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MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Brittany Gada, Associate Planner
DATE: August 1, 2024
SUBJECT: LU32023-00667 Pointer Road Park

This memo in intended to supplement the staff report dated July 3, 2024, and the supplemental memo dated July 10, 2024, for the proposed Pointer Road Park project (LU32024-00667). Land use application numbers associated with this project are CUN32023-00798, DR32023-00665, LLD12023-00799, PD22023-00800, TP22024-00065, VAR32024-00079, and RP12024-00080. This project was heard at the Planning Commission hearing on July 10, 2024. The project was continued to a date certain of August 7, 2024, and the record was left open to allow the submittal of new information and public comment related to the applications.

This memo provides two new exhibits that were submitted by the applicant since the July 10, 2024, Planning Commission hearing. First, Exhibit 3.18 Land Use Drawings final, dated July 30, 2024, includes a revised plan set with modifications to landscape buffers and paving for a private driveway traversing the west side of the site. Second, Exhibit 3.19 Written Statement final, dated July 30, 2024, updates the project narrative to reflect the site modifications.

In response to the new information provided by the applicant in Exhibits 3.18 and 3.19, this memo revises staff's findings from the July 3, 2024, staff report in the Design Review Guidelines Analysis section associated with Design Review Three approval criterion 40.20.15.3.C.3. Specifically, findings in response to the Design Guidelines related to landscape buffering and screening of Section 60.05.45.11 are revised below. The revised findings do not change staff's recommendation of approval of the project or the recommended conditions of approval.

Deletions are identified using ~~strikethrough~~ font. Additions are shown underlined in red.

Section 40.20.15.3.C.3

For proposals meeting Design Review Three application thresholds numbers 1 through 7, the proposal is consistent with all applicable provisions of Sections 60.05.35 through 60.05.50 (Design Guidelines).

FINDING:

This criterion applies because the proposal meets Design Review Three Threshold 7 for a new park in a residential zone. As detailed in the Design Review Guidelines Analysis section of this staff report, the proposal is consistent with all applicable provisions of Sections 60.05.35 through 60.05.50 (Design Guidelines) by meeting the recommended conditions of approval.

Conclusion: Therefore, staff finds that, by meeting the conditions of approval, the proposal meets the criterion.

Design Review Guidelines Analysis

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11. Landscape buffering and screening.

a. A landscape buffer should provide landscape screening, and horizontal separation between different zoning districts and between non-residential land uses and residential land uses. The buffer should not be applicable along property lines where existing natural features such as flood plains, wetlands, riparian zones and identified significant groves already provide a high degree of visual screening. (Standard 60.05.25.13)

FINDING:

BDC Table 60.05-2, Footnote 7 requires parks in residential zones to provide B3 buffers along property lines abutting residential uses in residential zones, and BDC Table 60.05-2, Footnote 5 allows the B3 buffer to match the width of minimum required setbacks. The subject site abuts existing residential homes on all sides and is, therefore, required to provide a minimum 5-foot-wide B3 buffer along all side property lines. As detailed in BDC 60.05.25.13.D, a B3 buffer consists of a six-foot-tall sight-obscuring fence or wall, one tree for every 30 lineal feet, evergreen shrubs, and live ground cover.

As shown on the proposed landscape planting plan (Sheet L3.01), the proposal includes landscape buffers in compliance with the B3 buffer standard along all side property lines, except in two areas of the site. First, on the west side of the park, fencing is located ~~at~~ along the interior edges of the private driveways more than five feet from~~, rather than on~~ the side property lines. Since the private driveways must connect to existing driveways serving adjacent residences, it is not possible to locate the buffer plantings between the buffer fencing and the property lines ~~site and adjacent residences~~ in this area to meet the B3 buffer standard. Instead, a five-foot-wide planting area is provided on the inside of the fence which meets the B3 buffer planting requirements. ~~A planting area is provided along a portion of the west~~

~~property line, but it does not comply with the buffer standard as it does not include a fence or trees.~~ Second, fencing and buffer plantings are not proposed within the shared accessway due to structural constraints and narrow lot dimensions in that area. It is not possible to maintain existing access for residents and provide the new pedestrian accessway in that part of the site in a way that also accommodates a landscape buffer.

Proposed buffer planting areas maintain a ~~minimum~~ width of ten feet, in excess of the minimum required width of five feet, except next to private driveways where the buffer planting area is five feet wide. There is also one area in the southeast corner of the site where the planting area tapers to 5-feet-wide. In most areas, buffers are 20 feet wide or wider ~~where~~ since lawn is present in the buffer area in addition to ten feet or more of tree and shrub plantings. Six-foot-tall privacy fencing is proposed around the perimeter of the site using either wood or slatted chain-link fencing. Within proposed buffer planting areas, 13 trees will be retained, and 3~~0~~6 new trees will be planted. Two other trees are proposed to be retained on the north side of the site. Based on the spacing requirement of 1 tree per 30 lineal feet of required buffer area, 49 trees are required. ~~However, 43 total trees are proposed within buffer areas,~~ The project meets the requirement for 49 buffer trees. However, ~~and~~ some gaps between on-site buffer trees exceed the ~~minimum~~ maximum 30-foot spacing. The applicant's narrative states that the 30 new trees are strategically located in areas where there are not already existing trees on adjacent properties, as opposed to a strict 30-foot on center spacing; the applicant believes this will provide a more natural feeling to planting areas in the park and will allow new trees more space to mature when not in conflict with adjacent trees. In addition, grouping similar trees such as Douglas firs more closely together than the 30-foot spacing allows the trees to support each other during high wind events. Staff notes a correction that there are 36 trees proposed to be planted in buffer areas.

While the Development Code does not recognize off-site trees as a part of buffer requirements, staff concurs that the proposed spacing and number of trees in buffer areas have appropriately clustered trees to provide enhanced screening around high-traffic areas like the playground, water play area, and picnic shelter and to create a more natural landscape to support the health of native tree varieties. Buffer planting areas on the west side of the site near these higher-use areas are between 20 and 25 feet wide, and tree spacing meets or exceeds the 30-foot spacing standard with 11 trees proposed where five trees would have met the standard. On the east side of the site next to high-traffic areas of the park, the buffer planting area ranges from ten to 30 feet with additional lawn area measuring between ten and 25 feet.

Regarding shrub and groundcover plantings, the applicant states that the buffer will include larger evergreen shrubs such as pacific wax myrtle, ceanothus, and tall Oregon grape; larger deciduous shrubs such as mock orange and snowberry; and smaller shrubs and groundcovers such as evergreen huckleberry, sword fern, and

kinnikinnick. Shrubs and groundcovers will be positioned and layered to screen the park from adjacent properties and to provide visual interest within the park. Groundcover will be planted wherever there are not trees or shrubs planted, except in the gleaning garden where bark mulch will be provided to allow easier access to the berry bushes and fruit trees by park visitors.

Staff concurs that buffers include large, hedging evergreen shrub varieties, many of which will meet or exceed the standard of four to six feet tall within two years of planting. Based on the shrub spacing information provided on the planting plan, the variety of proposed shrubs, and excess buffer width, staff finds that buffers will be heavily vegetated with diverse plantings in a way that provides adequate screening. Groundcover is present in all other areas, in compliance with the B3 buffer standard.

In summary, staff finds the applicant's proposed landscape buffers provide adequate screening in all areas and emphasize visual and horizontal separation between the park site and abutting residences near higher traffic park amenities.

Conclusion: Therefore, staff finds the proposal meets the guideline.

b. When potential impacts of a Conditional Use are determined, or when potential conflicts of use exist between adjacent zoning districts, such as industrial uses abutting residential uses, landscape screening should be dense, and the buffer width maximized. When potential conflicts of uses are not as great, such as a commercial use abutting an industrial use, less dense landscape screening and narrower buffer width is appropriate. (Standard 60.05.25.13)

FINDING:

The proposal is for a new public park in a residential zone and requires a New Conditional Use. The park site borders existing residential uses on all sides. As noted above in response to landscape buffering and screening guideline A, the applicant proposes buffers along the majority of the site's side property lines, with the exception of the site boundaries next to the shared accessway and private driveways traversing the site. These buffers exceed the minimum five-foot width in ~~all~~ most areas and include six-foot-tall screening fencing. In areas of the site where potential conflict between park uses and residences is greatest, including around the water play area, playground, and picnic shelter, a 20 to 25-foot buffer width is provided along the western site boundary excluding lawn areas with large native trees such as Douglas Fir and Incense Cedar, retained trees, and a variety of shrubs. Lawn areas are provided around the perimeter of the site in all areas in addition to the tree and shrub planting areas which provide greater horizontal separation from residential property lines in potential conflict areas. Along the eastern site boundary in these areas, planting areas ranging from ten to 30 feet are proposed with additional lawn area between the property line and park play areas. Proposed tree

planting is less dense in other areas of the park abutting open lawn and pathways where impacts are expected to be not as great compared to the structured play areas. Accordingly, staff finds the applicant's proposed landscape buffers provide adequate screening and horizontal separation between the park and abutting residential properties in a way that maximizes buffering around the park areas with the greatest potential for impacts to neighbors.

Conclusion: Therefore, staff finds the proposal meets the guideline.

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d. When changes to buffer widths and buffer standards are proposed, the applicant should describe the physical site constraints or unique building or site characteristics that merit width reduction. (Standard 60.05.25.13.E).

FINDING:

As noted above in response to landscape buffering and screening guidelines A and B, the proposed landscaping plan demonstrates that the site meets or exceeds the B3 buffer standard in most areas of the site with the exception of the shared accessway, private drivewayS, and tree spacing near open lawn areas. Structural encroachments, access easements, and property line boundaries prevent meeting the buffer standard next to the shared accessway and private drivewayS. Regarding tree spacing, staff finds that the proposed buffer plantings maximize tree planting in potential conflict areas adjacent to residences and concurs with the applicant that some trees benefit from clustering to support tree health and resilience. Where tree spacing exceeds the 30-foot buffer standard, buffer width (including lawn areas) ranges from ten to 30 feet wide and occurs in lower traffic areas of the park away from programmed play and picnic areas. Staff finds that the existing physical site characteristics and tree health requirements coupled with maximized buffers in potential conflict areas merit the requested buffer reductions.

Conclusion: Therefore, staff finds the proposal meets the guideline.