



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION MEETING OF THE QUEEN CREEK
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

Wednesday, May 12, 2010 7:00 P.M.

Council Chambers, 22350 S. Ellsworth Road, Queen Creek, AZ 85242

1. **CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice-Chairman Moore.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Present

Vice-Chairman Moore
Commissioner Atkinson
Commissioner Ingram
Commissioner Reyes
Commissioner Sossaman

Absent

Chairman Trapp-Jackson
Commissioner Perry

Staff

Present

Community Development Director Condit
Planning Manager Balmer
Senior Planner Williams
Community Dev. Assistant Laura Moats

Others Present

Ralph Pew, Pew and Lake
Tyler Wright, Pew and Lake
Greg Davis, Iplan Consulting
Charlie Caldwell

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Members of the public may address the Commission on items not on the printed agenda. Please observe the time limit of three minutes. Speakers' cards are available at the door, and may be delivered to staff prior to the commencement of the meeting. **There were no public comments.**

4. **Consent Agenda:** Matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion and one vote. Public Hearing items are designated with an asterisk (*). Prior to consideration of the Consent Agenda, the Chairman will ask whether any member of the public wishes to remove a Public Hearing item for separate consideration. Members of the Commission and/or staff may remove any item for separate consideration.

- a. **Consideration and Possible Approval of April 14, 2010 Work Study and Regular Session Minutes;**
- b. **Consideration and Possible Approval of DR09-104, "Highland Homes at Lucia, Plans 3100 and 3380", A request from Kendal Baxley of KB Drafting and Design**

for Design Review approval of two additional standard floor plans with three elevations each on a total of 102 remaining lots in the Lucia subdivision, zoned R1-12, located at the northeast corner of Ocotillo and Sossaman roads;

- c. **Consideration and Possible Approval of DR09-106**, A request from Kendal Baxley of KB Drafting and Design for Design Review approval of two additional standard floor plans with three elevations each on a total of 128 remaining lots in the Crismon Heights subdivision, zoned R1-9 and R1-12, located at the northeast corner of Crismon and Ocotillo roads;

Motion: Commissioner Sossaman
To approve the Consent Agenda as presented, with the following corrections to the April minutes: remove Doreen Cott as staff in attendance; replace Mike Moore with Kathy Trapp-Jackson on the signature line of the last page of the minutes.

2nd: Commissioner Atkinson
Vote: All ayes. Motion carried 5-0 (Trapp-Jackson, Perry absent).

5. **Public Hearing, Discussion and Possible Action on GP10-014, “Circle G at The Church Farm Minor General Plan Amendment”**, A request by Greg Davis of Iplan Consulting on behalf of William Lyon Homes, to amend the General Plan Land Use Map designation for 20 acres located at the southeast corner of Ocotillo and Signal Butte roads from Community Commercial to Medium Density Residential.

Senior Planner Williams presented the staff report, noting the entire Church Farm site is approximately 885 acres, and includes multiple zoning districts ranging from R1-2 to R1-43. This minor General Plan Amendment request is for a 45-acre portion zoned C-2 commercial, with a 20-acre subsection. Mr. Williams noted a companion rezoning and subdivision case will be presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission in the future. The applicant is currently requesting the 45 acres be reduced to 25 acres of MDR (2-3 du/acre). Mr. Williams noted the proposed Community Commercial parcel is L-shaped due to future site planning options by the applicant. Mr. Williams illustrated the traffic pattern in the surrounding area, which he noted is a shift from the original proposed traffic patterns, due to the realignment of Signal Butte Road to Meridian. Staff is recommending approval of this request.

Commissioner Sossaman questioned how the commercial will work on the proposed linear-shaped parcel, and stated he feels it might not draw the commercial tenants to this area because of the L-shaped configuration, making it difficult to develop. Commissioner Sossaman stated he is not opposed to reducing the amount of commercial on this corner, but he would like more specific information as far as the proposed site plan, layout, parking, ingress and egress, etc.

Ralph Pew of Pew and Lake, 1744 S. Val Vista Drive, Suite 217, Mesa, AZ, addressed the Commission on behalf of Wm. Lyon Homes. He stated the applicant is requesting a reduction

in the amount of Commercial zoning on this site because a 45-acre commercial center at this location would be difficult to develop.

Mr. Pew responded to Commissioner Sossaman's concerns related to the L-shaped configuration, stating this area was designed with the site plan before the General Plan Amendment with enough depth and turning radius. In addition, it is his understanding since this is a General Plan Amendment, the property lines are not necessarily fixed as in zoning cases. There will be room to make slight changes to the configuration if staff feels it is necessary.

Vice-Chairman Moore asked for Planning Manager Balmer's assessment. Mr. Balmer pointed out the half-circle commercial areas on shown on the General Plan Land Use Map are different because they show areas where commercial is allowed, but not necessarily the shape of the commercial site. He added there is already a plan in this case, but mainly, this affects residential to the south. At that point, staff will ask for a more precise plan. Currently, this is a review of the concept and whether and how these pieces fit (commercial with residential).

Commissioner Sossaman asked which use is driving this, assuming it is the residential. Mr. Pew responded there are two driving factors:

- 1) As far as the zoning, there is too much commercial; therefore, it makes sense to request a reduction in the amount of commercial;
- 2) As far as the configuration, the linear design (rectangle) is what the applicant feels will work well, and accommodate a housing project intended in this area. The applicant is also confident in the commercial site plan, as they have met with commercial developers who are interested in this land and feel comfortable with the depth and width.

In response to a request for clarification on the requested action, Mr. Balmer stated staff's recommendation is to approve the request as shown. There are no recommended stipulations. He clarified a zoning case and subdivision case will come later in the process to show where the exact property line will be and how the pieces will fit together.

Vice-Chairman Moore opened the Public Hearing at 7:15 p.m. There were no public comments and the Public Hearing was closed.

Motion: **Commissioner Atkinson**

To approve GP10-014, Circle G at the Church Farm Minor General Plan Amendment, as presented.

2nd: **Commissioner Sossaman**

Vote: **All ayes. Motion carried. 5-0. (Trapp-Jackson, Perry absent).**

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

6. **Discussion on SD09-003, “Circle G at the Church Farm”**, A request by Greg Davis of Iplan Consulting, on behalf of William Lyon Homes, seeking input only on a subdivision design concept with densities of 6.97 dwelling units/acre to be built in a section of Circle G at the Church Farm subdivision, located at the southeast corner of Signal Butte and Ocotillo roads.

Senior Planner Williams presented the applicant’s request for comments on a high-density concept for ‘six-pack’ courtyard homes on the Church Farm site. Mr. Williams pointed out the elements of the high-density product, showing 12-homes clustered together, with common shared driveways, rear-loaded garage doors, and a sidewalk from the street to access the front porch of the homes. The lot sizes are proposed to be 3,000 square feet (52’X63’). Mr. Williams detailed the 20-foot common drive aisles, with four-foot approaches into the garages.

Additionally, Mr. Williams indicated on the graphic illustration the HOA maintained areas and homeowner-owned properties, specifically the use-benefit easements, meaning a property owner can use adjoining property owners land for their benefit.

The staff analysis of the proposal included the following concerns:

- Proposed density of 6.97 dwelling units/acre is higher than any other single-family detached density currently built in Town;
- Maintenance costs for HOA will be higher (driveways, more common landscaping areas, additional hardscape);
- Congested streets due to less places for owners and guests to park; especially more congestion on trash days with trash receptacles, on-street parking, and garbage trucks;
- Driveways too short for owner vehicles (and owners will use garages for storage, rather than 2 cars)

Mr. Williams closed by stating staff and the applicant are requesting comments and feedback only, with no formal action.

Mr. Ralph Pew addressed the Commission, and made the following points:

- The R1-4 district is specifically created for Master-Planned communities in conjunction with commercial uses; the issue is “what is an acceptable product to put in an R1-4 district?” The question to be addressed is how to build homes that are compatible with this type of lifestyle.
- The proposed concept maintains an overall density in the Church Farm subdivision of less than 2.5 dwelling units/acre; and less than 3 dwelling units/acre west of Meridian Road;
- Queen Creek needs a product like this. Mr. Pew cited Article 4 of the Town’s Zoning Ordinance, “*R1-4 district is intended to allow a broader mix of residential opportunities*”

by allowing single family housing on smaller lots and lot clustering.” This concept clusters six homes around a common courtyard.

Mr. Pew listed benefits of having a ‘courtyard’, ‘six-pack’ product as follows:

- The cluster concept puts homes on 3,000 square-foot, rather than 4,000 square-foot lots and uses the remaining 1,000 square feet for more meaningful and open space uses in other areas of the site;
- Applicant feels people who are interested in buying these homes do not want large yards or maintenance of those yards;
- Concept proposes no garages facing streets; two drive aisles instead of six driveways on a long street;
- Applicant feels buyers will not be deterred about traffic congestion because they already fully understand ingress/egress in neighborhoods such as this;
- Applicant feels there is an improved street character; consistent landscape maintenance; and good neighbor interaction.

Mr. Pew responded to staff’s concerns about lack of space for vehicles to maneuver in the driveways, stating there is adequate room. He stated buyers would typically not own large pick-up trucks, and that people who buy here have a lifestyle compatible with these types of courtyard products.

Mr. Pew also outlined common misconceptions, including that people may call this type of product entry-level housing. The cost to the builder for what is typically called “bricks and sticks” is more per square foot and the quality and amenities are not compromised.

Mr. Pew requested Commission input on this concept, since there will be units on small lots in the R1-4 district in the future. He pointed out there are not many other designs that can achieve 5 units per acre, other than this concept.

Commission comments:

Commissioner Sossaman clarified the R1-4 zoning district does not currently exist in this project. Mr. Pew responded that is correct, because it has not been zoned in the Church Farm subdivision. This site is currently zoned R1-43.

Vice-Chairman Moore asked where this product would be installed on the site. Mr. Pew responded, for the moment, a project of this nature will go south of the commercial minor General Plan Amendment just previously considered by the Commission. There may be other transitional spots on this parcel, as well. The applicant feels approximately 5 to 6 per cent of a master-planned community should be comprised of units of this nature placed in appropriate locations.

The Commission offered the following comments:

- 1) Prior experience with projects like this in other areas, including California and Arizona, have shown that people do not park where they are supposed to; there is too much congestion, especially on trash days when receptacles are out on the street; more parking should be provided for owners and their guests;
- 2) Alley-ways are littered with grease and oil because people work on their cars in the alley (as there is not enough room on the short driveways in front of the garages);
- 3) There are too many cars on the street because of limited space in the garages;
- 4) Experience has shown that people who live in these areas buy a home like this because it fits their budget, not their lifestyle;
- 5) It can be difficult to see the addresses since only the end units abut the street; this can cause accidents and can reduce emergency response times;
- 6) The concept shown is too linear; an alternative to the drive-aisles should be provided, as they do not provide adequate room for vehicular maneuvering;

The Commission offered the following suggestions:

- 1) A nicer, similar product that is considered “alley-loaded” is Agritopia, which has common yards, yet the back drive is a through-street;
- 2) The proposed concept would be good for an urban/downtown area, such as Town Center; but not in the Church Farm subdivision;
- 3) The Commission desires a less linear project with more through-streets or a bigger space for u-turns at the end of the drive-aisles;
- 4) The opinions of the Commission depend on what the product and the entire project looks like and how it works with the surrounding area/amenities;
- 5) The proposed density is not a problem or an issue; but the use of open space to make it valuable open space makes a difference (i.e. do not install only concrete and gravel and call it open space; put in ball fields, community areas, etc. that look good and can actually be used);
- 6) Queen Creek needs something like this;
- 7) There would need to be a very strong homeowners’ association to make something like this work, even in a master-planned community. The homebuilder should work with the HOA.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

All administrative items were discussed during Work Study.

7. **Review** of next month’s agenda items
8. **Report** on Town Council Action
9. **Communication** from members of the Commission and Staff
10. **Adjournment**

Motion: **Commissioner Sossaman**

To adjourn.

2nd: Commissioner Ingram

Vote: **All ayes. Motion carried 5-0 (Trapp-Jackson, Perry absent)**

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

By: _____
Michael Moore, Vice-Chairman

ATTEST:

Laura Moats, Community Development Assistant

I, Laura Moats, do hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the foregoing Minutes are a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the May 12, 2010 Regular Session Meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 12th day of April, 2010.

Passed and Approved this day 14th day of July, 2010.