12-unit buildings arranged in a “barbell” configuration, he now proposes two row house style structures, one with 10 units and the other with 12 units. The property is zoned Rm-2 Multi-Family Residential. Multi-Family buildings of this size are allowed in the Rm-2 Multi-Family Residential District as a Conditional Use (the Conditional Use was granted by the Plan Commission in 2015).

The proposed multi-family buildings would be arranged to flank East Loos Street and South Wilson Avenue. The remaining buildings would be placed towards the north and east end of the lot. Wetland (1.14 acres) is present on the far north end of both lots, and constrains the possible building layout.

The new proposed Multi-Family buildings would have the following setbacks:

- **25 feet** from the East Loos Street Right-of-Way
- **60 feet** from the eastern property line
- **175 feet** from the northern property line

The proposal calls for the buildings to be setback 20 feet farther from the eastern lot line than the approved site plan.

The Developer proposes two row house buildings that would be three stories tall from the west (with garages on the bottom floor) and two stories tall from the east. The primary change would be that the buildings would be built at an elevation 10 feet higher than the previously approved buildings. However, due to a narrower building plan and lower roof pitch design, the new buildings would be 10 feet shorter than the previously approved buildings. The result is that the overall height appearance from the east (Northview Highlands) would not change.

The proposed grading plan changes on the east end of the development. The buildings would be built at an elevation 10 feet higher than the previously approved buildings and as a result, the large retaining wall is not necessary and the area would be sloped and landscaped. The City Engineer reviewed the new grading plan and approved it.

The original landscape plan showed 4 quaking aspen planted directly east of the two buildings.

The proposed grading plan adds 2 sugar maples, 1 coffee tree, and 1 river birch to the east side of the row house style buildings.

Staff received one comment from a resident of Northview Highlands that they would prefer shorter trees in this area (trees that grow no taller than 15 feet or so) in order to preserve sunset

views from the homes in Northview Highlands. Staff believes that this request can be accommodated by using a mix of ornamental trees that will not grow as tall.

Staff recommended approval of the Site Plan.

Plan Commission Discussion:

Mr. Drew reviewed the executive summary, noting that he had received a request from a citizen in Northview Highlands that trees abutting that subdivision be shorter so as not to block western views for residents. Mr. Drew noted that he would work with the developer to accommodate the request. Chairperson Dautermann requested questions or comments. Mr. Regan asked if the tree height changes would be part of the recommendation. Mr. Drew noted that he would work with the developer on implementation. Mr. Rusniak requested a clarification about what residents in area developments had been concerned about – aesthetics of the buildings or landscaping. Mr. Drew discussed the mix of concerns brought up by residents and the scale of the buildings, stating that the City has been able to allay concerns and pointing out that buildings in this development will be lower than the homes in Northview Highlands. As presented, the current proposal shows buildings at the same height as previously planned but 20 feet farther away from the border of Northview Highlands. Mr. Henke asked if the proposal resulted in the same number of units. Mr. Drew stated that there were two fewer units in this proposal.

Chairperson Dautermann asked what had changed between the approval last June and this proposal. Mr. Drew noted that the estimates for the planned retaining wall were higher than expected. Chairperson Dautermann commented on how often the Plan Commission and Common Council had to keep revisiting developments and noted the frequency of economics as a reason for changes. Mr. Rusniak asked how important the retaining wall is, if it is an aesthetic issue or an engineering issue. Mr. Drew deferred to Dave Decker, the developer.

Mr. Decker came to the podium to explain what had brought him to this point, noting some history of the development and stating that this revision provided attached garages rather than surface parking, and more green space.

Mr. Drew informed commissioners that although this was not a public hearing, notices had been sent to residents of Northview Highlands whose properties abutted the development, as well as the owner associations of the two nearby condo developments.

MOTION by Regan, second by Kuepper to approve the Wilson Heights Site Plan as reviewed. Mr. Henke made a motion to amend the previous motion to include a 15' height restriction on trees along the Northview Highlands border. Second by Dennis. Motion carried. On the previous motion, motion carried with one 'Nay' (Dautermann).

Concept Plan Review of Red Oak Apartments, a Multi-Family Residential Development Located South of the Red Oak Subdivision East of STH 83

Executive Summary Review:

McCune, McCune, McCune, and McCune, LLC submitted a concept plan for 11 multi-family residential buildings (156 total units) on a 17.2 acre site south of Red Oak Subdivision. The lot is currently in the Town of Hartford. The proposal includes 11 multi-family buildings, each with 12 or 16 units, as well as an onsite management office, a clubhouse with pool area, and six detached garage structures. In addition, the area at the northwest corner of the property would be combined with existing land in the Red Oak Subdivision, to create 3 single-family lots on the south side of Firefly Trail. In order to facilitate the proposed development, the City of Hartford

2030 Smart Growth Plan would need to be amended, the property would need to be annexed to the City, the property would need to be rezoned to Rm-3 Multi-Family residential, a development agreement would need to be negotiated and approved, a Certified Survey Map approved, and a Conditional Use Permit for a Planned Unit Development along with a Site Plan would need to be approved.

The proposed multi-family buildings would be arranged around a circular driveway that would be accessed from a proposed new public Right-of-Way that would intersect with STH 83.

The proposed Multi-Family buildings would have the following setbacks and lot coverage:

- **53 feet** from the STH 83
- **65 feet** from the new proposed Right-of-Way
- **30 feet** from the eastern property line
- **30 feet** from the northern property line
- Lot Coverage would be approximately **18%** of the 17.2-acre site, below the 25% maximum allowed by Code in the Rm-3 District.

The adopted Smart Growth Plan identifies this area for medium density residential development at a density of 1.1-2.9 units per acre. The area to the north and west calls for medium density residential development at a density of between 1.1-5.8 units per acre. The density proposed for this development would be 9.1 units per acre. Staff supports a change to the Smart Growth plan to allow for higher density residential development in this area. The business community needs additional multi-family development. Many workers live elsewhere and are less likely to stay with Hartford businesses for the long-term. A couple of undeveloped or partially developed sites within the City are planned for multi-family development, and developers have indicated to Staff that they have been unable to acquire these sites for development. Finally, the Smart Growth Plan only identifies one other area outside the current City boundary for high density residential development (on STH 60 south of Wal-Mart); however, sanitary sewer is not currently available to this area. The strong demand for multi-family housing, combined with the lack of supply, calls for additional areas to be identified within the City's Smart Growth Plan. Staff believes that this area is appropriate given its location on a State arterial road.

The proposed 12-unit and 16 unit multi-family units are allowed in the Rm-3 Multi-Family District as a Conditional Use. As proposed, the concept plan would meet the zoning requirements of the Rm-3 Zoning District with an approved Planned Unit Development.

The Developer proposes a mix of one and two bedroom apartments arranged in 12-unit and 16-unit structures. The proposed buildings would be two stories tall. Some buildings would have attached garages and the remainder would have access to detached garages.

The plan proposes a new Right-of-Way intersecting with STH 83. This Right-of-Way would travel approximately 265 feet east from STH 83 and then dead end. Future development to the south would result in an additional north/south Right-of-Way. The proposed multi-family structures would be accessed from two driveways that would intersect with the proposed Right-of-Way. The first driveway would be located approximately 220 feet east of STH 83. The second would be located at the terminus of the proposed Right-of-Way. In addition, a 12-foot wide emergency access is shown at the north end of the development, adjacent to the Red Oak Subdivision.

Staff has a number of concerns about the proposed street and driveway layout as well as the overall accessibility to this proposed development, including the dead-ending of the proposed Right-of-Way with one driveway to the north of the terminus and one driveway east of the terminus and the proposed road that is shown with a 90 degree bend very close to the intersection with Hwy. 83. Staff recommends that the proposed Right-of-Way continue east to the property boundary, and that the second driveway intersect with this road.

The City requires at least two access points (or the potential for two access points when additional development occurs) to ensure proper emergency access. The plan can meet this requirement with an emergency access. Also, sanitary sewer and water main will need to access the site from the north. Sewer and water will need to be separated by a minimum of 8' and additional width will be required for installation and future maintenance. The easement for the emergency access would need to be a minimum of 30' wide.

No grading plan is shown as part of this concept plan, and will be required.

Sanitary sewer and water main are only available north of the site. All sanitary sewer and water mains shall be considered public utilities through the site. As public utilities, they will need to be installed within easements and access to all sewer and water structures will be required. The water main extension from the north does not have the ability to be looped. If maintenance is required on the water main serving this area from the north, any required water shut-downs will affect a large number of customers. The City Engineer and Utility Director did not expect this to be an issue but wanted to make sure that everyone was aware of this.

As a preliminary grading plan has not been prepared at this point, Staff is not sure if sanitary sewer will work on gravity in this area, or if a lift station will be required.

The Utility Director noted that electric service does not go all the way down Firefly Trail in the Red Oak Subdivision at this point, and would need to be extended to the utility and emergency access easement to facilitate the proposed development.

The Fire Chief noted that having a water supply right off STH 83 that far south will help the Fire Department respond to fire emergencies in the Town of Erin and has requested that a turnaround area with hydrant near the intersection with STH 83 be incorporated into the plan. The Fire Chief also noted that a tornado siren may be required in this area in order to create proper emergency siren coverage within the proposed development.

Staff recommends approval of the Concept Plan for the Red Oak Apartments, subject to the proposed Right-of-Way continuing east to the property boundary, and that the second driveway intersect with this road, that the easement for the emergency access and utilities be a minimum of 30' wide, and that a turnaround area with hydrant near the intersection with STH 83 be incorporated into the final development plan.

Plan Commission Discussion:

Mr. Drew reviewed the executive summary. Chairperson Dautermann invited developer Mark McCune to speak. Mr. McCune reviewed history and plans for the current development, previous development (Red Oak subdivision), and adjacent parcels. Mr. Regan asked Mr. McCune when the multi-family concept came about. Mr. McCune noted that it was about February of 2015. Mr. Kuepper asked if the development would have enough sewer and water capacity. Mr. McCune affirmed. Mr. Drew noted that the water pressure in this area is fine, but will drop as development occurs to the south. Mr. Rusniak complemented Mr. McCune on the Red Oak subdivision, noting the top-quality condominiums there. Mr. Kuepper asked if all apartment units would be the same and what the outside appearance would be. Mr. McCune

stated that apartments would be a mix of one and two bedroom units, and that the development hadn't gotten far enough to start considering outside appearance.

MOTION by Henke, second by Regan to approve the concept plan for Red Oak Apartments. Motion carried.

Proposed Amendment to the City of Hartford 2030 Smart Growth Plan

Mr. Drew reviewed the history of the City of Hartford Smart Growth Plan, noting a review about once a year for various reasons since its approval. He reminded members that the Plan Commission and Common Council can vote to change the plan at any time. Mr. Drew explained that changes are usually initiated at the request of landowners, and pointed out the need for flexibility to intermix compatible uses.

Mr. Drew noted that the amendment includes a proposal to incorporate the Downtown Plan by reference into the Smart Growth Plan, and a change in density (from medium to high) to the land south of Red Oak subdivision (the proposed Red Oak Apartments development). Mr. Drew reviewed some of the points of the Downtown Plan, which the Plan Commission has previously recommended for approval, and noted in the case of the Red Oak Apartment development that the City's current mix of single/duplex/multi-family units is low on the multi-family end, and could become more of an imbalance upon buildout of current housing stock in the City.

Chairperson Dautermann requested comment. There were no questions or comments.

MOTION by Anderek, second by Kuepper to recommend approval of the City of Hartford 2030 Smart Growth Plan. Motion carried

Adjournment – Motion by Henke, and seconded by Kuepper for adjournment. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Justin Drew, City Planner

Compiled by Char Smelter, Planning Secretary