MINUTES OF THE CITY OF HOLLADAY
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, June 24, 2025
6:00 PM
City Council Chambers
4580 South 2300 East
Holladay, Utah

ATTENDANCE:

Planning Commission Members:
Karianne Prince, Vice-Chair
Ginger Vilchinsky
Angela Gong
Paul Cunningham

City Staff:
Carrie Marsh, City Planner
Brad Christopherson, City Attorney

WORK SESSION

In the absence of Chair Roach, Vice-Chair Karianne Prince called the Work Session to order at 5:30 PM.

City Planner, Carrie Marsh, reported that the Highland Park Planned Unit Development ("PUD") was originally approved in 2022. There was discussion at that time regarding the back side. The original Site Plan showed the townhomes in one section and various iterations of the road. Most of the open space for the PUD was in the back toward the west side of the property. Tree removals were tied to which were to be impacted by building footprints and roadways. The original approval included tree canopy sustainability with trees within buildable areas being approved for removal. Photos were provided showing the new trees proposed to be removed. Ms. Marsh explained that they are on the perimeter of the property.

Commissioner Cunningham's understanding was that the ordinance gives considerable deference to the Arborist to identify which trees need to be removed and why. That decision hinged on evidence provided by the Arborist. Ms. Marsh confirmed that the Arborist is also a Tree Removal Company. It is standard protocol to retain an Arborist who is affiliated with the tree removal company, who can assess the health of the trees and determine which should remain. The developer hired a tree removal company that provided the assessment. The letter provided in the Commission packet is the original letter upon which the previous approval was based, and trees are within those building and road footprints. Ms. Marsh explained that an amendment was being sought because there are trees outside of the footprint that the Planning Commission would have to approve. The request was part of the Conditional Use Permit associated with the PUD.

The Landscaping Plan was presented but had not been provided to the Commission in advance of the meeting for review. It included the proposed replacement trees as well as the affected tree canopy. Specific trees on the property were identified and discussed. Ms. Marsh stated that there is often a question regarding tree quality and health. The intent of the Tree Canopy Sustainability

Ordinance is to improve the tree canopy over time and replace older or diseased trees with newer ones. The result is to replenish the existing tree canopy. There is continual difficulty with site development when trees are in questionable health. From the developer's perspective, it is easier to manage those trees now and put in fresh landscaping and fencing.

Vice-Chair Prince commented that the issues raised in an e-mail received earlier in the day pertaining to privacy and water drainage seemed to be beyond the scope of the Planning Commission. Ms. Marsh explained that drainage is managed with engineering. Any drainage from a property cannot drain onto neighboring properties. The Engineering Plans ensure that drainage is retained on site. The location of the main stormwater retention area was identified. Site grading will ensure that all runoff flows to that central area.

With regard to privacy, any new development will have new trees planted. The Staff Report addressed the difference in land use and how that changes over time. Ms. Marsh explained that the existing land use has a small home with large trees. When redevelopment takes place, there will be a significant impact while adhering to the land rights of the property.

With regard to the quality of trees, there is nothing in the ordinance that takes into account what quality trees are. It is within the Commission's purview to decide whether the applicant adequately complies with the Tree Canopy Ordinance and the intent of a PUD with open space. It was clarified that the ordinance requires 1-for-1 replacement with the tree caliper based on canopy coverage once the tree is mature. The replacement will cover 11,745 square feet. It takes some of the larger trees that have a lot of canopy coverage and disperses them into smaller trees. Smaller trees will be planted along the perimeter where there is limited space.

Ms. Marsh stated that the property is zoned multi-family and the developer is entitled to 12 units. They are allowed to cover up to 60% of the lot. It was noted that the road and building count toward the lot coverage. 40% landscaping is required, not including the tree canopy. Commissioner Gong was concerned about the clear intent on the part of the developer to not keep any of the existing trees, as they have not been watered.

CONVENE REGULAR MEETING – Public Welcome and Opening Statement by Commission Chair.

Vice-Chair Prince called the Regular Meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Vilchinsky read the Commission Statement.

PUBLIC HEARING

1."Highland Park" PUD – Site Plan Amendment- 4880 South Highland Circle (R-M Zone). Continued Review and Consideration of Submittals by Applicant, Alec Moffit, to Modify the Site Plan of the Highland Park PUD, a .74-Acre Site containing 11 units within the R-M Zone, to Accommodate Tree Removals. Review conducted according to Final Site and Building Approvals (Conceptual:10/4/22, Preliminary: 1/10/23) and Development Standards of the Residential Multi-Family Zone §13.32 and §13.08.080 of the City of Holladay Code. *File #22-1-11.*

City Planner, Carrie Marsh, presented the Staff Report and stated that the request involves a previously approved Planned Unit Development ("PUD") subdivision in the R-M Zone. The property is located at 4880 South Highland Circle. The previous land use was residential with a home that was used as a business. What is proposed is a shift toward multi-family development. The site was previously approved with 11 townhomes. The previous approval included only trees to be removed that were directly impacted by building and road footprints for fire access. As the applicant began working toward site development, their tree assessment involved additional trees outside of the previous approval on the west and north sides.

Ms. Marsh reviewed the Landscape Plan and stated that the total lot coverage for the R-M Zone is 60% for buildings and roads with 40% landscaping. Also included was the Tree Canopy Replacement Plan to replace over 9,000 square feet of existing tree canopy with 11,000 square feet of tree canopy. The Landscape Plan shows the new trees that will be planted. The proposed removals were detailed by the applicant in the application. A larger Willow tree on the front east side of the property was originally to be removed but will now be preserved. The trees that are affected by the roadway and building footprints are interior. The additional trees that are outside of the original approval were identified. The applicant provided a Tree Assessment prepared by an Arborist with Diamond Tree Experts who detailed all of the trees on the site.

The applicant, Alec Moffitt, from Sequoia Development, reviewed the trees on the site and stated that Tree #2 is the Willow tree identified. It was originally removed from the list because there was another large tree on the site that the City wanted to keep. The health of the tree, however, is in question. They will try to preserve it but there was doubt that it would survive construction. Tree #1 included a group of pine trees in the middle of a building. The same was true for Tree #3. Tree #14 is in a road, and Trees #9, 8, 7, and 6 are on the north side. Trees #9, 8, and 7 have died, and #6 has a large root system that will be severely impacted by the road. It was not expected to survive. The concern was that it would become a hazard. Tree #12 is in the middle of the road. Tree #11 is close to the building footprint. Trees #4 and 5 were in question. The developer hoped to obtain approval to remove them while they try to save them.

Mr. Moffitt stated that they will save as many trees as possible. He noted that they purchased the property because of the large, mature trees. It was unfortunate that over the past two years, while the project has been on hold, the trees have not received any water or care. As a result, their health has declined. Their desire is to remove only trees that are sick or dying or that will be adversely impacted by construction.

A question was raised regarding who removed the irrigation system. Mr. Moffitt responded that they razed the home and removed the water meters. Immediately afterward, interest rates skyrocketed. Their initial plan no longer penciled and they had to stop construction immediately. Since then, they have tried to reduce the cost of the homes so that they would be reasonably affordable. Doing so allowed them to allow the project to move forward. During that time, however, no water got to the trees. Mr. Moffitt explained that the trees they will be replacing will significantly increase the canopy that existed previously.

Vice-Chair Prince opened the public hearing.

Joseph Amici gave his address as 4828 South Highland Circle #303 and stated that his home abuts the subject property to the north. He expressed support for the proposed changes and stated that currently there are mature trees on the property but an unsightly pile of dirt. He hoped the building process could be expedited, including the proposed changes involving the replacement of canopy trees. He asked that the developer maintain the property in the interim before construction begins as it is unsightly, full of garbage, and covered in abandoned traffic cones.

Kevin Ludlow from Sequoia Development, gave his address as 1955 South 1300 East, Suite 104. He lives in the City of Holladay and reported that they developed Bandits Restaurant and the Powder House Ski Shop and are very familiar with the City. They also developed brownstone residential behind the former Ace Hardware. He thanked the Commission for their consideration.

Vice-Chair Prince stated that a comment was submitted via email earlier in the day that was made part of the record. A nearby resident asked about the plans for the tree removal, perimeter trees, and drainage issues. Ms. Marsh offered to address those questions with the resident directly.

There were no further comments. The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Cunningham asked what was proposed for the Willow tree on the northeast side. He recalled that the Commission specifically asked that that tree remain. Mr. Moffitt was seeking permission to remove it, if needed. Ms. Marsh explained that the current Landscaping Plan does not show the Willow Tree. The Commission can choose to modify or add conditions if desired.

Vice-Chair Prince asked if the Commission could require that if the Willow is removed, it be replaced with a large tree. City Attorney, Brad Christopherson, stated that the Tree Ordinance does not address large trees. His recollection was that it refers to caliper. Ms. Marsh stated that replacement trees need to be 1½-inch caliper with the focus being on the mature canopy size. That can be dispersed into smaller trees or a larger tree. Where the Willow is currently is in a large open space that would be appropriate for a larger tree. The choice would be up to the developer.

Mr. Christopherson recommended that the Commission consider the plan as if the trees are not going to be saved. Mr. Moffitt commented that the Landscape Plan does not include any existing trees. He noted that there are still a lot of trees remaining. The area will be very private and secluded with as many trees as possible.

The comment was made that the Arborists' Report is not optimistic in terms of keeping any of the trees due to serious health issues. It was felt that with some foresight, the situation could have been prevented. It was thought to be due to a lack of planning. Commissioner Cunningham suggested that in the future, developers be required to continue watering the site. The comment was made that when dealing with demolition and water meters are removed, there is no way to get water to the site.

Commissioner Vilchinsky moved to APPROVE a Site Plan Amendment to the "Highland Park" Planned Unit Development, a residential 11-unit development within the R-M Zone located at 4880 South Highland Circle, subject to the following:

Findings:

1. ***Complies with the allowed land uses in the R-M Zone.***

2. ***No changes are being made to any of the previous approvals for the PUD.***

3. ***Replacement Tree Canopy coverage provides for the future preservation and enhancement of desirable site characteristics.***

Conditions:

1. ***Tree removals are only as designated.***

2. ***Replacement trees to be planted as shown. Significant deviations must be approved by the Planning Commission.***

3. ***The developer was strongly urged you to try to keep Trees #2, 4, and 5 on the back end of the property.***

Commissioner Gong seconded the motion. Vote on motion: Commissioner Cunningham-Yes, Commissioner Vilchinsky-Yes, Commissioner Gong-Yes, Vice-Chair Prince-Yes. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Cunningham moved to ADJOURN. Commissioner Vilchinsky seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Commission.

The Planning Commission Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:15 PM.

I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the City of Holladay Planning Commission Meeting held on Tuesday, June 24, 2025.

Teri Forbes

Teri Forbes
T Forbes Group
Minutes Secretary

Minutes Approved: **January 6, 2026**