



## **Washington County Land Use Authority Meeting**

### **April 8, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission of Washington County was called to order by Chairman Brian McMullin at 1:30 p.m. on April 8, 2025, in the Washington County Commission Chambers and via Zoom, at 111 East Tabernacle Street in St. George, Utah. The Commissioners in attendance were Brian McMullin, Mark Owens, Brad Gaston, Brandon Anderson, Kevin Jones, Olivia Anderson. Keith Kelsch was absent from today's meeting. The Washington County Staff in attendance: Scott Messel, Director of Community Development, Victoria Hales, Washington County Deputy Attorney; Todd Edwards, Public Works Director; Leslie Fonger, Destination Development Manager, Emerson Rivera, Zoning & Code Compliance Specialist; Lance Gubler, Building Inspector, Reid Walkenhorst, Planner.

#### **MEETING OPENING AND WELCOME.**

#### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Pledge of Allegiance led by Chairman McMullin.

#### **ROLL CALL / STATEMENTS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST.**

Roll Call:

Chairman Brian McMullin: No Conflict

Vice Chairman Mark Owens: No Conflict

Commissioner Kevin Jones: No Conflict

Commissioner Brad Gaston: No Conflict

Commissioner Olivia Anderson: No Conflict

Commissioner Brandon Anderson: No Conflict

Commissioner Keith Kelsch: Absent

Chairman McMullin introduced Olivia Anderson as a new Planning Commissioner. She was invited to introduce herself and how she became interested in Land Use. Olivia shared aspects of her family, living in Dammeron Valley, and how she's passionate about wanting to protect the quality of life, natural resources, and support responsible development in Washington County.

- LOT LINE ADJUSTMENT AND ZONE CHANGE (Public Hearing – Legislative).** Review an application for a zone change and lot line adjustment for six parcels 3080-B-NS, 3085-NS, 3077-A-NS, 3077-B-1-NS, 3082-B-NS and 3082-A-NS. The approximate location is 622 E Hwy 144, New Harmony, Utah. The parcels are currently zoned A-20 (Agriculture 20-acre min lot size), the applicant is requesting to change to zone A-10 (Agriculture 10-acre min lot size). To



support the zone change request, the applicant is also pursuing a lot line adjustment to reduce the number of lots from 6 lots to 3 lots. The applicant is Kirk Anderton.

Mr. Messel explained the location of the property in New Harmony. The property under consideration is currently comprised of 6 parcels which are not compliant with the acreage requirements of the A-20 zone. The applicant is proposing to reduce the number of parcels to 3 and rezone the newly configured parcels to the A-10 zone.

Mr. Tim Watson approached the podium and explained the current 6 parcels will be reconfigured and reduced to 3 parcels. The application proposes to rezone the newly configured parcels to the A-10 zone. The new parcels will have enough acreage to satisfy the requirements of the A-10 zone.

Ms. Hales added a condition of approval, stating a private easement document will need to be recorded ensuring perpetual use of the easement and further detailing the easement cannot be vacated without written consent from Washington County.

Mr. Tim Watson asked for clarification on whether the location of the easement could be changed.

Ms. Hales stated the priority of the County is to ensure the access easement is perpetual, meaning it can't go away, and it cannot be vacated without written consent. The Planning Commission is the land use authority and would review modifications in a public meeting.

Chairman McMullin opened the public hearing.

None came forward or wished to speak.

Chairman McMullin closed the public hearing.

**MOTION:** **Commissioner Anderson motioned to APPROVE the proposed Zone Change and Lot Line Adjustment, Commissioner Mark Owens seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**2. ROAD DEDICATION PLAT (Public Meeting – Administrative).** Review a proposed Road Dedication for 900 N near Leeds. The approximate location is 900 N Main Street in Leeds. The applicant is proposing to dedicate the roadway to Washington County to support development activity in the area. The applicant is Bush and Gudgell.

Mr. Messel explained there is growth happening at the North end of Leeds. 900 N provides access to developments which have been approved in Leeds. Part of 900 N is in the town of Leeds, part of the road is in the County jurisdiction. Currently the road doesn't get a lot of traffic, but this will be changing. There are findings and conditions in the staff report, staff recommends approval.

Commissioner Jones asked if a road being dedicated to the county already meets the standards of the county.



Mr. Messel stated the road does or would need to meet our standards before being dedicated.

Commissioner Anderson asked about the public utility easement and grading easement.

Mr. Edwards stated the slope easement will be shown on the dedication plat.

Commissioner McMullin asked about the width of the roadway and if it was adequate for anticipated growth.

Mr. Edwards stated Public Works was satisfied with the width and it aligned with the requirements of the traffic study.

Commissioner Anderson suggested there should be a legal description for the slope easement on a separate document.

Ms. Hales stated there will be an additional requirement from the legal department, item 6 on the staff report; Washington County will retain a slope easement which will be described on a separate document and recorded, or on the plat legal description.

**MOTION:**

**Commissioner Jones motioned to APPROVE the Road Dedication Plat citing findings and conditions in the staff report, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Gaston. The motion passed unanimously.**

3. **PLANNED DEVELOPMENT RESIDENTIAL (PDR) – CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW (Public Meeting) – Administrative.** Review a Concept Plan for a Planned Development Residential (PDR) known as Solara. The project parcel is 3151-A-1-HV, with an approximate location of 1850 W Mills Lane near Leeds. The applicant is Solara Communities, LLC.

Mr. Messel gave an overview of the planned development process, specifically the Concept Plan, being the starting point for the developer, and a way to receive feedback from Staff and the Planning Commission, as they continue to work toward their Project Plan.

Mr. Messel further provided information on the project parcel, the area being requested for zone change, an area of 10 +/- acres, and the density per acre being requested, at 7.5 units per acre. He invited Doug Towler to approach the podium and provide a presentation on their proposal.

Mr. Towler approached the podium and gave an overview of their proposal. Their focus is currently on the 10 acres, closest to Mills Lane. Mr. Towler shared information on other development activities in the adjacent areas. He further highlighted the infrastructure coming into the area to support the development. Infrastructure for water, power, and sewer will support their project. He indicated his team has been working with utility providers to ensure the requirements of his development are met.



Internal roadways are contemplated to have trails, or curb, gutter, and sidewalks. They have also configured the town homes to share a common open space and have alley load access for vehicles. This design encourages more walkable spaces and less of a car centric design. Mr. Towler expects residents will enjoy the proximity to outdoor amenities such as trails to BLM land, hiking, biking, and enjoying nature.

Mr. Towler stated his team is prepared to sprinkle any structures necessary to comply with the requirements from Hurricane Valley Fire. They are working toward securing a secondary access which would eliminate the need to sprinkle the units. However if there is a delay, they will meet the requirements for a single point of access.

Mr. Towler talked about the landscaping and how they plan to satisfy the ultra-low use water wise landscape standards from the Washington County Water Conservancy District.

Mr. Messel stated he would like the developer to ensure they have trees in their landscape plan. Trees will help reduce the heat island effect which can occur with high density developments in this area.

Mr. Towler also included their plan to use dark sky principles in their lighting plan. They intend to use downward facing, fully shrouded lighting. Along trails they will use ballard style lights to illuminate the trails.

Chairman McMullin asked about the discrepancy with acreage and density requirements of the code. The code requires PDR minimum acreage to be 40 acres, and the density per unit is set at 5 units per acre. The Solara proposal is asking for 10 acres, and a density of 7.5 units per acre.

Ms. Hales stated the acreage and density being requested, could be contemplated as appropriate, however it would require changes to Washington County Code Title 10 Zoning Regulations.

Mr. Messel stated the county is in favor of higher density, and for this particular project, the proximity of utilities lends favorably to higher density and a lower acreage requirement.

Commissioner Anderson asked if there was a reason the code required 40 acres as the minimum lot size.

Ms. Hales stated the 40 acre minimum requirement was likely intentional, because most PDR projects are on larger acreage sites.

Commissioners Owens asked the applicant if they understood they would be applying for a zone change.

Mr. Towler stated he understood they would need to be approved for a zone change, but this step was just for Concept Plan approval.



Ms. Hales stated the Concept Plan needs to be reviewed and comments taken from today's meeting need to be incorporated in their project plan approval. Today's meeting is primarily about taking feedback. The project plan will be made up of a 3 legged stool; project plan, development agreement, and zone change. The applicant has made a lot of progress.

Commissioner Owens wanted to get an idea on the cost of housing from this phase of development.

Mr. Towler stated the townhomes will be sold at market rate, and they expect they will sell for between \$350,000 to \$400,000.

Commissioner Owens asked if there will be inclusion of Tiny Homes in this phase.

Commissioner Ownes clarified that he would like to work together with the developer to build units less than 800 sq ft.

Mr. Towler stated he would like to bring the discussion of smaller homes and higher density back to the planning commission with the builder.

Mr. Messel stated the water, utility, and access issues have prevented the Solara group from moving forward with their project. Access continues to be a challenge. Scott emphasized the need for improvements on Mills Lane going south. Scott feels like a multi-use trail or path would help with connectivity.

Mr. Messel further provided examples of how a multi-use trail could be contemplated along Mills Lane. He also brought to attention the concern associated with double frontage lots. Those lots will need to have a landscape strip or trail to ensure the double frontage issue is addressed.

Mr. Messel shared his concern with the townhome units adjacent to the retention area. He would like to see more of a courtyard design or create some kind of usable space on the backside.

Commissioner Jones asked Mr. Towler if the PID was mostly focused on utilities.

Mr. Towler stated the PID will focus on any improvements which will be dedicated to the county, whether roads, trails, or utility infrastructure. The first 75 units won't be enough to create a bond agreement.

Commissioner Jones asked if there will be an HOA.

Mr. Towler stated there will be HOA fees, but they are trying to keep the amount of amenities to support the families, without having so many amenities that the HOA fees become too much of an expense.

Mr. Towler stated his concern about deed restricted units, as they may impact their ability to obtain PID financing.



Commissioner Owens asked if there will be one builder for the project or multiple builders.

Mr. Towler stated there will be multiple builders. Currently they have two home builders lined up who have committed to take portions of the project.

Commissioner Gaston asked if the sprinkling of units would continue after the secondary access was established.

Mr. Towler said if they could get into a position which didn't require sprinkling of units, they would opt to not install sprinklers to keep cost down.

Commissioner Gaston asked how the HOA would be turned over to homeowners.

Mr. Towler stated there will be a master HOA which will manage homes for single family residential and a separate HOA will be used to manage the STR portion of the development.

Commissioner Anderson asked about the amenities, what type of amenities.

Mr. Towler stated they are trying to promote an outdoor lifestyle, and maximizing the outdoor spaces as amenities. They are trying to be good stewards of keeping the cost of amenities down. They will have amenities for full time residents; parks, cabana's, club area and a trail system meandering through the property. There will also be specific amenities for the STR portion of the development; Pool, showers, gathering area, no club house.

Mr. Messel commented that based on the planned amenities, the trail system along Mills Lane would be very beneficial.

Ms. Leslie Fonger came to the podium and talked about the importance of multi-use amenities, the transportation benefits, and the expense of living in a home. She strongly advocated for a trail system to be brought in along Mills Lane. Mills lane is a critical connection point going North and South.

Commissioner Jones asked if she was advocating for trail improvements along the frontage of the property.

Ms. Fonger strongly advocated the trail should be improved along with the road improvement requirements going North to accommodate the access needs for multi-use transportation.

Ms. Hales stated she had a list of legal considerations. She will provide those items in writing for the developer to correct. Much of the language in the Concept Plan makes reference to phases or terminology referencing the larger project.

Ms. Hales stated the applicant will need a Will Serve Letter for water service for the 75 single family units.



Commissioner Anderson asked who is responsible for making the corrections before the Project Plan is submitted. The developer will be responsible for taking feedback and making corrections.

Mr. Messel stated the developer would be responsible for taking feedback from the Concept Plan review and updating the Project Plan accordingly. Mr. Messel further clarified the entire project will need to be submitted and approved before the 76<sup>th</sup> unit is approved.

Commissioner Anderson stated her concern with Single Family Homes with RV garages not being affordable.

Chairman McMullin stated his desire for adhering to the Outdoor Lighting ordinance.

Mr. Towler stated they will be going for completely Dark Sky compliant.

Mr. Owens asked what level of freeway noise is experienced at the lots along Mills Lane (10, 11, and 12). He wondered if those lots might be less desirable, and could they potentially be used for tiny homes.

Mr. Towler indicated the topography of the area helps to mitigate some of the noise from the freeway.

Mr. Towler stated he's willing to bring in more density, but he's concerned about having to bring in another concept plan with an ask for higher density. He does recognize that lot 11 is unique and would benefit from landscape strip to create a buffer with the freeway and Mills Lane.

Commissioner Anderson asked if there would be a commercial component in the future phases.

Mr. Towler explained there will be some potential for limited commercial in the future phases, but their focus is mostly on creating residential units.

Mr. Messel asked Mr. Towler to ensure there are dedicated spaces for mail delivery and refuse and trash disposal is taken into consideration with their plan.

**MOTION:**

**No MOTION on this item. Feedback only.**

**4. MISC REVISIONS TO TITLE 10 ZONING REGULATIONS (Public Hearing – Legislative)** Review proposed changes to Title 10 zoning regulations. Review, discuss, hold a public meeting and a public hearing to make recommendations to the County Commission.

Ms. Hales reviewed the proposed changes which includes language associated with fines, alcohol establishments, and zoning requirements. There are also changes being proposed for minimum acreage requirements for zone changes and units per acre to



allow for higher density in PDR zones.

The Planning Commissioners engaged in a robust discussion concerning the proposed changes to acreage and density requirements for PDR.

Chairman McMullin opened the public hearing.

John Leavitt a resident from Veyo approached the podium, but stated he wasn't concerned about proposed changes. He appreciated the expanded uses allowed in the MFG zone.

Jessica Dottie asked for clarification on the changes to the use chart related to the MFG zone.

Chairman McMullin closed the public hearing.

Discussion continued on the line items concerning alcohol serving establishments which have been revised to allow for more expanded uses.

Discussion circled back to the bonus density discussion related to PDR. The recommendation was to keep normal density on 10 acres at 5 units per acre. For a developer to get the advantage of 7.5 units per acre, .5 units per acre would be designated as Moderate Income Housing with owner occupancy, deed restricted for 100 years, and not subject to HOA fee's.

Commissioner Owens wanted to spend some time clarifying other line items, specifically construction hours. Contractors should be able to ask for variance of construction hours at a department level rather than approval from the Planning Commission.

Ms. Hales will also define which holidays are specific to the ordinance revisions by adding legal county holidays.

**MOTION:**

**Commissioner Jones motioned to send a POSITIVE recommendation of the proposed changes, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Anderson. The motion passed unanimously.**

5. **MINUTES.** Consider approval of the minutes of the regular Planning Commission meetings held on March 1, 2025.

**MOTION: Commissioner Anderson motioned to APPROVE the minutes, the motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Gaston. The motion passed unanimously.**

6. **COUNTY COMMISSION UPDATES REMARKS, STAFF REPORTS.**

Mr. Messel provided an update of action taken by the County Commission.

Consent Agenda Approvals



- Amended Plat – Blackridge Ranches – Lorraine Fischer/Julie Prior
- Amended Plat – Mountain View

Legislative Approvals

- Zone Change – New Harmony A-20 to RA-5 – Edwin Voskanian
- Zone Change – Kolob OST-20 to SFR-1 – Terry Arnold
- PDSBOZ Amendment – Trees Ranch

Project Plan

Development Agreement

**7. ADJOURNMENT.**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Jones motioned to ADJOURN the meeting, the motioned was seconded by Commissioner Gaston.

**Meeting adjourned 4:15pm.**

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Reid Walkenhorst  
Community Development Planner

Approved: