



Planning Department Newsletter

PROSPECTS ARE LOOKING UP FOR APARTMENT DEVELOPMENT

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As reported briefly in last month’s newsletter, there is increasing interest from the development community in establishing new apartments in Pullman. And this emphasis on construction of multiple family dwellings appears to be part of a nationwide trend.

In an article entitled, “Apartment Construction Boosts Housing Market,” from the St. Louis, Missouri “stltoday.com” website on December 21, 2011, the Associated Press wrote:

Home construction has finally begun a gradual comeback and should add to the nation’s economic growth this year, a turning point in the recovery from the Great Recession. The main reason appears to be a positive consequence of the weak economy: Apartments are being built almost twice as fast as two years ago.

In a washingtonexaminer.com article from December 20, 2011 entitled

“Apartment Construction Soars, Giving Hope for Market,” Ben Giles states that “the latest construction figures add to a growing trend—requests for permits to build apartments with five or more units have spiked 80 percent in 2011, while permit requests to build single-family homes have lagged, rising just 3.6 percent.”

As referenced above, the reasons for the increase in multi-family construction relate primarily to the still sluggish economy. Derek Kravitz stated in his December 21, 2011 Tulsa World article, “Apartment Construction Gives Housing Market a Boost,” that “renting has become a preferred option for many Americans who lost their jobs during the recession and were forced to leave their houses.” Mr. Giles, in the previously cited story, wrote that “rental demand is high as families struggle to secure mortgages and a new generation of recent college graduates finally move out on their own.”

Of course, the unique characteristics of the Pullman community have consistently made apartment building attractive here. It is estimated that roughly 60 percent of this city’s population are WSU students, and college students are typically drawn to multi-family housing for cost and mobility reasons. Accordingly, about two-thirds of Pullman’s housing units are apartments, and the remaining third are single family houses. (For most non-



The Village Green apartment house on NW Terre View Drive is one of several multi-family projects under construction or proposed to be built this year.

college communities, the ratio of multi-family residences to single dwellings is just the opposite.)

Apartment developers are particularly interested in the Pullman market at this time because of the substantial increase in student enrollment on campus. The number of university students in this community has expanded in the last 12 months by over 1,000, and WSU is expecting even higher enrollment for this coming fall semester. That helps to explain the recent growth in local multi-family development activity.

Currently, there are two apartment houses under construction — the Tomason Place Apartments Phase II building on NE Terre View Drive (containing 28 dwellings) and the Village Green Apartments project on NW Terre View Drive (also involving 28 dwellings). In addition, there are a number of multi-family development proposals that have been presented in various forms to planning staff over the past few months. These include:

- a 216-unit apartment complex south of the intersection of NE Terre View Drive and NE

Eastgate Boulevard (with more apartments proposed in a second phase scheduled for next year)

- a 180-unit apartment complex on the south side of NE Terre View Drive between NE Eastgate Boulevard and NE Hopkins Court (with more apartments proposed in a second phase scheduled for next year)
- a 16-unit apartment complex on SW Marcia Drive
- an expansion of the Campus Commons North apartment complex to the north, to be accessed off NE Terre View Drive (with an undetermined number of additional units)
- six townhouse style units at the southwest corner of NE Stadium Way and NE Monroe Street

If most or all of these proposals come to fruition, it promises to be a busy year in Pullman from the standpoint of apartment construction. Keep watching for updates on these projects in future editions of this newsletter.

REGULATIONS FOR DOGS AND CATS

It may come as a surprise to some that the city regulates the number of dogs and cats per dwelling, and it may come as a further surprise that these regulations are contained in the zoning code. Recently, planning department staff had occasion to discuss the animal provisions with a family that exceeded the limit on number of dogs. During that discussion, one of the family members asked that the city enhance its educational efforts in this regard so that more citizens will know the rules before they make their pet acquisition plans. So, in response to that request, the department offers this primer on dog and cat restrictions in Pullman.

In most instances, the maximum number of cats and dogs over six months of age that are allowed per dwelling is three dogs, or three cats, or a total of four dogs and cats. If a family would like to explore going beyond these basic limitations (e.g., if the occupants wish to keep four dogs at their house), it can submit a letter to the planning department asking for such permission. In order for the department to approve such a request, the proposal would need to meet

the following criteria set forth in Zoning Code Chapter 17.35:

- the property on which the residence is located must be a minimum of 10,000 square feet in size
- there must be a minimum of 2,000 square feet of land per animal (e.g., with a 10,000-square-foot lot, a family could have up to five cats)
- structures used to house the animals must be located at least 20 feet away from all property lines
- potential noise impacts must be minimized
- the request must be compatible with surrounding neighbors, keeping in mind the proximity of dwelling units both on and off the property under consideration



If you are considering the acquisition of some furry friends for your household and would like clarification on any of the rules described above, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the planning department staff.



Pending Land Use Proposals

Displayed below are land use applications submitted to the planning or public works department or city-generated proposals for planning provisions that require a public meeting, public notice, or site plan review in accordance with the city code.

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	STATUS
College Hill Design Standards	formulate design standards for new construction	College Hill Core	PC meeting to set direction held 9/22/10; staff sent draft standards to stakeholders 9/16/11; stakeholders meeting held 10/27/11
City Urban Growth Area Expansion	expand urban growth area to accommodate future growth	greater Pullman area	PC recommended approval 3/23/11; CC endorsed UGA 6/28/11; staff conducting final preparations for CC adoption
Mary's Park Annexation	annex approximately 2.2 acres to city	southeast of Old Moscow Road/Johnson Avenue intersection	staff facilitating preparation of legal description for proposed annexation area
Campus Crest Rezone (Z-12-1)	rezone 3.7 acres from WSU to R3	south of intersection of NE Terre View Drive and NE Eastgate Boulevard	staff reviewing application; tentative PC hearing on 2/22; tentative CC meeting on 2/28
Copper Basin Rezone (Z-12-2)	rezone 79.0 acres from R1 to R2	west end of SW Center Street	staff reviewing application; tentative PC hearing on 3/28
Mader Administrative Variance Application (AV-12-1)	increase building coverage for single family house to 36% in R1 zone	2140 NW Robert Street	staff approved application 1/20; appeal period ends 2/6

KEY TO ZONING DISTRICTS: R1 Single Family Residential; RT Residential Transitional; R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential; R3 Medium Density Multi-Family Residential; R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential; C1 Neighborhood Commercial; C2 Central Business District; C3 General Commercial; I1 Light Industrial; I2 Heavy Industrial; IRP Industrial Research Park; WSU Washington State University

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS: CC: City Council; PC: Planning Commission; BOA: Board of Adjustment; DOE: State Department of Ecology; HPC: Historic Preservation Commission



NOTES: 1) If an applicant fails to act on a pending application for a period of six months, said application will be dropped from the above list. 2) Numbers in parentheses are planning staff's internal file numbers. 3) Site plan review by city staff is generally conducted for proposed construction of developments other than single family homes, duplexes, or manufactured homes; it does not apply to most construction on the WSU campus.

City offices will be closed on
Monday, February 20, 2012 for President's Day



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