

**BACH**  
**July 22, 2021**  
**12:00 pm - 1:00 pm**  
**Via Zoom**

*Attendees included: James Lindt, Sara Nadolny, Susan Philp, Doug MacDonald, Anne Baker, Cathy Click,  
Mike Kosdrosky*  
*Guests: Jeff Orsulak, Michael Lipkin*

**Agenda items**

- 1. Sopris Meadows Parcel 5 Application – Continued Discussion**
- 2. Capital Needs Committee Housing Items Discussion**

The meeting began at 12:03 pm

**1. Sopris Meadows Parcel 5 Application – Continued Discussion**

James introduced the Applicant team Michael Lipkin and Jeff Orsulak. This item is a continued discussion of the proposal for the Sopris Meadows Parcel 5 application, which involves the construction of 155 dwelling units. The site is a 12-acre parcel located between Park Modern and Willits Lake to the east and west, and between Lakeside Townhomes and Willits Lane to the north and south. The proposed style is similar to Park Modern. The affordable housing units are proposed within two buildings which are by way of East Valley Road through Lakeside Avenue. James noted that the Applicants have updated their housing proposal since last BACH's review.

James shared the site plan, with 44 affordable housing units within two buildings for a total of 40,820 square feet. The Applicants are proposing to dedicate a .75% real estate transfer assessment (RETA) on the project's free market portion.

The Town's affordable housing requirement allows for two mitigation options: 1) 15% of units and 15% of the project's square footage to be deed-restricted affordable housing with a 1.5% RETA, or 2) 20% units and 25% square footage to be deed-restricted affordable housing. The Applicant is proposing a bit of a hybrid between two options with a 28% total unit count equal to 44 units, 20% of the square footage to be deed-restricted housing. The Applicant is also proposing a .75% RETA, which is half of RETA on 1.5% mitigation requirement as deed-restricted units.

Michael added that the proposal is midway between options 1 and 2 in square footage, which is why they are asking for the blended rate RETA. He indicated that they are providing higher than required affordable units. Michael said he thinks this is a positive proposal for a demonstrated need. The housing is a good location for families.

Michael said that the Code incentivizes the creation of 1- or 2-bedroom units, but de-incentivizes 3-bed units. However, they are interested in accommodating families.

Michael presented the new site plan. He said that the Applicant team has enhanced the space between the parking and affordable housing units as a green zone. Michael noted that the project is taking up

more land for parking than for the actual buildings, and wondered, given scarcity of land on valley floor, if providing so much land for parking is appropriate. He asked BACH if they would consider supporting a parking variation. The requirement is 2.25 spaces per unit. In Willits Town Center there are buildings with the requirement of 1 space per unit. The site is less than ½ mile walk to bus stop. He asked if BACH would support one space per unit. They could add enhancements such as spots for carshare, motorized bicycles, etc.

Michael said that the other piece of the proposal they would like BACH's feedback on is to prioritize the affordable housing to support the arts (TACAW and Art Base) as a place where guest curators or short-term employees can find housing. They're also suggesting priority for in-home healthcare aides. And preference for locally owned businesses.

James suggested BACH handle the discussion topics one at a time. First is the overall mitigation program of 44 units at .75% RETA.

Doug said that with 44 two-bedroom units, we may expect as many as 88 cars. In looking at diagram, it might be possible to supply extra parking without using space available for development. Surveys indicate that people want more parking.

Michael said car ownership is not where people are going.

Cathy questioned what makes a development transit oriented. Susan replied that the development should be within ¼ mile walking distance and within ½ mile biking distance to transit. Cathy said that the Town should look seriously at getting some sort of small-scale shuttle between downtown and Willits to get people to give up their cars. Some type of "Downtown" service (like Aspen has) could help alleviate some of the parking pressures. Doug said that shuttle has ongoing Capital expenses so was removed from the Capital Needs Committee's consideration. Also, the Town cannot use bond money for ongoing expenses. Cathy questioned whether another funding possibility would come from developers.

James explained SkiCo's carshare program that is planned for their development at Block 9 once a platform is established. Cathy said this could be something for the developer to look at. They should find a tangible option. Michael said he is happy to build spaces but that it is not the developer's job to take the leadership on doing something proactive about transit.

Susan said that the buildings in Willits with one subgrade parking space per unit has the issue too much on-street parking. Michael said overnight on-street parking has never been enforced, and that people will take all the spaces they can.

Anne asked about the location of the on-street guest parking. Michael said that it is proposed on the public street. James said that in terms of Code and policy, it is required that base parking be met on-site, but in certain circumstances can be satisfied on-street. The parking scenario is more of a board review item, but if BACH thinks there is merit in getting more family housing on the site and the amount of parking proposed is appropriate BACH could recommend there be further study amongst the Town and Applicant to get more family units within the affordable housing piece.

Mike said that in respect to the parking issue he agrees that the parking ratio too high for the location. The Town should be looking at a project's proximity to transit services. Parking creates a lot of concrete

and pollution due to runoff. He generally supports less pavement and more opportunity for family-oriented housing.

Michael was asked about the parking for the free-market building, which is located subgrade. Cathy said that all parking should be examined. If the units are intended as workforce housing, and the tenants are not only Willits-area employees they will have cars, particularly tenants with families. Cathy said she supports moving away from parking and figuring out how to get people to mass transit efficiently.

Mike asked he would supporting having the Applicant to study the issue more and consider a reduction in the number of parking spaces. If the P&Z and Council are open, give them flexibility for future development. Cathy feels that any thoughts toward parking reduction should be part of a long-term policy and not project specific such as this request.

Mike is advocating for more flexibility and creativity to figure out what is best for that particular site.

James said that BACH also should provide comments on the priority occupancy of the units as proposed. Mike indicated he leans more towards changing overall policies. He has some concern with too many “carve outs”. But he agrees there should be a priority for local employers.

Cathy expressed interest in the idea of earmarking affordable housing for certain sectors. Salaries not keeping pace with the corporate world. She would like to explore the idea more.

Doug said he is pleased with the sizes and livability of the 44 proposed units.

Mike expressed interest in going to Council to discuss policy.

**M/S Mike Kosdrosky and Anne Baker to provide a recommendation that BACH is supportive of the 44 affordable housing units proposed at the Sketch Plan level and encourages the P&Z and Town Council to consider the amendments to the prioritization for the affordable units proposed as well as reduction of parking proposed and work with BACH to review policies to better examine the proposal. Motion passed 4 to 0.**

## **2. Capital Needs Committee (CNC) Housing Items Discussion**

James said the CNC narrowed down the potential projects related to the Basalt Forward 2030 project – housing aspects were being looked at. There is an option to buy land for affordable housing and to partner with others on its development (4 lots in Stott’s Mill, Purchase Stott’s Mill multi-family lot, building in Parcel 5, Parcel 9 in Sopris Meadows), or to buy down existing deed restrictions (such as at Block 11, 525 Basalt Ave) or future non-deed restricted units.

Feedback is being sought from BACH. Susan said that at Monday’s meeting there was still a question about whether the Town can buy a deed-restriction through the bond, and the Town Attorney confirmed that it can be done.

Doug said that the Mountain Migration report that Mike sent mentioned buying down deed-restrictions as a strategy. That may be more cost effective than building new units. He thinks Mike’s idea about the flexibility is important, could be very effective if we can use this kind of methodology. If Town owns the land, we can set the parameters as opposed to buying down deeds.

Mike said that if the Town buys a sizable parcel there could be the possibility of combining a Town Hall and Police Station, upper-level affordable housing units, and a significant green infrastructure project.

Anne said she is interested in doing more research into buying land versus not buying land and weighing the costs and benefits.

James said BACH sounds to be interested in buying land for the creation of affordable housing as a top priority.

CNC meets next on 29<sup>th</sup>.

Mike said he is not a fan of buying-down lots for development at Stott's Mill.

BACH will hold a meeting on 7/29 to solidify its recommendation to the CNC.

M/S Mike and Doug to adjourn. Motion passed 3 to 0.

The meeting ended at 1:30 pm.