

MEETING MINUTES

**Meeting of the Technical Review Committee for Stanley Historic District Lot 4
November 16, 2006, 1:30 p.m.
Board Room, Estes Park Town Hall**

- Committee Members:** Michael Chalona, Bob Goehring, Bob Joseph, Randy Repola, John Spooner
- Attending:** Chair Repola, Technical Review Committee Members Chalona, Goehring, Joseph, and Spooner
- Also Attending:** Architectural Review Committee Members David Lingle and H. David Nelson, Town Attorney Greg White, and Recording Secretary Julie Roederer
- Absent:** None

Chair Repola called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m., reviewed the agenda, and had each member of the Technical and Architectural Review Committees introduce himself.

The previous development proposal for Lot 4 was withdrawn by the applicant prior to any decision by the Technical Review Committee.

Steve Lane of Basis Architecture, the primary design consultant for the development proposal submitted by Estes Winds, LLC, provided a visual presentation of the proposal and answered questions from Committee members. Further discussion among the Committee members followed. To summarize:

- The development proposal provides a transition from outlying commercial and residential areas to the Stanley Historic District. To that end, two residential buildings (Buildings B1 and B2) are proposed on the east portion of the lot beside the adjoining residential subdivision, two mixed-use buildings—Buildings C and D (commercial lower level/residential upper level and commercial lower level/office upper level)—are proposed in the center of the development, and a commercial building—Building A (restaurant lower level/banquet hall upper level)—is proposed on the west portion of the lot.
- The two-story residential buildings will each have six units. Each unit will contain two bedrooms, and each unit will have two parking spaces (one garage space plus one outside space), which meets the residential parking requirements. The applicant is requesting a variance to the 25-foot landscape buffer setback to allow ground-story decks/patios to extend into the setback by as much as ten feet. The purpose of the landscape buffer setback is to provide a “cushion” between adjoining properties. With the 25-foot setback, the Steamer Drive right-of-way, Steamer Drive, and the open-space lot between the proposed residential buildings and the adjoining neighborhood, the effect of encroachment into the landscape buffer setback would be minimal.
- The two mixed-use buildings create a courtyard, which benefits both commercial and residential users. The applicant is requesting a variance to the mandatory build-to line on Steamer Parkway to allow creation of the courtyard rather than the “downtown streetscape” envisioned in the Stanley Historic District Master Plan (henceforth “Master Plan”). Direct pedestrian access will not be via Steamer Parkway. The proposed western mixed-use building (Bldg. C) will be approximately 15 feet from the build-to line and the eastern mixed-use building (Bldg. D) will be approximately 24 feet from the build-to line.
- For commercial development of the lot, the Master Plan requires off-street parking to be located behind (to the southeast) buildings. The applicant requests a variance from this requirement and proposes separate parking for residential uses on one side of the mixed-use buildings, with commercial parking on the other side. Access to the retail units will be from the west and access to the residential units will be from the east. This variance would also allow parking along the access drives from Steamer Parkway.

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- The westernmost building (Bldg. A) is proposed to be a restaurant/banquet hall. The applicant proposes a service access entrance to the “basement” level of this two-story building. The “basement” level will be approximately 1,500 to 2,000 square feet dug into the hillside and will provide a small amount of storage space as well as area for building utilities (fans, boilers, etc.). The Master Plan encourages the use of this type of service area. The square footage of this area was not included in the total square footage calculations. Member Joseph stated his opinion that the floor area ratios provided in the Master Plan are an effort to limit the visible bulk of development on the site and that putting mechanical and service areas under a building is a good way to accomplish this objective. He stated it should be within the scope of the Technical Review Committee to make a reasoned judgment that the square footage of this below-grade service area does not need to be included in the total square-footage calculations of the development.

Town Attorney White stated the Estes Valley land use code (Estes Valley Development Code) does not apply to this proposal. The Technical Review Committee should use reasonable judgment to determine what comprises the 30,000-square-foot limit, the purpose of which is to limit bulk.

- Special Condition #3 in the Master Plan references the access drive to the Stanley Hotel, which has been relocated since the Master Plan was adopted.
- The commercial portion of the site would require 148 parking spaces; the applicant proposes 121 parking spaces for commercial use, and requests a variance to the parking requirement because the proposed uses (office, retail, restaurant) all have different peak times for parking demand. The applicant believes the proposed shared parking would be more than adequate to meet demand. Member Spooner stated that providing all the parking required by the Master Plan in addition to the coverage by the building footprints would not leave adequate room for required landscaping and buffering. He stated his agreement with the concept of shared parking for this proposal. Member Chalona questioned whether there would be adequate parking if a large event or banquet were held during a time of peak use for other portions of the site.
- The proposed buildings sit “low” on the site and do not block view corridors. One of the mixed-use buildings was pushed to the west to leave views unobstructed.
- Phasing is anticipated, as follows: Phase I – utilities, Phase 2 – restaurant/banquet hall (Bldg. A), Phase 3 – northern residential building (Bldg. B2), Phase 4 – southern residential building (Bldg. B1), Phase 5 – central courtyard buildings/space (Bldgs. C and D).
- Sidewalk is proposed the entire length of Steamer Parkway, with sidewalks through the site and crosswalks used as needed. The Master Plan calls for pedestrian linkage between the Stanley Hotel and Stanley Village. The proposed linkages are too circuitous. Addition of a sidewalk between proposed buildings C and D (the two mixed-use buildings) and sidewalk along the landscape border may be recommended by the Committee to more completely meet the Master Plan requirement.
- Approval of a variance would be required to allow commercial and residential development to be on either the first or second floor and to allow buildings to contain either or both residential and commercial uses (Bldgs. C and D). The Master Plan envisions commercial use on the main floor with residential units above, while the applicant proposes some buildings that are residential-only, a commercial-only building, and two mixed-use buildings. Committee Members discussed the fact that the “Maximum Allowable Development” guidelines in the Master Plan contemplate residential-only use, and that the two-story residential buildings proposed on the eastern portion of the lot provide a desirable buffer between the proposed commercial uses and the residential neighborhood to the east.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

Architectural Review Committee members David Lingle and H. David Nelson described their preliminary findings, summarized as follows:

- The main roof pitches are 5:12 and meet the Master Plan guidelines. Some roof pitches on the accent roofs do not meet the strict guidelines of the Master Plan, but do provide architectural character and visual interest, improving the overall impact of the development and thus meeting the intent of the Master Plan.

- Mr. Lane confirmed that the applicant will not request any variances to the building height limit of thirty feet.
- Mr. Lane also clarified that synthetic stone is not proposed and will not be used. The applicant intends to use thin-cut genuine stone. Color samples, roof samples, siding samples, stone samples, etc. will be provided for review at the building-permit stage.
- The proposed colors and materials provide variety and interest.
- No exterior stairs are proposed on the residential buildings, which is in compliance with the Master Plan. Exterior stairs are shown on the restaurant, but exterior stairs on commercial buildings are not addressed in the Master Plan.
- The Architectural Review Committee believes the submittal is in compliance with the Master Plan in terms of general architectural style, the building clustering aspects, garage door placement on the residential buildings, overall architectural compatibility, and the attached decks for the residential units.
- The proposed design is generally in compliance with the Master Plan. Committee Member Nelson expressed his opinion that the overall plan is excellent.

REVIEW OF PARCEL 4 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS—SPECIAL CONDITIONS:

The Committee reviewed each Special Condition shown on page 43 of the Master Plan. Discussion is summarized as follows:

Special Condition 1: The western third of Lot 4 is platted open space; no development is proposed in that area. All view corridors are preserved.

Special Condition 2: In addition to comments noted above, parking will be screened because it will be behind buildings. The slope of the proposed parking lot is 4.5 to 5 percent; the roofs of parked cars will be below street level. Landscape buffering in the parking areas is proposed. The intent of this special condition is to minimize visual impact of parking; this could be further accomplished with addition screening, which the Committee may require.

Special Condition 3: Requirements for the easternmost primary access point have been met. Requirements for the second primary access point do not apply because Lot 1 did not develop as contemplated under the Master Plan, therefore the point is moot. Nevertheless, the Committee has reviewed this proposed access for safety and found that the proposed offsets do not create a dangerous situation and that the access is well separated so as to provide for safe turning movements.

Special Condition 4: The proposal meets the requirements of Special Condition 4.

Special Condition 5: In addition to comments noted above, the Committee may require a pedestrian linkage between proposed Buildings C and D (the two mixed-use buildings).

Special Condition 6: Development of Steamer Parkway was undertaken by the Estes Park Urban Renewal Authority some years ago. Development in the area has not proceeded entirely as envisioned by the Master Plan—for instance, the Master Plan envisioned as many as fifty dwelling units in Stanley Views Subdivision; only nineteen were built, generating less traffic than originally anticipated. The language of this Special Condition in the Master Plan states “as warranted,” and the median islands and additional travel and turn lanes may not be needed. The Traffic Impact Analysis needs to be refined; the applicant will do additional analysis and submit estimated hourly trips along Steamer Parkway.

Special Condition 7: Member Spooner expressed some concern that two detention basins in a series are proposed without any time history of flows into or out of the basins. He stated his opinion that the submitted stormwater management plan will work but may need some fine tuning. The applicant, Member Spooner, and the Town Public Works department will meet to discuss.

Special Condition 8: The courtyard concept in the core of a commercial pod is one way to address this standard and provides a pedestrian space.

Special Condition 9: Addressed in comments during applicant’s presentation and #5 above.

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PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chair Repola stated that written comments had been received from Amy Hansen of Otten, Johnson, Robinson, Neff & Ragonetti, PC. He opened the meeting to public comment.

Amy Hansen of Otten, Johnson, Robinson, Neff & Ragonetti, PC, addressed the committee on behalf of New Stanley Associates, LLLP. She stated the Stanley Historic District is an overlay district and that the Estes Valley Development Code should apply to this proposal. She argued that banquet hall use is not allowed under underlying zoning in any other area of the Estes Valley and is allowed only as an accessory use to accommodations use. She stated her concern that the proposed parking is inadequate to meet peak usage. She stated the intent of the Master Plan is to protect the architectural significance and economic viability of the Stanley Hotel. Members Spooner and Joseph expressed their disagreement with her interpretation of the Estes Valley Development Code. Chair Repola reiterated that the Estes Valley Development Code is not applicable to this review.

Al Renner, 601 Findley Court, expressed his appreciation that the locations of the proposed buildings are such that view corridors are preserved. He stated the homeowners association is supportive of the variance to allow the two proposed residential-only buildings. He voiced his concern about the traffic that will be generated on Steamer Parkway, stating it was not designed for such heavy traffic. He also expressed concern about lack of adequate parking.

Byron Hall, resident at 161 Stanley Circle Drive and Chair of the Association for Responsible Development, and Patrick Cipola, 632 Aspen Avenue, both addressed the Committee and expressed concern that the proposed development is not the best use of the property. Mr. Hall encouraged the Committee to table the plan. Mr. Cipola stated he had been told by a former Town Board member that the property would be kept as open space.

Ed Campbell, President of Stanley Views Homeowners Association, expressed his satisfaction with much of the proposed development. He stated his support of the proposed location of the parking lot. He expressed concerns about the traffic, inadequate parking, and the northeast access to the development being located directly across from access to his subdivision (Findley Court). He also expressed concern that there is inadequate space for cars turning from Steamer Parkway onto Steamer Drive since the development's northeast access point is approximately 100 feet from that intersection. There will only be room for approximately five cars waiting to turn there, which may not be enough if a large event is taking place. He also encouraged the Committee to count the proposed below-grade square footage of the restaurant/banquet hall in the total for the development and limit the total to 30,000 square feet as required by the Master Plan.

Chair Repola noted the meeting had run past its scheduled time. Another meeting of the Technical Review Committee will be scheduled during the week of November 27, 2006.

Chair Repola adjourned the meeting at 3:35 p.m.

Randy Repola, Meeting Chair

Julie Roederer, Recording Secretary