City of Buena Vista
Planning Commission

Agenda for June 11th 2019

Regular Meeting

Call to Order by Chairman

Roll Call

New Business

1. Site Plan Review and Certificate of Appropriateness for Mike Bowling on behalf of Darlene Stoddard, 218 W 29th St

Public Comment

Review and Adoption of Minutes
Minutes of April 9th meeting

Report of Secretary

Report of Standing Committees

Report of Special Committees

New Business

2. Discuss Savernake tract zoning changes and future development

Old Business

Adjournment
Members and Term Expirations:
Dennis Hawes, Chairman, 7/31/2020
Mike Ohleger, Vice-Chairman, 6/30/2022
Sandy Burke, 8/31/2021
Marolyn Cash, 6/30/2020
Lucy Ferrebee, 9/30/2019
Melvin Henson, City Council Representative, 9/30/2019
Preston Manuel, 12/31/2020
Jay Scudder, Ex Officio member
Bradyn Tuttle, 12/31/2020

Staff:
Tom Roberts, Director of Planning & Community Development, Secretary

Meetings:
Members of the Buena Vista Planning Commission meet in Council Chambers, 2039 Sycamore Avenue, at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, unless otherwise announced. Meetings may be held and business conducted without a quorum, but no votes may be taken unless a quorum is present. A majority of members constitutes a quorum. A motion passes with a majority vote; a tie constitutes defeat of the motion.

Please go to our website www.bvcity.org for more information on this and other issues and information about the City of Buena Vista including the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulations. The Department of Planning & Community Development is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM and Tom Roberts can be reached at (540) 261-8607 or troberts@bvcity.org. Please call ahead to ensure availability.

Public Comments Or Suggestions
_____________________________________________________________________________
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Name, Address, and Signature:
_____________________________________________________________________________
Members of the Buena Vista Planning Commission met in Council Chambers, 2039 Sycamore Avenue, at 7:00 p.m. on April 9th 2019. Roll was called and a quorum was established.

**Members Present:**
- Melvin Henson, City Council Representative
- Michael Ohleger, Vice-Chairman
- Dennis Hawes, Chairman
- Lucy Ferrebee
- Marolyn Cash
- Preston Manuel

**Members Absent:**
- Jay Scudder, Ex Officio member
- Bradyn Tuttle
- Sandy Burke

**Staff Present:**
- Tom Roberts, Director of Planning & Community Development

Meeting is called into order.

**Conditional Use Permit for the Fire Department**
Chairman Hawes introduces the permit approval for the Fire Department to erect a prefabricated carport at the rear of Magnolia Avenue.

Tom Roberts
- Conditional Use Permit to replace the temporary tent structure that the department had in the vacant lot with permission.
- Wants to set a precedent concerning these types of structures because although this car port is fine there could easily be other prefabricated structures that could be erected in the district that aren’t as appealing, wanted to stick to the processes with this project.
- Recommends the proposal be approved as presented and mentioned that he had given permission to the Fire Department to put the structure up before the permit was approved.

Fire Department Representative
- Previously the Fire Department has been using temporary tents that cost around $700 and were smaller than they liked, so they’ve had to buy two of them.
- Decided to go with the proposed structure because it is good quality that won’t fall down six months down the road, made sure to keep in mind the snow load in the area.

- Often do fundraising for the community and for the Fire Department so they need a structure to have over the grills and allow everybody and everything to be in one place.

Ms. Ferrebee asks if the pavilion will be attached to the ground, concerned about the pavilion flying around during major storms. The Fire Department Representative assured that the pavilion is staked down with 30 inch stakes into the ground. Chairman Hawes asks about two dumpsters by the Fire Department, and the Representative explains that they are donated dumpsters that are used during the Carnival and offers to move them if needed. They are turned upside down because people besides the Fire Department would come and dump their trash in there so they were filling up quickly. Chairman Hawes closes the public hearing. Mr. Ohleger recommends approval of the permit, Ms. Ferrebee seconds the approval. Mr. Henson abstains because he is a member of the Fire Department.

**Review and Adoption of Minutes**

Mr. Henson points out an error on the membership page. Guy Holstein is listed as present but he is no longer on the board. Also that the meeting start time and end time is an hour behind.

Mr. Henson motions to adopt the minutes with corrections, Mr. Manuel seconds. All approve as corrected.

**Report of Secretary**

Tom Roberts

- In response to question raised at last Planning Commission meeting, he looked on website but could not find incorrect references to the PC meeting date.

- Had a meeting with Ed Walker where his team presented current projects. Also present were representatives from state agencies involved in grant making, such as the Department of Housing Community Development, the Governor’s Office, and Virginia Community Capital (which is a non-profit, not a state agency). Discussed at the meeting were options for revitalization. Also presenting was a woman from Danville who went over what they’ve done for revitalization there.

- Presented bumper sticks with Mr. Walker’s logo that he developed for his revitalization project. Still waiting on getting a final copy of his master plan to distribute, although Mr. Walker is working with an architect to sketch what the buildings could look like when redone.

- Biggest project is to establish the new library. Plan to move the library to the old McCormick feed store next to the post office. Mr. Roberts will be meeting with Mr. Walker, the Mayor, the Library Board and Director, and Ms. Moore to figure out the process to build the library. Mr. Walker wants to turn the current library building, the old City Hall, into a boutique hotel. Mr. Walker is looking for tenants for other spaces, Social Services still being a possibility.

Mr. Ohleger questions whether there has been any consideration to building a new structure for the library, like in Glasgow. Mr. Roberts explains that Glasgow received funding from a private donor for that library. Some of the reasons for not building a new structure are the suitability of the McCormick feed store building, the desire to keep the use downtown, and the number of vacant buildings downtown. The McCormick feed store building has a lot of development potential because it is a simple box. They can make the library for $750,000 within those parameters and they’ve worked with the library already to develop a conceptual floor plan so the library knows what kind of space is needed, what square footage, etc. Chairman Hawes mentions that although it is not an attractive building on the outside, changes could be made when the library is done to the exterior to make it more pleasing. Mr. Robert refers to the part of the proposal to take the space between the feed store and a paved lot to create a little garden area with
trees, picnic tables, and a statue or sculpture. The building is 5,000 square feet, which is double the size of the current library.

Tom Roberts

- Got revised plans for the industrial park development project, some revisions were made realigning the road. Hope to have the revised plans reviewed for the roadway and the water and sewer so that construction can go ahead in June.
- No update on the comprehensive plan, the committee hasn’t met in a long time.

Mr. Ohleger brings up the old Domino’s pizza location, 2478 Beech Avenue. Mr. Roberts explains that that building will be a Five Dime Pizza. They have a building permit but they might not have posted it properly, Mr. Roberts offers to ask Alan McMahan to follow up with them about posting the permit. It’s going to be carry out and delivery, with pizza, sloppy joes, and other similar foods. Big John’s Sandwich Shop is discussed, the opening date is not known.

**Name Change for Seminary Hill Historic District**

Mr. Ohleger makes a motion to change the Seminary Hill Historic District to the Seminary Hill District. Some discussion ensued concerning having “historic” in the name as well as a land use change that the committee will be having a public hearing about eventually. Mr. Henson suggests adding “29th Street” to the name. The board agrees that the district will encompass the same area but just drop “historic” from the name. Mr. Henson seconds Mr. Ohleger’s motion to change the name to the Seminary Hill District. All approve.

Chairman Hawes mentions that the Rockbridge Republican Committee would like to meet in Buena Vista at some point and wonders if a meeting like that has ever been done in the BV courthouse. It is usually a night meeting that meets at seven and runs about an hour long, with twenty to fifty people showing up depending on what’s going on. The Chairman of the Rockbridge Republican Committee called the school board but hasn’t received an answer yet. The committee discusses the double decker, the American Legion Building which has a fee, SVU, and the Fire Department. Mr. Henson mentioned the pavilion at the golf course as another option for a meeting place.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.
STAFF REPORT
DATE: 7 June 2019
TYPE: Site Plan and Certificate of Appropriateness
SUBJ: 218 W 29th Street Multifamily Development

Synopsis
Mike Bowling, on behalf of owner, seeks to construct 8 apartments in two different buildings on 29th Street.

Site Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address/Tax Map</th>
<th>218 W 29th St and adjacent lot 18-1-5-21-9 &amp; 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing zoning:</td>
<td>MB Mixed Business with SHHD Seminary Hill Historic District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing land use:</td>
<td>Two-family dwelling and vacant land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed zoning:</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed land use:</td>
<td>Townhouse-style multifamily homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrounding zoning and land use:</td>
<td>All adjacent properties are single-family homes or two-family homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size:</td>
<td>Eight new 868 sq ft apartments, one existing 2,257 sq ft duplex 100’ x 125’ lot (12,500 sq ft)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Recommendation:</td>
<td>Discuss modifications</td>
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Tentative Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Commission Meeting</th>
<th>6/11/2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Council Public Hearing</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Council Adoption</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Overview
This project would construct small townhome-like two-story apartments on a vacant infill lot on 29th Street, near the auto parts store and the intersection with Beech Avenue.

Site plan review is required because this is more than a two-family dwelling, and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required because this property is located within the SHHD.

Analysis

Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Conformance
This land use of this site is designated by the Comprehensive Plan as Corridor Commercial, which is described as such:

Targeted areas along arterials or major collectors that are intended to provide for a mix of small- to medium-sized retail, office, institutional and residential uses. Convenience goods and services are provided such as ice cream and sandwiches, banking, laundry, video rentals as well as general commercial goods and services such as motels and printing services that serve the larger community and travelers.

This land use designation extends west along 29th Street to Bontex. The zoning is MB Mixed Business, the intent statement of which reads:

The mixed business district is primarily a business district that incorporates and promotes a wide variety and intensity of uses. This district is designed to have a high level of human and business activity and vibrancy where business people can live and work in the same building, where residents and visitors can freely gather for shopping, entertainment and recreation.

MB allows by right almost all of the residential use types in our zoning code, ranging from single-family dwellings to boarding houses to tourist homes.

At present most of the 29th Street corridor from Beech Avenue east to Rockbridge Avenue is residential, both single- and two-family. Because of the arterial nature of 29th Street and the mix of commercial uses nearby, this is an appropriate location for higher-density residential uses. This corridor can support the higher level of traffic and activity associated with more residents, and the residents will similarly support existing and future businesses located within walking distance. Additionally, locating apartments on a main corridor will reduce pressure to convert homes in single-family character neighborhoods to multifamily uses.

Water & Sewer
Water and sewer run in both the alley behind this site and in 29th Street in front. Public Works is determining the necessary capacity and pressure and will advise on necessary connection locations. Apartments will have a single master meter and private submetering.

Pedestrian Access
Pedestrian access is from the front or rear of the site. There is existing sidewalk on 29th Street. The site design provides for several internal walkways, and units face the inside of the site, creating an internal courtyard. The units have back doors which are served by a front-to-back walkway at the west edge of the property.
**Vehicular Access and Parking**

The submitted site plan calls for 11 spaces lining the rear property line, accessed from the alley. However, the parking requirement for apartments is 1.5 spaces per unit, or 12 spaces for eight new units. Additionally, the submitted plan does not give any buffer on side lot lines or turning/aisle area between the parking spaces and the alley.

The target market for these units will be SVU students because of its proximity. Although student tenants will ideally walk up the hill to class, we have to assume that students will own cars. Provision of off-street parking in new residential developments like this is very important to reduce pressure on street parking. Also, though the minimum requirement is 1.5 spaces per unit, if units are occupied by couples each adult may have a vehicle. For these reasons, functional parking at or above the minimum is essential on this project, and an alternate design is needed.

One benefit of this project is the creation of an additional on-street parking space by the elimination of a driveway and curb cut.

**Historic District Review**

Below are the matters to be considered in reviewing a COA application:

In reviewing applications, the committee shall base its decision on whether the proposals therein are compatible with the existing building or structure, if any, and with the surrounding design district. Interior arrangement or features not subject to any public view shall not be considered. The following shall be considered by the committee in acting on the appropriateness of the proposed erection, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, or demolition of buildings or structures:

(a) Exterior architectural features, which are subject to public view from a public street, way or place.

(b) Design, arrangement and relative size or mass.

(c) The relation of the proposed construction to buildings and structures in the immediate surroundings.

(d) The extent to which the building or structure would be harmonious with or obviously incongruous to the historic aspect of the surroundings.

(e) In the case of a building to be razed or moved, a primary consideration shall be the extent to which its continued existence would tend to protect irreplaceable historic places and preserve the general historic atmosphere of the city.

(f) The extent to which the proposed construction or demolition will promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, and making the city a more attractive and desirable place in which to live.

(g) The extent to which the proposal adheres to the design district guidelines for the City of Buena Vista adopted by the city council and incorporated herein by reference.

Architectural features in the submitted plan include the following:

- Main building with six units will have a gable roof running perpendicular to 29th Street (“end gable” facing 29th)
- End gable facing 29th St will have unit entrance and covered front porch
- Interior (east) side of main building will have covered front porches
- Exterior cladding vinyl siding
• Suggested that each unit pair of the main building will be clad in a different color siding.

The new main building will be larger than surrounding single- and two-family homes, but is not significantly out of scale. Its perpendicular orientation to the street presents a façade that is 32’ long, which fits with the rhythm of existing houses. Also, adjacent buildings will somewhat screen the new buildings from view from 29th Street.

Recommendations

Staff recommends the following changes to the presented plan to address the specific issues raised in analysis. I am including a conceptual alternate site plan for consideration as well.

1. Redesign parking and/or reduction of number of units to achieve minimum required off-street parking spaces. This could be achieved many ways, but my conceptual site plan shows an alternate layout which provides 13 spaces.

   Double-loaded spaces are acceptable, in my opinion, for this type of residential development in a dense area. A dwelling unit could be assigned two spaces front to back, and then tenants of that unit could schedule and negotiate use of the two spaces.

2. Incorporate landscaping buffers of shrubs/trees along side property lines. This would reduce impact on neighbors of parking and activity, and increase the visual appeal of the project in the historic district. Additionally, incorporate landscaping on the 29th Street elevation of the new building to increase visual appeal and compatibility in the historic district.

3. Hip the roof on the 29th Street elevation of the main building, instead of a plain gable end. This will make the façade more compatible with surrounding buildings by reducing the vertical plane along the street. This building will already be closer to the sidewalk than other buildings on this block, and the straight wall of the gable end will make the building appear more imposing, even if it is broken up with a covered porch.

4. Require internal walkway running front to back in middle of site to be hardscape, such as poured concrete, flagstones, brick, concrete pavers, etc.

The conceptual alternate site plan divides the units into one three-unit building and one five-unit building, and reorients the smaller building. This accomplishes several things:

• Reduces mass of main new building, making it more in keeping with scale and mass of existing buildings.
• Creates space for double-loaded parking
• Maintains ~20’ of courtyard-like space between smaller building and existing duplex
• Creates “offset” so that the “tunnel” between the two new buildings is only about 10’ long
• Reduces the needed clearance off adjacent property line for the new building by putting “blank” side wall rather than wall with entrance on this side
• Allows convenient access to parking out of back door (or front door) for residents of smaller building
• Plan shows suggested rooflines dashed
Additional stipulations to accompany site plan approval:

1. Water and sewer connection locations shall be at the discretion of the City. At writing capacity and pressure of nearby lines has not been confirmed. Owner/contractor shall be responsible for all connection costs to include construction of new laterals, replacement or extension of mains, and restoration of surfacing (gravel, concrete, asphalt) if needed.

2. Exterior cladding of each building, or each grouping of no more than three units, shall be of a different character and/or color. For example, using green siding on the two units closes to 29th Street and white siding on the other three units of that building.
Any determination of topography or contours, or any depiction of physical improvements, property lines or boundaries is for general information only and shall not be used for the design, modification, or construction of improvements to real property or for flood plain determination.

Site Plan Application
218 W 29th St
Planning & Zoning | 6/5/2019
Multi-Family Plan 72793
Order Code: 00WEB
Bookmark This Plan
Order This Plan or call 800-482-0464.

Build your own custom, up to 96 Page Planbook, by filing this plan away in your Bookmark This Plan!
Order This Plan or call 800-482-0464.

Specifications
- Total Living Area: 1736
- Main Living Area: 448
- Upper Living Area: 420
- Garage Type: None
- House Width: 28’3.5
- House Depth: 38’
- Number of Stories: 2
- Bedrooms: 4
- Full Baths: 2
- Half Baths: 2
- Max Ridge Height: 27’2 from Front Door Floor Level
- Primary Roof Pitch: 9:12
- Roof Framing: Unknown
- Porch: 170 sq ft
- 2nd Floor Laundry: Yes
- Main Ceiling Height: 8’
- Upper Ceiling Height: 8’

Available Foundation Types:
- Crawl Space
- Slab

Available Exterior Wall Types:
- 2x4

Order This Plan or call 800-482-0464.

Overview

The owners of the Savernake tract, over 300 acres east of Rt 501 at the south end of Buena Vista, are looking to sell the property. The current zoning, a combination of R6 Residential Planned Unit Development (PUD) and B2 Planned business, is out of date; does not conform to the current comprehensive plan; and is believed by the owners to reduce the value of the property. The owners would like to work with the City to strategically rezone the tract.

Background

The Dickinson family has owned the Savernake tract for many decades. On the east side of Rt 501, what is known as the Savernake subdivision was created in the 1990s. At the time, master plans were drawn up for multiple winding roads through several hundred more acres with single-family lots and townhomes. For various reasons, these were never built.

The majority of the tract was zoned R6 Residential PUD in the 1985 zoning ordinance and map adoption. PUD zones require that any development submit a master plan for development, which would include engineered drawings of road, buildings, open space, etc. PUD zones are intended to give flexibility to residential development so that developers can take a large parcel, concentrate housing on one portion, and dedicate the remainder as open space. This clustering results in smaller lot sizes and/or higher density than would normally be allowed, but is much more efficient for infrastructure construction and is more environmentally sustainable.

The language of the R6 zone has not changed since then. When the Savernake housing subdivision was platted and approved, those lots were rezoned to R2 Residential.

The frontage of the tract along Rt 501 (a strip ~200’ deep) was zoned in 1985 as B2 Planned Business. This zone text also has remained unchanged since 1985, and is similar to a residential PUD but with far fewer requirements. Essentially, all uses in B1 Business zone are permitted, but developers must show their overall plan of development to the Planning Commission for approval.
Issues and Analysis

Owner concerns

The owners’ primary concern is that the PUD zoning may make the properties less appealing for buyers because no development of any kind can occur without submittal of a master plan and approval by the Planning Commission and City Council. Additional concerns:

- Master planned residential subdivisions on the land zoned PUD may be unlikely because of the topography and current costs of construction
- Both the R6 and B2 zone texts are outdated and impose some problematic requirements
- Neither R6 nor B2 allows multifamily development
- The location and extent of the B2 zone is impractical because it is too small (too shallow) for modern commercial development needs

City staff have had multiple discussions with the owners and their representatives about different options, pros and cons, and the City’s plans for this area.

City analysis

Typically, rezoning requests are contemplated when the property owner has a specific development project. However, this tract of land is one of the largest undeveloped portions of the City and strategically located on a major corridor (Rt 501). Planning and zoning designations here are very important, and this juncture is an appropriate time to review the current zoning.

The zoning of this tract no longer conforms to the long-range planning for this area. As noted earlier, the comprehensive plan designation is mixed-use planned development, which is a result of a 2006 community visioning exercise. Several dozen residents met over the course of two meetings, facilitated by the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, to discuss a vision for future development at the south end of the City along Rt 501 (both east and west sides). The consensus was that there should be a mix of industrial, commercial, and residential uses in medium to high density development with a park- or campus-like feel. There was a concern about scale and compatibility, and thus the desire for “planned development.”

The City also appreciates the idea that argument planned developments, whether residential, mixed use, or commercial, are costly and less likely in the current environment than single-site or by right development.

Concept

Staff propose the following general outline to update the planning and zoning for this tract of land:

1) Creation of a new mixed use zone and application to the portion of the tract closer to Rt 501. A wide range of uses including retail, professional office, medical, institutional, hotel, and multifamily would be permitted by right. Having uniform zoning rather than “strips” of business and multifamily allows more flexibility for developers, and leaves open the door to a larger master-planned development. This new zone would also require adherence to the City’s existing Design Guidelines, an appendix to our Land Development Regulations that addresses individual building design as well as street
layout and site design. These guidelines would help ensure quality development and could achieve some of the benefits of master planned PUDs.

2) Within this new mixed use zone, identifying optimal locations for a few access roads that could serve future development further back on the tract. These access roads would be platted and dedicated as future ROW. Currently, there is only one road accessing the back portion of the tract, South Woodland Avenue.

3) Review the back portion of the property more carefully and evaluate the use of PUD zoning versus by right (R1/2/3).

4) Update the text of R6 Residential PUD to reflect current best practices.

Also, the City will review ordinances that pertain to road construction and design standards. These are relevant as they can determine feasibility of road construction and the type of development.

**Next Steps**

The purpose of this preliminary discussion at the June meeting is to glean general feedback and ideas. Staff will draft new zone text and map out zone boundaries for a public hearing at the July 9th 2019 Planning Commission meeting.
Any determination of topography or contours, or any depiction of physical improvements, property lines or boundaries is for general information only and shall not be used for the design, modification, or construction of improvements to real property or for flood plain determination.