

**TOWN OF ERIE
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Wednesday, August 15, 2018**

SUBJECT: **PUBLIC HEARING:**
Resolution P18-11: A Resolution Making Certain Findings Of Fact And Conclusions Favorable To The Site Plan For Erie Commons Filing No. 4, 3rd Amendment, Town Of Erie, County Of Weld, State Of Colorado.

PURPOSE: Century Communities requests Site Plan approval to construct 77 single-family attached townhome dwellings units in Erie Commons Filing No. 4, 3rd Amendment.

CODE REVIEW: Erie Municipal Code, Title 10

DEPARTMENT: Planning and Development

PRESENTER: Audem Gonzales, Planner

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff finds the requests for Alternative Equivalent Compliance for Erie Commons Filing No. 4, 3rd Amendment in compliance with the Approval Criteria and recommends the Planning Commission adopt the resolution of approval.

Staff finds the Site Plan for the Erie Commons Filing No. 4, 3rd Amendment in compliance with the Site Plan Approval Criteria and recommends the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. P18-11 with the following conditions of approval:

- a. Erie Commons PD Amendment No. 8 shall be approved and recorded before the Site Plan approval comes into effect.
 - b. Erie Commons Filing No. 4, 3rd Amendment Final Plat shall be approved and recorded before the Site Plan approval comes into effect.
 - c. Staff may direct the consultants to make technical corrections to the documents.
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SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND OF SUBJECT MATTER:

Applicant: Century Communities
8390 E. Crescent Parkway, Suite 650
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

Owners: Community Development Group of Erie
2500 Arapahoe Avenue, Suite 220
Boulder, CO 80302

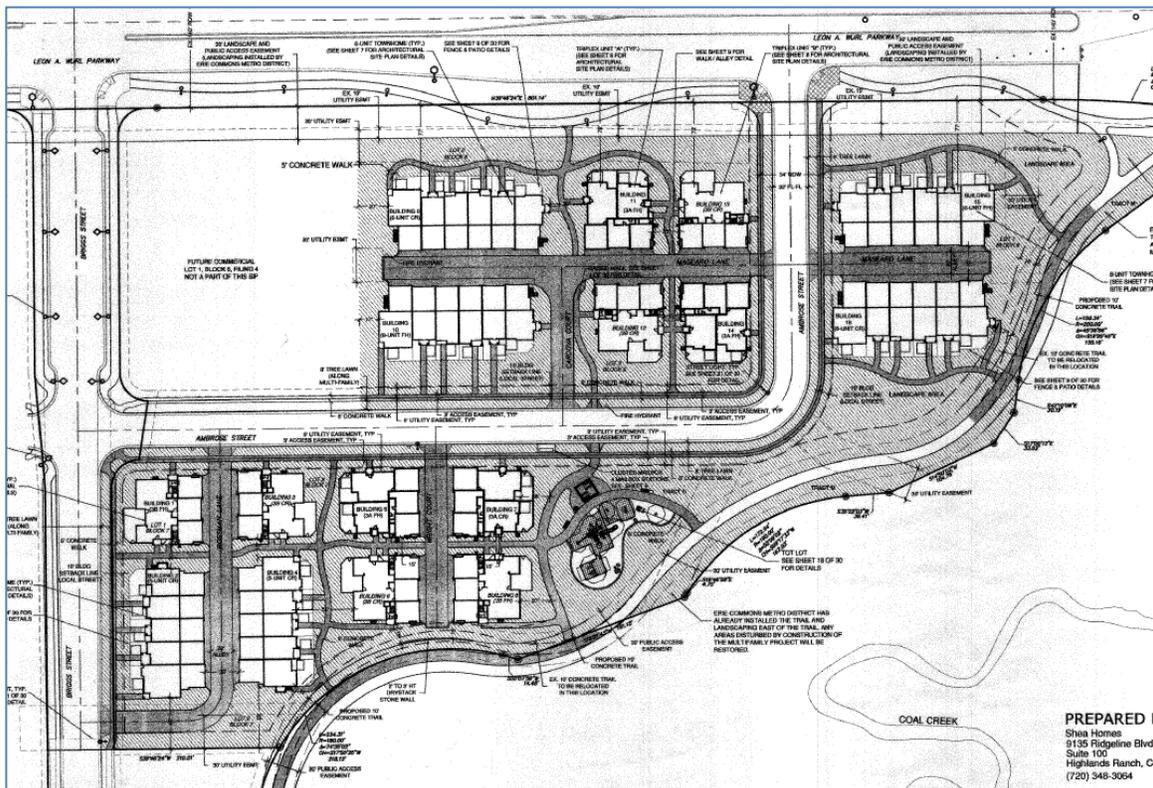
Existing Conditions:

Zoning: Erie Commons PD – Planned Development
Project Size: 6.742 Acres
Existing Use: Vacant Lot

Project History:

The Erie Commons Filing No. 4 Final Plat was approved in 2006 and included 33 lots, including the subject property. Ambrose Street was platted with a 54 foot right-of-way width and is partially built out today up to the entrance of the Blue Mountain Montessori School parking lot located on Lot 1, Block 6. Aside from the school and partially constructed street, the subject area remains vacant and undeveloped. The 54 foot right-of-way is not standard but the paved surface meets the Town's Standards and Specifications. The applicant proposes to keep the existing platted right-of-way for Ambrose Street. The other lots and tracts available for development within this portion of the Final Plat will need to be re-platted to accommodate the development proposal.

A Site Plan was approved for this project area in 2006 which included 64 tri-plex and townhome units and a pocket park. All units fronted onto a public street or common garden court. The development was never built out leaving the site vacant. The approved site plan has since lapsed and expired. Below is an illustration of the expired plan, provided to show how the dwelling units were oriented on the site.



Expired Site Plan

2. Building Orientation:
 - a. Staff was concerned over the volume of traffic on Erie Parkway and building entrances and porches oriented towards the street. Staff recommended that the majority of units be side loaded to Erie Parkway.
 - i. The applicant stated the original Site Plan approved in 2006 had townhomes facing Erie Parkway.
 1. Town Board suggested enhancing the building articulation facing Erie Parkway and throughout the development. One board member stated that having 7 units in one building facing Erie Parkway is too many. Some board members stated facing Erie Parkway was good and they encouraged multiple orientations. Different roof lines and heights were also encouraged.
3. Townhomes Adjacent to Coal Creek Spine Trail:
 - a. The sketch plan showed several townhome units fronting onto the Coal Creek Spine Trail. This trail is a regional spine trail boasting some of the highest traffic volumes and speeds in the trail corridor. Staff recommended that access onto the trail be limited to specific access points in the development. Staff recommended that the majority of units be side-loaded to the spine trail which would allow for views into the open space while funneling all users to the trail on one common walk system. The Open Space and Trails Advisory Board was also concerned with building location and orientation to the spine trail.
 - i. The applicant stated Coal Creek Open Space is part of the community and townhomes should be able to front onto open space. The applicant stated a fence and landscaping could be incorporated along the east portion of the site.
 1. Town Board commented on the short distance between townhome units and the Spine Trail and how a buffer should be incorporated. Several board members stated the units should be backed away from the Open Space and trail system. Several board members were okay with the idea of townhome units fronting onto the open space with adequate setbacks in place.
4. Alleys and Garages:
 - a. Staff was concerned with the alley in Tract N being so close to the spine trail at the northeast portion of the site. This did not leave much room for landscape screening of the rear garages for dwelling units 89-92. Also, staff was concerned with winter snow plowing at this location and how snow would be pushed from the alley onto the sidewalk system.
 - i. The applicant stated this would be addressed with the actual Site Plan and one alternative would be potentially losing a unit at this location.
 1. Several Town Board members recommended eliminating units from this area to solve snow storage concerns and the lack of pocket park space.

Current Application:

Location:

The Site Plan for Erie Commons Filing No. 4, 3rd Amendment is generally located near the east corner of South Briggs Street and Erie Parkway.

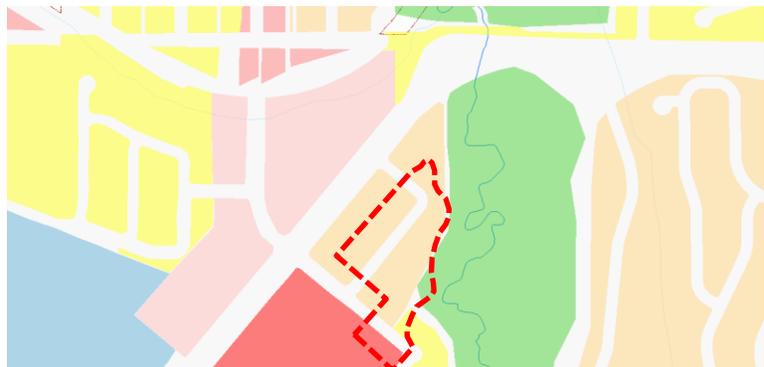


Adjacent Land-Use/Zoning:

	ZONING	LAND USE
NORTH	Erie Commons PD – Planned Development	Commercial
EAST	Erie Commons PD – Planned Development	Open Space
SOUTH	Erie Commons PD – Planned Development	Single Family Residential Vacant Commercial Property
WEST	Erie Commons PD – Planned Development	Commercial Private School

Compliance with Town of Erie Comprehensive Plan:

The application is in general compliance with the Land Use designation on the Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Plan Map. The Comprehensive Plan shows the Medium Density Residential (MDR) designation for this property. Medium Density Residential requires a density of 6-12 dwelling units per acre. This project proposes a density of 11.4 dwellings per acre.



Compliance with Erie Commons PD Amendment:

The applicant has a PD Amendment land use application in concurrent review with the Preliminary Plat and Site Plan. Erie Commons PD Amendment No. 8 proposes altering building orientations, lot dimensional standards, and setback encroachments to accommodate the proposed Site Plan.

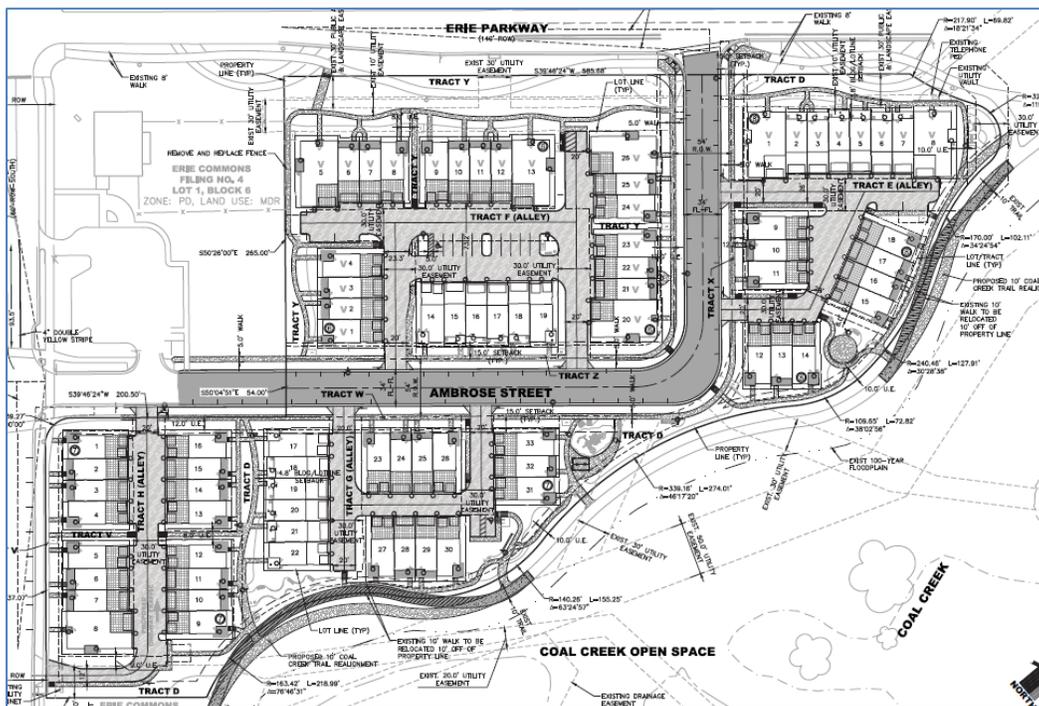
SITE SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION:

The applicant is proposing to construct 77 townhome units in Erie Commons Filing No. 4, 3rd Amendment. The townhomes front onto public streets, common garden courts, and the Coal Creek Trail within the Coal Creek Open Space. The townhome buildings are proposed to be Farmhouse and Craftsman style with seven distinct models. Several buildings along Erie Parkway incorporate single-story ranch end units while other buildings incorporate balcony end units.

Housing Diversity:

There are 172.4 acres in the overall Erie Commons neighborhood zoned for residential uses. Municipal Code 10.6.7.D 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; housing type: townhomes – 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.

This Site Plan proposes single-family attached townhome units that are all alley loaded.



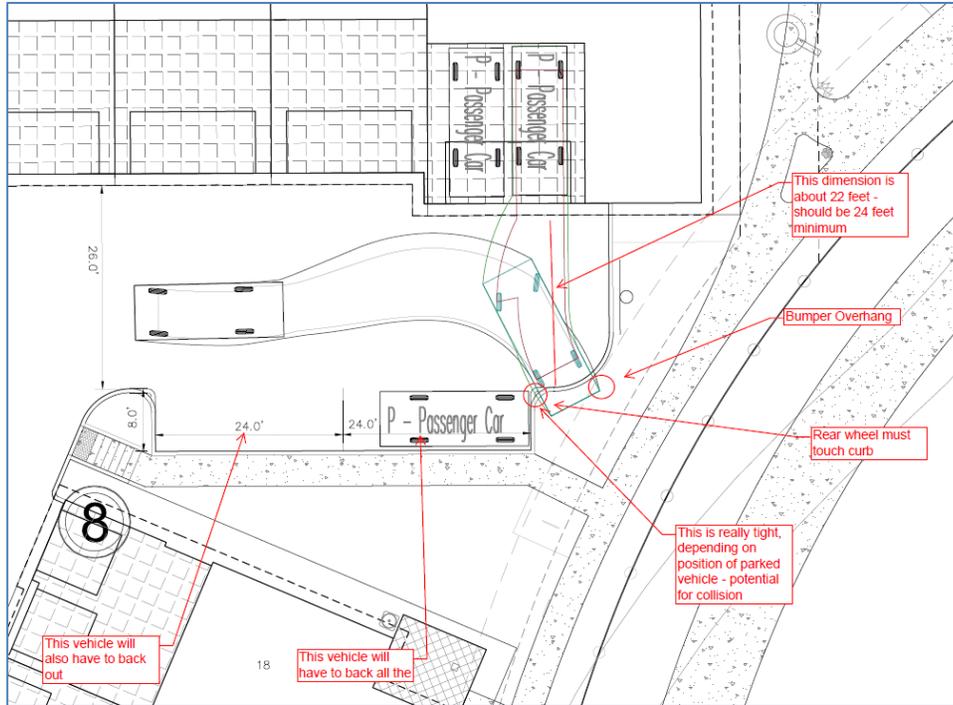
Proposed Site Plan

Parking:

- 2 car garage for each unit.
- Alley loaded garages.
- 18 off-street guest parking spaces.
- 46 on-street guest parking along South Briggs Street and Ambrose Street provide parking for guests.
 - 7 on-street parking spaces along South Briggs Street. These spaces are directly in front of units 1-8, Block 7 and are intended to serve these units.
 - 39 on-street parking spaces along Ambrose Street
- No parking allowed on Erie Parkway
- Staff has expressed concern over vehicle headlights shining off-site onto adjacent property. The applicant has provided several screening fences throughout the site to block potential off-site impacts. The fences were incorporated next to parking areas and alley ways. Staff is satisfied with the fencing proposal. Also, the southwest alley has been designed to be one-way in only to reduce traffic and vehicle lights from affecting residential properties to the south.
- Staff has also expressed concern over the alley in Tract E, more specifically, with the alley length, location next to the spine trail, backing movements from Unit 8, Block 8, and with snow removal in the alley.

The applicant has addressed some of these concerns by incorporating screen fences to the east of the alley to block car headlights from shining on the spine trail. The applicant has provided turning and backing exhibits for Unit 8, Block 8 showing how a vehicle can exit the garage. Also, the snow storage area has been designed and graded to drain back into the alley and into the storm sewer versus draining onto the spine trail and potentially icing over in the winter.

Staff feels the applicant has adequately addressed most of the concerns except for the backing out of garage movements associated with Unit 8, Block 8. The backing out diagram provided by the applicant was reviewed and redlined by the Town's transportation engineer consultant illustrating potential conflict points. This garage is in the 8-unit townhome building that exceeds the maximum number of units by 2 units and length by 34 feet. Staff recommends bringing this building into conformance with Municipal Code which would shorten the building, allow for adequate alley length and more room for backing out of the garage. It would also result in safely fitting guest parking, alley right-of-way, snow removal, a fire hydrant, a no parking sign, screen fencing and the spine trail connection.



Backing out exhibit with traffic engineer concerns shown in red.

Lighting:

- Standard street lighting provided on all streets.
- Site lighting incorporated throughout the development – 12’ pedestrian scale.
- Lighting fixture types on the townhomes are cut-off fixtures.

Landscaping, Parks and Trails:

- 30 foot landscape buffer is provided on Erie Parkway. The applicant is proposing to replace missing and damaged landscaping at this location.
- Landscaping within the right of way is provided along Ambrose Street and South Briggs Street.
- A pocket park is proposed within the Erie Commons Filing No. 4, 3rd Amendment. It is broken up into five separate park areas and is located on the east side of the development along the Coal Creek Trail.
- Privately owned and maintained landscape areas within the development include the landscaped courtyards where several units front.
- The internal sidewalk system is extensive and connects units to adjacent streets, pocket park areas and Coal Creek Trail.

Trash Service:

- Individual units will contract for local pickup service.

REQUESTS FOR ALTERNATIVE EQUIVALENT COMPLIANCE:

Pursuant to Municipal Code 10.6.1C “Alternative Equivalent Compliance”, the procedure permits a site-specific plan that is equal to or better than the strict application of a design standard. The “Alternative Equivalent Compliance” requests that have been made by the applicant are listed below. Please reference the individual letters addressing the

Alternative Equivalent Compliance requests included in the application materials that follow this memo.

a. Number Of Townhome Units:

Municipal Code Section 10.6.7.F.e.ii.(B).(1) - "No more than 6 townhome dwelling units may be attached in any single row or building cluster."

i. Request for Alternative Equivalent Compliance:

One building contains 8 townhome dwelling units, Lots 1-8, Block 8; exceeding the maximum number of dwelling units by 2 units. Only 1 building out of the 18 proposed buildings exceeds the maximum allowance. The applicant's justification for the request is that the building has been carefully designed in terms of orientation, building massing, architectural character and materials. The building is oriented towards Erie Parkway with front doors, stoops and porches creating a welcoming entry into Old Town. The two end units are one-story ranch plans which step down in scale and massing from two story to one-story units. A series of traditional farmhouse style gable end roof forms, in a variety of sizes, front onto Erie Parkway. Materials reflect the authentic farmhouse style with lap siding, paired porch columns, and stone base accents. The end units are also accessible and provide all the living spaces on the ground floor.

The 8-plex building was not shown in the Sketch Plan. In that plan, this area had two buildings with 4 units each. A 7-plex building was shown fronting Erie Parkway on the west portion of the site. The Town Board of Trustees commented that the 7-plex concept was not appropriate along the major thoroughfare. The Town has not previously approved a townhome building that exceeds the 6 unit maximum. Staff supports the Municipal Code 6 unit maximum standard.

b. Building Length:

Municipal Code Section 10.6.7 F.1.d.ii.(C) - "The maximum length of any multi-family building shall be 156 feet."

i. Request for Alternative Equivalent Compliance:

One building containing 8 townhome units, Lots 1-8, Block 8, is 190 feet long; exceeding the maximum building length by 34'. Only 1 building out of the 18 proposed buildings exceeds the maximum building length. The applicant's justification for the request is that the proposed design provides ranch style end units that create a transition from the taller internal units to adjacent open spaces and street frontages. The alternative would be to split the structure into two 4-plex buildings, and replace the end units with typical two story end units. The applicant stated this would be a less desirable design solution lacking the transition in massing and product diversity.

As stated above, the Town has not previously approved a townhome building for more than 6 units in a row. The proposed 8 unit townhome building is 34' longer than the 156' length allowed by the Municipal Code. The Boulder Creek development in Erie Commons Filing 4 was approved with a building

length at 160' vs. the 156' requirement. The Town approved the additional 4' because the building incorporated ranch units on each end.

c. Tree Lawn Width:

Municipal Code Section 10.6.5.F.1.c.i - "All sidewalks, as required above, shall be detached from the adjacent street and separated by a tree lawn that is a minimum of 8 feet in width."

- i. The tree lawn on either side of Ambrose Street is proposed to be 7.5 feet in width opposed to the required 8 feet. The applicant stated the design fits within the platted right-of-way and easement design. In addition, this design meets the Town's Street Design Standards by providing the desired pavement width for travel lanes and exceeds the local road standard which shows a 7 foot tree lawn.

Staff supports this request as it meets the Standards and Specifications minimum tree lawn width of 7 feet.

d. Minimum Garden Court Tract Width:

Municipal Code Section 10.6.5.F.3.d - "The minimum width for a trail corridor shall be 30 feet."

- i. The Site Plan proposes Lots 1-4, Block 6 to front onto a garden court with a width of 29.62 feet. The applicant stated the reduction in tract width is negligible from a pedestrian scale due to the additional building separation provided from the front setback of the townhome units along this garden court.

Staff supports this request as the result is equivalent to the 30 foot requirement.

ALTERNATIVE EQUIVALENT COMPLIANCE ANALYSIS:

The requests for Alternative Equivalent Compliance listed above were reviewed for conformance with Municipal Code 10.6.1. C.5. Approval Criteria. Staff finds the requests in compliance with the Approval Criteria listed below.

- a. The proposed alternative achieves the intent of the subject design standard to the same or better degree than the subject standard;

Staff: The alternatives achieve the intent of the standard. The applicant has provided ranch units to break up building massing and to visually step down the development from highly visible corridors.

- b. The proposed alternative achieves the goals and policies of the Town's Comprehensive Master Plan to the same or better degree than the subject standard;

Staff: The proposed alternatives achieve the goals and policies of the Town's Comprehensive Master Plan. The Comprehensive Plan encourages mixed use residential development at this location. The townhome

- c. The proposed alternative results in benefits to the community that are equivalent to or better than compliance with the subject design standard;

Staff: The proposed alternatives benefit the community by providing a mix of housing types and accessible units.

SITE PLAN ANALYSIS:

The Site Plan for the townhome development within Erie Commons Subdivision Filing 4, 3rd Amendment was reviewed for conformance with Municipal Code, Title 10, Section 7.12.F.9 Approval Criteria. Staff finds the Site Plan in compliance with the Site Plan Approval Criteria as listed below.

- a. The Site Plan is generally consistent with the Town’s Comprehensive Master Plan;

Staff: The Site Plan is generally consistent with the Town’s Comprehensive Master Plan. This area is designated as Medium Density Residential. This application is aligned with that designation.

- b. The Site Plan is generally consistent with any previously approved subdivision plat, planned development, or any other precedent plan or land use approval as applicable;

Staff: The Site Plan is consistent with the proposed Preliminary Plat and proposed Erie Commons PD Amendment No. 8.

- c. The Site Plan complies with all applicable development and design standards set forth in this Code, including but not limited to the provisions in Chapter 2, Chapter 3, Chapter 4, and Chapter 6;

Staff: The Site Plan complies with all applicable development and design standards set forth in the UDC, this includes Alternative Equivalent Compliance requests.

- d. Any significant adverse impacts reasonably anticipated to result from the use will be mitigated or offset to the maximum extent practicable; and

Staff: Significant adverse impacts are not anticipated. The applicant was diligent with providing screening and buffering to adjacent properties in the form of setbacks, landscaping, fencing and

- e. The development proposed on the Site Plan and its general location is or will be compatible with the character of surrounding land uses.

Staff: The development proposed is compatible with the character of the surrounding land uses. The incorporation of single-story ranch end units makes this development more compatible with the Erie Parkway corridor.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff finds the requests for Alternative Equivalent Compliance for Erie Commons Filing No. 4, 3rd Amendment in compliance with the Approval Criteria and recommends the Planning Commission adopt the resolution of approval.

Staff finds the Site Plan for the Erie Commons Filing No. 4, 3rd Amendment in compliance with the Site Plan Approval Criteria and recommends the Planning Commission adopt Resolution No. P18-11 with the following conditions of approval:

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NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING:

As required by the Municipal Code a Neighborhood Meeting was held on October 18, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the Erie Community Center. The required notice for the Neighborhood Meeting was provided.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

Notice of this Public Hearing has been provided as follows:

Published in the Colorado Hometown Weekly:	July 25, 2018
Property Posted as required:	July 27, 2018
Letters to Adjacent Property Owners:	July 27, 2018

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Various public comments have been received for this application. Common concerns from area residents are with the project density, site layout and building height. All received written public comments are attached to this memo.