



Department of Community Development

Planning and Building

The Town of Erie

645 Holbrook St.
P.O. Box 750
Erie, CO 80516
(303) 926-2775
FAX (303) 926-2706

Memo

To: Brian Mulqueen

From: Deborah Bachelder

Date: April 27, 2016

Re: SK-000710-2015: Erie Commons Filing 4 East – Sketch Plan Application

cc: Jon Lee, Marty Ostholthoff, Russell Pennington, Matt Wiederspahn, Farrell Buller, Rob Crabb

Comments:

Community Development has reviewed the resubmittal of the Erie Commons Filing No. 4 – East Sketch Plan application. Many of the previous comments remain because this memo is how staff will inform the Planning Commission and the Board of Trustees on how the applicant has or will need to meet Municipal Code requirements. This memo will be a part of the packet of information that will be forwarded to the Planning Commission and Board of Trustees. Those comments that are outstanding issues, that staff will discuss at Planning Commission and the Board of Trustees, have been highlighted. Some of the issues listed below that have not been fully addressed may not be mentioned at Planning Commission or the Board of Trustees but will need to be addressed in the future applications for development.

1. Housing Diversity:

- a. Staff 12/9/2015: There are 172.4 acres in the overall Erie Commons neighborhood zoned for residential uses only. In MC 10.6.7.D., this quantity of residential zoned land requires the developer to provide either 4 housing types, 3 housing types and 1 housing type variation, or, 2 housing types and 2 housing type variations. The Erie Commons neighborhood has met the requirement by providing 2 housing types and 2 housing type variations; they are: housing type Townhouse – alley loaded; housing type Single family detached – under 5,000 sq. ft. lot; housing variation Single family detached 5,000-9,999 sq. ft. lot; housing variation Single family detached 10,000-39,999 sq. ft. lot.

2. Townhome Design Standards (MC 10.6.7.F.)

- a. Lot Orientation:
 - i. MC 10.6.7.F.1.c.ii.(A) states “The primary entrance and façade of individual buildings within a multi-family development shall be oriented towards 1. Primary internal or perimeter streets, or 2. Common open space, such as interior courtyards, parks, or on-site natural areas or features with a clearly defined and easily accessible pedestrian circulation system”.
 1. Staff 12/9/2015: Many of the primary entrances that do not face onto a street are not oriented toward the required common open space such as an interior courtyard, park, or on-site natural area. The Town’s public open space does not qualify as an interior

courtyard, park, or on-site natural area. We need to further discuss orientation of the buildings on the site.

2. Staff 12/9/2015: Many of the primary entrances that orient to a common open space such as an interior courtyard, park, or on-site natural area do not meet the required 30 foot minimum tract width (10.6.3.C.4.d.v.). This requirement has not been met on Units 24, 31-39, and 76-84.

- a. Applicant Response:

Response: The proposed alley-loaded townhomes have entrances and porches that face outward. Having these face the Coal Creek on-site natural area is a proven site design solution, and these units would be seen as desirable in the market. The Coal Creek corridor is an on-site natural area, since it is part of the larger Erie Commons GDP (Parcel B-6 on PD Map).

- b. Staff Response 4/21/2016: Staff will discuss this issue at the Planning Commission and Board of Trustees meetings. We believe that the 30 foot minimum courtyard or natural area should be dedicated between the townhome lot and the Town's open space corridor that has a regional trail corridor adjacent to the site. The 30 feet would allow the development to provide a separation of uses by providing private walkways to the townhomes and a landscape buffer.

- b. General Staff Comments:

- i. Staff 12/9/2015: Staff supports the orientation of townhomes onto the street (example: Units 1-9); and units that face onto an interior courtyard with defined trail corridor (example: Units 10-18 and Units 19-24). Staff encourages the applicant to rework the plan to maximize this type of townhome orientations.
 - ii. Staff 12/9/2015: The townhome orientation to the preschool is important for the safety of the children and to address noise issues related to the playground. Staff would recommend siding units to the preschool site with extra width to the lot or a common tract to provide for additional landscape screening.
 - iii. Staff 12/9/2015: Staff would like to discuss orientation of the buildings on Erie Parkway. Both of the other townhome developments we have done in town only have the units siding to the arterial streets.
 - iv. Staff 12/9/2015: We need to discuss Units 85-92 being closer to Erie Parkway than the other units. Staff has concerns about road noise for residents and impeding the view into the open space.

3. Erie Commons PD Zoning Requirements – Mixed Use Residential:

- a. The first part of the purpose of the Mixed Use Residential district states: "The Mixed Use Residential District is envisioned to accommodate both commercial and residential land uses in an "urban village" image..... Mixed Use Residential District buildings are commonly oriented towards the street with minimal building setbacks, designed to frame the streetscape. The space created between the sidewalk and the Mixed Use Residential building, the entrance forecourt, typically provides a semi-public space which creates opportunities for social interaction and streetscape surveillance."

- i. Staff 12/9/2015: Part 1 of the Purpose: The applicant has met the purpose of the District with the townhomes that face the street.

- b. Staff 12/9/2015: The second part of the purpose states, "Internally, Mixed Use Residential buildings are arranged and orchestrated in such a fashion as to frame, enclose, and define outdoor spaces creating meaningful open space. Outdoor spaces have clear, recognizable shapes that reflect careful planning and not simple "left-over" areas between buildings."

- i. Staff 12/9/2015: Units facing the Coal Creek corridor do not meet this purpose statement. The units should face onto an internal courtyard that has an end that opens up to the regional trail corridor. The open space/courtyard has a minimum width requirement of 30

feet. Facing the townhome units directly toward the regional trail and providing a parallel walk system to the regional trail is synonymous with building a frontage road next to a highway. The Town does not allow this type of road system (10.5.4.G.7.) and cannot support this approach to a trail system. The townhome units should face onto an internal open space, like you have proposed between Units 10-18 and Units 19-24, that acts like a collector road that then provides a single link into the regional trail system. A frontage road approach would encourage too much social trail creation of direct access to the regional trail creating dangerous conflicts on such a highly used regional trail.

- c. Staff 12/9/2015: The minimum lot size is 2,000 square feet. The narrative states that the lots range from 1,240 square feet to 2,600 square feet. The layout of the site needs to be further discussed and agreed upon before staff will support smaller lots.

- i. Applicant Response:

- Response: The Sketch Plan has been revised. Lot sizes are 1,480 sf, 2,000 sf, and 3,663 sf. The average size is 2,380 sf. There are 12 3,663 sf lots; 28 2,000 sf lots; and 53 1,480 sf lots.**

- ii. Staff Response 4/21/2016: A PD Amendment would be required to accommodate the lot sizes you report under 2,000 square feet.

- iii. Staff 4/21/2016: Additionally, you have modified the townhome lots to extend into alleys that now have 30 foot utility easements in them. Alleys must be a separate tract from the townhome lot. If an alley requires a 30 foot utility easement for a Town utility line then the alley tract must be with width of the utility easement.

- d. Staff 12/9/2015: The principal structure setbacks for townhomes (SFA) do not appear to have been met on all units.

- i. Front: 15':

- ii. Side to Street: 10':

- iii. Side Internal: 5':

- iv. Rear: 15':

- e. Staff 12/9/2015: Please check the "Encroachments/Projections Into Yards" section that follows after Table V-2 as you move forward with a Site Plan.

4. Erie Commons PD – Article IV: Architectural Standards:

- a. Staff 12/9/2015: In the "Single Family Attached and Multi Family" portion of the standards it appears you may not be meeting some of the following requirements:

- i. Building Location and Orientation

- 1. "1. The primary entrance and façade of individual buildings within a multi-family development shall be oriented towards:

- a. Primary internal or perimeter streets, or

- b. Common open space, such as interior courtyards, parks, or on-site natural areas or features with a clearly defined and easily accessible pedestrian circulation system." This is the same requirement as the Town MC which has been commented on above.

- ii. Architecture 3: "Design each unit to be individually recognizable."

- 1. Staff 12/9/2015: Staff has not reviewed the architectural renderings and photos submitted as the applicant has stated they submitted townhome images from other projects they have completed and they have not fully designed a product for this site specifically. The final design of the townhomes for this site will need to meet the Erie Commons Architectural Standards and Town of Erie Design Standards. We appreciate the submittal of the renderings and photos as they will allow staff, Planning Commission and Board of Trustees understand the architectural intent for the Site Plan layout.

6. Parks and Open Space

a. Pocket Park:

- i. Staff 12/9/2015: One Pocket Park is required for this development as there is not another pocket park within ¼ mile. (10.6.3.B.4.)

1. Applicant Response:

Response: The existing Pocket Park on Montgomery Drive to the east of this site is within ¼ mile of the entire site.

- 2. Staff 4/21/2016: Although the Pocket Park in Grandview may be within ¼ mile from the site as the crow flies; the walk to the site is much longer. Staff will provide an illustration showing the general distances to the various parks surrounding the site and get feedback from the Planning Commission and Board of Trustees on whether this site should provide a pocket park.

b. Neighborhood Park:

- i. Staff 12/9/2015: A 7 acre Neighborhood Park in Erie Commons Filing No. 1 has already been constructed. The existing neighborhood park meets the Town dedication requirements.

c. Community Park:

- i. Staff 12/9/2015: The Town dedication requirements have been met with the 54.92 acre Community Park dedication in Erie Commons Filing No. 1.

7. Pedestrian Trails and Sidewalks

- a. Staff 12/9/2015: Internal streets are required to have 8 foot tree lawns (10.6.5.F.1.c.). This will push the 5 foot sidewalk outside of the road right of way. The recorded plat is already set up for this scenario with a public access easement outside the right of way and then the utility easement behind the public access easement. Reconfiguration of the site needs to include the 8 foot tree lawn with the public access easement for the public sidewalk; the sidewalk and easement should be in a tract; not on a private townhome lot. The Town requires that sidewalks have public access easements on them which are not appropriate to place on a private lot.

- i. Staff 4/21/2016: The applicant still has the public sidewalk on private townhome lots and not in a separate tract. This will need to be addressed in future applications.

- b. Staff 12/9/2015: The internal trail system needs to be fully located in tracts and not placed in private lots and parking spaces. The Town requires that these commons walks have public access easements on them which are not appropriate to place on a private lot.

- i. Staff 4/21/2016: Staff cannot determine if this comment has been addressed adjacent to the Coal Creek open space corridor as the property lines and lines for walks are not clearly distinguishable from one another.

8. Streets

- a. Staff 12/9/2015: As Ambrose Street is currently platted as a 54 foot right of way, staff is supportive of having the right of way remain as 54 feet.

9. Alleys

- a. Staff 12/9/2015: MC 10.5.H.2: The alleys shown appear to be 20 feet wide. The Sketch Plan does not show utility locations so it is not possible to know if 20 feet is adequate. Please be aware that if utilities are located within the alley the minimum width of the alley tract will be 30 feet.

- i. Staff 4/21/2016: You have modified the townhome lots to extend into alleys that now have 30 foot utility easements in them. Alleys must be a separate tract from the townhome lot. If an alley requires a 30 foot utility easement for a Town utility line then the alley tract must be with width of the utility easement.

- b. Staff 12/9/2015: MC 10.6.7.F.3. Alleys: How will the applicant break up the appearance of the long expanses of garages in the alleys.

- c. Staff 12/9/2015: The alley end near Unit 92 is not long enough to accommodate vehicles exiting the garages.
- d. Staff 12/9/2015: Alley ends near the Coal Creek open space will need further evaluation and design consideration to provide landscape screening, and snow plowing snow stacking room and run-off for melting snow and potentially the chemicals associated with snowplowing/ice control.

10. Parking

- a. Garage Parking in Units:
 - i. Staff 12/9/2015: All proposed units appear to have 2 car garages which can provide the required parking for the dwelling unit parking. The parking spaces within the garages will need to meet or exceed the minimum parking space size (10.6.6.H.) of 9 feet wide by 20 feet long.
 - ii. Staff 12/9/2015: Staff has concerns about garages that are visible from Coal Creek trail (Unit 24 & Units 90-92). Staff would like to discuss options during our meeting for this type of orientation.
- b. Off-Street Guest Parking:
 - i. Staff 12/9/2015: Off-street guest parking is required at 1 guest space per 3 units. With 92 units, 31 off-street guest parking spaces are needed; the Sketch Plan shows 16 off-street parking spaces only. The Community Development Director may consider on-street parking as an alternative to off-street parking. Further discussion is needed with staff.
 - ii. Staff 12/9/2015: Staff questions whether or not the requirement for required parking to be within 200 feet of the front door of units has been met (10.6.6.D.1.c.). The 200 feet is measured from the edge of the parking space, along a sidewalk/pedestrian trail route to the front door of a unit. At the time of Site Plan the applicant will need to provide a diagram that illustrates how this parking requirement has been met. We are sending an example of a developers diagram submitted with a Site Plan. A clear pedestrian path on a trail is needed from each parking area to the units.
 - iii. Staff 4/21/2016: Pedestrian walks are required for access to all guest parking spaces from the units they serve.
- c. Bicycle Parking:
 - i. Staff 12/9/2015: The requirements of MC 10.6.6.G. will need to be met for bicycle parking on the site when a site plan application is made.

11. Applications After Sketch Plan

- a. Staff 4/21/2016: After the Sketch Plan application completes the review process with staff, Planning Commission and the Board of Trustees, staff anticipates the need for the following application types to be submitted to the Town.
 - i. Erie Commons PD Amendment
 - ii. Preliminary Plat
 - iii. Site Plan
 - iv. Vacation
 - v. Final Plat



Memo

To: Deb Bachelder
From: Matt Wiederspahn, P.E., CFM, Development Engineer
Date: April 27, 2016
Subject: **Erie Commons Filing 4 Sketch Plan Comments**
CC: Russell Pennington
Wendi Palmer

Comments for Sketch Plan:

1. A Preliminary Utility Plan was not included in the submittal. Therefore, Public Works cannot provide any comments on the feasibility of the utilities required for this development.
2. All alleys that have utility mains in them must be 30 feet wide.



Town of Erie Open Space and Trails Advisory Board

From: Town of Erie Open Space and Trails Advisory Board (OSTAB)
To: Deborah Bachelder, Senior Planner, Community Development
Date: April 19, 2016

Subject: Erie Commons Referral – Filing 4 Sketch Plan

Location: southeast corner of South Briggs Street and Erie Parkway

OSTAB has reviewed the referral materials, compared them to Town planning documents, and has prepared the following comments, questions, and recommendations for the Town's consideration in evaluating this application.

Overview:

This parcel is an infill site within the surrounding Erie Commons Development. It is a very dense development with 92 townhomes (each of which has an attached 2-car garage) on 6.75 acres. A substantial number of dwelling units (DU's) are very close to the adjacent Coal Creek Spine Trail (CCT) and Coal Creek Open Space (CCOS).

Open Space and the Natural Areas Inventory (NAI):

Discussion:

There are no NAI sites in this phase.

There is no open space that qualifies as dedicated open space as define in the Unified Development Code (UDC). We do not have information that would enable us to determine whether or not the total open space requirement for the entire Erie Commons development was met in previous filings.

Recommendation: Staff should determine whether or not the dedicated open space requirement for the entire Erie Commons development was met in previous filings, or if some is required in this filing.

Impact on Adjacent Coal Creek Trail (CCT) and Coal Creek Open Space (CCOS):

Discussion:

There are 4 structures containing 19 DU's (31-37, 38-40, 76-78, 79-84) that are oriented toward the CCT and CCOS; these units are 20-30 feet from the property line. We are greatly concerned that these units will have a negative impact upon the CCOS, and the experience of users of the CCT. It is our understanding that the town code requires that such units must be oriented to common open space, such as an interior courtyard, park, or on-site natural area. None of these units meets that requirement. There are also 2 DU's (24 and 92) at the end of alleyways that are 15-20 feet from the property line.

There are 2 alleyways (south end of K, east end of N) that are 10-15 feet from the property line, and 15-30 feet from the CCT. Since this property is slightly higher than the CCT and CCO, there will be 2 problems when those alleyways are plowed:

1. Water will flow onto the CCT as large piles of snow melt. Undoubtedly hazardous wet and/or icy conditions will be created.
2. Contaminants such as sand and salt will runoff into the open space.

The sidewalks in front of 3 buildings are parallel to the CCT and too close. Sidewalks in front of DU's 75-78 and 79-84 are only 15 feet from the CCT. The sidewalk in front of DU's 31-37 is 15-25 feet from the CCT. Sidewalks typically have lawns adjacent to them. Lawns almost always need pesticides, which will runoff into the CCOS. Sidewalks so close to the CCT provide an opportunity for residents to detour onto the CCT, possibly creating a hazard with users on the CCT who do not see the unexpected "intersection". Access to the CCT should be restricted to the 5 connectors that are in the plan.

There are 92 DU's and no parks. Where will the children play? They will inevitably migrate to the CCT and the CCOS, using it as their play area. The CCT has heavy use: bike riding, jogging, in-line skating and walking. Many walkers have dogs. Bike riders, typically traveling at 10-15 mph, and dogs walkers should not have to dodge children playing on the trail. The applicant responded to previous comments by stating there is a pocket park on Montgomery Drive (Grandview) that is within ¼ mile of the entire site. We do not have the tools to measure the distance on sidewalks/trails from this application to that park. However, the ruler in Google Earth very roughly measures a MUCH longer distance. It appears that the applicant measured ACROSS the CCOS and the Coal Creek. That certainly does not qualify.

Recommendations:

1. Provide a 30 foot buffer from the DU lot lines to the property border adjacent to the Coal Creek Trail.
2. Provide a 30 foot buffer from alleyways to the property border adjacent to the Coal Creek Trail.
3. The sidewalk in front on all DU's that are oriented toward the Coal Creek Trail/Open Space should be in this buffer, at least 15 feet from the property line;
4. The area between the sidewalk and the property line should NOT be a mowed lawn. Options include native grasses (infrequently mowed), ornamental grasses, and/or xeric shrubs;
5. Build a fence along the property line adjacent to the Coal Creek Trail. The fence should be similar to existing fences along the Coal Creek Trail further south in the Erie Commons development;
6. Build a pocket park so that children do not use the Coal Creek Trail/Open Space as their "playground".

Other observations:

We usually limit our review to open space and trails. However, we have an observation that we decided to include:

There is only one street (Ambrose Street) within this application, with access onto Erie Parkway and South Briggs Street. Since Erie Parkway is a divided road, that exit is limited to those going east, primarily to the high school and/or I-25. Thus a majority of cars leaving this development will go west onto South Briggs Street, which provides access to Old Town, the elementary school, the middle school, and/or adjacent workplaces/services such as in Longmont, Lafayette, Louisville, and Boulder. There is a Montessori school at the NE corner of the new road and South Briggs Street. We assume that most children enrolled in

that school are driven there. In the morning, there may be significant, possibly hazardous, traffic problems as residents of the townhouses are leaving at the same time that children are arriving at the school.

Recommendation: Staff should evaluate whether or not a significant traffic problem as described above.

Please pass this referral letter to the Applicant, and appropriate town departments, boards, and commissions. Thank you for your attention to these matters. OSTAB is available to discuss any of the above in more detail as needed.

Sincerely,

Open Space and Trails Advisory Board

Denise Brady
Kevin Chard
Dawn Fraser
Monica Kash
Nicole Littman
Ken Martin (Chair)
Joe Martinez