

NOTICE OF MEETING
HILLSIDE REVIEW BOARD
CITY OF ST. GEORGE
WASHINGTON COUNTY, UTAH

Public Notice

Notice is hereby given that the Hillside Review Board of the City of St. George, Washington County, Utah, will hold meetings at the referenced site on **Wednesday, May 25, 2022**, commencing on-site at approximately **8:30 a.m.**

PRESENT:

James Sullivan
Dave Black
James Dotson
Russ Owens

EXCUSED:

Jeff Mathis

CITY STAFF:

Assistant Public Works Director, Wes Jenkins
Planner III, Dan Boles
Planner III, Carol Davidson
Development Office Supervisor, Brenda Hatch

James Sullivan called the meeting to order.

1. Consider the continuation of a request for a hillside development permit at the Commerce Point Development. The applicant is proposing to construct in the area shown on the slope map labeled 20-30%, 30-40% and 40% and above. The property is located at Southeast quadrant of the intersection of Auto Mall Drive and Blackridge Drive. The property is currently zoned Highway Commercial (C-2). The applicant is Commerce Point, LC. Case No. 2022-HS-005.

Austin Atkin – Some of the main questions from last time were in regard to the landscape and what it was going to look like. The idea is that this slope up here it's going to be obviously xeriscape landscaping, we are talking about not even putting any kind of drip line or anything on this hillside. The idea is that we will just create something aesthetically pleasing. It's mostly going to be behind the buildings.

James Dotson – Does that take precedence over ordinance? For landscaping along roadway and frontage?

Chris Volksen – Stability wise we don't want to put water on this at all, just because of the materials that are under here. As a geotechnical engineer, I'm not going to recommend water on there.

Carol Davidson - With the hotel that is going in over here across the street, during their zone change amendment we did ask for provisions, so they didn't have to do the street trees and stuff.

Wes Jenkins – Didn't we add that language from the hillside to the Planning Commission?

Carol Davidson – Yes.

Dave Black – So we could put it in the motion, no landscape water on the slopes.

Carol Davidson – They are still putting stuff in, they are having a system where it is contained, it doesn't run off. They are not putting in what is required, they are putting in less. I don't know of anyone that has requested zero irrigation. They got a reduction on the required landscaping.

Chris Volksen – It's important to remember that this is just for mass grading.

Wes Jenkins – If that is something the hillside wants to recommend it should probably come forward at this time.

Austin Atkin – Everything else in the project will match the landscaping that we've done, we're just talking about the steepest portion.

Dave Black – One of the things we talked about was the timing of when the decorative rock and that landscaping would go in. The idea was to get whatever retaining walls in that you need and get the decorative landscaping in behind those upfront without knowing how long it would be before the site gets developed.

Chris Volksen – I don't think the retaining walls are a part of this now.

Austin Atkin – Yes, we need to come in to design all that.

Chris Volksen – Part of GTS's part of the project, what we were asked to do was to go in, we had referenced 3:1 slopes on this west slope and I actually went back and looked at my design and for my slope stability analysis we had put in 2:1 slopes. We analyzed it using 2:1 slopes, I made that change in the report. We were asked for paving design for the road that is going to be put in. Right now, they are just planning on cutting these slopes down, just the 2:1 all the way down to the bottom and leaving that there. Then when the pad is developed, once whatever building they are going to put on it is defined then that wall will be installed. We gave recommendations for grading along that west slope, we're going to do it in sections instead of doing the whole thing. Our slope stability analysis assumed the retaining walls were there. That was something they asked for to see if it would change the stability of the slope, it really didn't change it at all. The 2:1 slope wasn't going to change it at all either.

Russ Owens – So why even have a retaining wall?

James Dotson – They want to push the building back up into the slope.

Russ Owens – So you cut it 2:1 and then you would cut that slope out more and put a retaining wall in?

Austin Atkin – When we know exactly what is going there, yeah.

Reid Pope – On this one over here the building gets fairly tight so we have 2 tiered walls just because we can't go over 8 foot.

Austin Atkin – That part we will be coming in and doing pretty much right away because this is the part that we do have a lease for.

James Sullivan – So I guess I'm confused because you recommended 2:1 and came back with 3:1.

Chris Volksen – It was a typo that Dave caught. I designed it at 2:1 on the first grading report, then after our meeting, I updated that to a 2:1. I think the original design I saw for that was a 3:1. That was 2 years ago or a year and a half ago.

James Sullivan – So these soils will hold a 2:1?

Chris Volksen – Yes.

Reid Pope – This whole site was actually approved for grading about 3 years ago or whatever.

James Sullivan – So you're not going to put the walls in, except for when you're going to come forth with the buildings?

Austin Atkin – Yes.

Reid Pope – We're just trying to get this, so it looks more desirable, clean up the property.

Dave Black – Are there provisions, let's just say for instance, you get the first building in and then the economy takes a dump, and it sets for 5 plus years before it starts up again and we have a scar. A 40-foot scar, unfinished slope, are there bonds to the City or something to address that? The reason we are here is because it has a potential for scarring, you are in the hillside overlay, 40-foot cut is a 40-foot scar. Your ultimate build out, I think adequately addresses the concerns. The buildings are going to hide it, your decorative landscaping addresses the concerns. But if it's 5 years down the road that was some of our conversation before to get some of that mitigation upfront as much as possible. Do you bond for that?

Wes Jenkins – Not necessarily, it can be part of the motion.

Dave Black – What if it sets for a few years, what is the magical number? And if the economy stays good, then like you say, it's probably going to go really fast and 2 years from now it's going to be completely built out, it's going to look great.

Austin Atkin - If we were talking about a really pristine area, that was really undisturbed and nice maybe it would be a little more of a thing.

Dave Black – Yes, what you do is going to be better than what you have now, that is a legitimate comment. The concern is the scarring, and you have a plan to mitigate it, it's just the timing.

Wes Jenkins – That's a good question. There are two things, whatever you approve today, say it's a 2:1 slope, we don't do temporary at the City. We just say that is permanent. There is no obligation on the City's part that would require them to do that. Whatever slope it's left in, we consider that permanent. If they come back and change that in the future as part of their development, that's up to them. Unless it's something that requires the hillside, and they go through that process. To answer your question, if you feel like mitigation needs to be in at some certain point and time then we ought to have that discussion, as far as aesthetic, and I don't know what that time frame is. That's where we look for some direction from you.

Dave Black – What's reasonable? If you get it all graded and it sets for a year, that's one thing. Can we recommend if it sits longer than a year the slope be mitigated?

Wes Jenkins – We would look to that guidance from what you guys recommend. That would go forward to Planning Commission and City Council.

James Sullivan – I think it's a really valid point, just because everything we've got here.

Austin Atkin – We're interested in it looking appealing as well, whether we build here tomorrow or not. We're long-term owners across the street and everything. That's pushing us to come in here and do the grading. We want to make it look appealing and ready to go. We're going to end up doing a lot of landscaping along this road here because it has to come through here and connect when we do this building. I don't know what it would cost to go and put gravel down on the upslope to try and make it look finished. It would be pretty costly I'm sure. And then we don't know if we are going to come and rip it all out and do it in the future anyway. When it's cut is it really that much worse than it is now? It's hard to nail it down, but we're interested in it looking nice.

James Sullivan – Are we approving the grading plan as it's drawn without the walls? One comment was that we don't approve anything temporary but we're approving temporary if we approve this plan without walls.

Wes Jenkins – So that can be that permanent condition. It could sit like that forever, as long as it's a stable slope and someone signs off on it. The City doesn't do anything beyond that. So, are you comfortable with it staying in that condition aesthetically for a long period of time or do you feel like something needs to happen, that's a good question?

James Sullivan – Worst case scenario is after 10 years it's going to look more natural than it did before. There's a good chance.

Dave Black – The stability question that you have really has been taken away from us, so we don't need to address stability. All we are looking at is disturbance, aesthetics and

mitigating the cut slope. I think that there is a 3rd party review that is done separately and whatever we decide on the aesthetics of mitigation, we could make that contingent on the results of the 3rd party review, because things could change after that's done. The Hillside Committee doesn't need to worry about that, we just need to worry about the cut slope.

Austin Atkin – What about to do this building and cut in this road, we are pretty close to grade for this road, we don't have to go in and disturb a lot of this right now. We don't have to take it to that 2:1 when we do the mass grading right away. Maybe our grading comes in enough to put in this road, and we leave most of that the way it is.

Dave Black – If you clean up any previously disturbed stuff and go in there, that's not an issue.

Discussion continued on leaving the site as is until they develop the other sites.

Wes Jenkins – This is my vision; you can address it two ways. You could say, if you do concrete walls, is the concrete color good enough? Or do you feel like it should be stained or something like that? You can address that and any landscaping, a reduction in the landscaping or something like that. You could say, if they choose to not do walls, and they do a slope then they would have to do some facing on that slope. You would address both conditions now.

James Dotson – From an aesthetic and landscaping perspective a 2:1 slope is a miserable thing, and they shouldn't be allowed anywhere. At least a 3:1 allows small gravel, if you're not rip wrapping the thing with big cobble, small gravel will never stay on it. It ends up at the bottom. Every single time, I can show you a thousand places in town where it's just a mess because they decided that a 2:1 slope was acceptable as a landscape area.

Wes Jenkins – I would think you would address that now, and you would say if you're not going to do walls but you're going to slope it, then you would put those recommendations in it.

Dave Black – Even with the walls, there is a considerable portion above it that will be slope. If you flattened up the slope the walls would have to be taller.

James Sullivan – If we approve their plan then maybe we need to say that it needs to be 6-to-12-inch rock. If we go that far to say that the cut slope long term needs to be finished out like that? Do we say it needs to be done now or whenever it does get cut needs to be finished with that kind of material? And then we approve if they put walls in, we're ok with what is drawn. If they do the walls and slopes we're ok with what's drawn? If they don't disturb anything we're ok with that?

Wes Jenkins – I think that's how I would address it. Say that the applicants recommended to not disturb this right now with the grading, that will be done at a later date. And then look at the options for how to deal with that slope.

James Dotson – Based on that plan, where would that line be?

Discussion continued on what portion would be left undisturbed.

Russ Owens – I am kind of a different opinion than Dave. I don't see how you can approve the cut in the slopes unless you have the 3rd party review done. There is so much ambiguity. Is there a landslide? The first report showed there was, the second report says, now it says there's none. I've never seen anything definitive where is the landslide. I've never really seen anything on the cut slopes. How did you come up with the stabilities on your cut slopes using the proper soil?

Chris Volksen – So we found the deeper landslide that others have had in this area, we did not find.

Russ Owens – And that's based on what?

Chris Volksen – That's based on coring.

Russ Owens – How many holes have you done here recently?

Chris Volksen – We've done 2, we finished one of them yesterday. We done other holes throughout the last several years.

Russ Owens – On some of those thought, some of your test pits have said yes, we have the sheared material. Which to me has got to be some type of landslide material so I don't know how that just goes away.

Chris Volksen – Well part of it we take out, bench in, and replace. Our test pits indicated it was the upper 10 ft. We just cored a hole yesterday right up here. Our core between 5 and 10 ft we picked up an alluvial type of deposit from 10 – 12 ft we picked up more intact mudstone that wasn't sheared up at all. Coring as you know in this stuff is really difficult. You cannot get good quality cores. We tried several different things. We know it's within the upper 10 ft. We know have water coming out up on Black Ridge Drive, that's probably where the slide plane is coming through. We have no water until we got to 90 ft. Which makes sense. Our slope stability analysis showed it coming out near the road.

Russ Owens – No it didn't, it showed it coming out on the slope in the first one.

Chris Volksen – Yeah, I know, but it's not down here, it's not underneath the motel.

Russ Owens – I guess I've never seen anything that proves that or even models that.

Chris Volksen – I realize we re-ran some stuff, and I thought it got sent out because I was asking where your review on it was. I found out you didn't get it.

Russ Owens – I would like to get that; I want to the information on all these new borings. I would hate to approve something that may need to change because if we say you can do a 2:1 slope then it will always be in writing and what if a 2:1 slope won't hold, and it needs to change to a 3:1.

Chris Volksen – And we did, we modeled the slope, cut it down, we used the same parameters we used over behind Maverik for building 1200 which were the same slope parameters that AGECE.

Russ Owens – So are they going to change with your new borings?

Chris Volksen – No, there is nothing, our model has not changed. That upper slide debris that we are finding on the site, we are calling it a slide debris, it could be an alluvial deposit. It's just a material that was not naturally, it's not a bedrock, it's not a mudstone. It was washed in, slid in whatever in that upper couple feet.

Russ Owens – We can argue that later in our report.

Discussion continued on the models and reports that were done by GTS and what was in the reports that were not received.

Dave Black – I guess we have two options; one is we could table it until that gets resolved or the other is we can assume that it gets resolved and the grading plan is similar to what we've seen and make a recommendation contingent upon satisfying the concerns of the 3rd party review. I don't think we could just recommend it for approval, I think it would have to be either tabled and wait till that is done or we come up with contingencies. There is a chance that it could change, but ultimately this site will be developed.

Russ Owens – I think we have been out here enough, I kind of like your second option. We give them some guidelines no matter what the slopes are grade this is what we would like to do to minimize any scars. We can give them some guidelines on how to address whatever.

MOTION: Dave Black made a motion contingent upon the final results of the 3rd party review, we would recommend for approval the grading plan as proposed with the following contingencies: disturbed slopes, cut slopes that are exposed over 10 ft tall be mitigated at the time of construction assuming that a portion of the site will remain undisturbed for a while. That mitigation will consist of an appropriately designed landscape plan, we recommend the landscape watering on the slopes themselves be eliminated and that in other portions of the site that landscape watering be reduced as much as possible based on agreements with the City. We recommend that any retaining walls that are built be colored to match the surrounding colors, the natural environment. The slopes that are shown on the grading plan, the cut might vary, and the grade could vary with 3rd party review and where possible we encourage that slopes be constructed flatter than 2:1 to facilitate the landscaping where possible. Any slopes steeper than 3:1 need to be treated with a fractured cobble that is 6 to 12 inches in size.

Austin Akin – The only thing I want to bring up is the color of the retaining walls, there will be a 2-story bank building right here that will be 25 to 30 ft.

Dave Black – How about any exposed retaining walls that are clearly visible to the public that are not hidden behind any buildings?

James Sullivan – I am never one that is apposed to gray when it is 6-8 ft tall with a 40 ft bank behind it that is going to be multi color like that lava slope. I think gray would look better; they are not going to use red rock on the slopes.

Discussion continued on the color of the concrete walls.

MOTION: Dave Black made a motion contingent upon the final results of the 3rd party review, we would recommend approval that with this grading plan they minimize the amount of disturbance as much as possible on undisturbed portions of the property, disturbed portions of the property for any slopes taller than 10 ft be permanent slopes

and be mitigated with decorative landscaping, any slopes that are 2:1 or steeper than 3:1 be rock that consists of angular cobbles at least 6 inches in size and the recommendation for approval is contingent upon the satisfactory results of the 3rd party review realizing that the current grading plan could potentially change from it's current configuration.

SECOND: James Dotson

AYES (4)

James Sullivan

Dave Black

James Dotson

Russ Owens

NAYS (0)

Motion carries

2. Consider approval of the meeting minutes from April 27, 2022.

MOTION: Russ Owens made a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting.

SECOND: Dave Black

AYES (4)

James Sullivan

Dave Black

James Dotson

Russ Owens

NAYS (0)

Motion carries

James Sullivan moved to Adjourn the meeting.