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Landscape Architecture • Urban Planning • Land Use and Site Planning • Entitlements • Graphic Communications • Project Management

July 31, 2018

Planning and Development Services
City of Boise
150 N. Capitol Bldg.
Boise, Idaho 83701

Re: Marietta Subdivision – 2234 & 2268 W. Kootenai St., Boise, ID 83705 – Letter of Explanation

To Whom it May Concern,

The application before you is for a 19 lot subdivision of the parcels located at 2234 and 2268 W. Kootenai St., Boise, ID 83705. This application also includes a Planned Unit Development application, and a variance application.

This project consists of 19 lots to be created for the construction of 18 single-family townhomes within 6 buildings and one common lot for a private lane, parking, and landscaped open space. These homes would have attached garages on the lower level that are accessed from a private lane that is internal to the site. The buildings will be located on their lots in order to provide a minimum of 22' of backup area. 9 of the homes on the lots would be oriented to face W. Kootenai St., which is in keeping with the current existing feel of the neighborhood and other newly constructed homes in the area. The other 9 homes would be oriented to take advantage of the views to the NE, which include the Boise Foothills, Tablerock, and portions of Downtown Boise. The proposed single-family townhomes will be 3 story and will not exceed the maximum height for the zone of 45'. The addition of landscaping and sidewalk along Kootenai will further enhance the residential nature of the street and neighborhood, while improving the pedestrian facilities adjacent to the property.

This development will contain 6 buildings with 3 single-family townhomes in each building. The end units of the buildings will have 2-car garages, and the center unit will have an oversized, single-car garage. Due to this, we are requesting a parking reduction. Single-family homes typically require 2-car garages and no guest parking, but we are providing for 9 on-site surface parking spaces, and a 9-space bicycle rack for visitor and resident use. This will result in a total of 39 parking spaces (30 garaged parking spaces (2 per end unit=24, 1 per internal unit=6), 9 surface parking spaces (3 compact)) and 9 bicycle spaces for use by visitors of the residents. Along with the on-site parking, we are requesting this reduction due to the proximity of this development to existing commercial, retail, educational facilities (BSU), and public transit. The Vista Village commercial center is 0.15 miles from the site and the BSU campus is 0.55 miles from the site. There are bus routes and stops along W. Kootenai St, as well as Vista Ave. and Federal Way, varying from 0.11 miles to 0.25 miles. There is also a wide buffered bike path along Federal Way that can take bicycle traffic and pedestrians from Kootenai and Federal Way east to Overland Rd., Broadway Ave, and the retail and commercial developments at the intersection of Federal Way and Bergeson St. This bike path is in addition to the existing bike lanes within the roadways in the immediate vicinity. Because of these circumstances, we believe the reduction in garaged parking spaces will not adversely affect the area and will adequately serve the needs of the residents and guests of the proposed single-family townhomes.

The parcels upon which this development is proposed is of a fairly unique shape. Due to this, during the planning and layout of the lots/units, it was determined that to property access all of the units, a reduction in the rear setback along the NE exterior property line would be requested. This variance has been formally applied for. This reduction will allow the developer to build the single-family units, rather than develop the property with a multi-family apartment complex, which is also allowable within the R-3D zone. The developer felt that it was appropriate to explore all options to get an approval for single-family residential so that adjacent homeowners are impacted as little as possible, and this project would enhance the residential nature of the surrounding property. The reduction of the setback to 7' from the required 15' will only occur along the NE property line, where the parcels abut a railroad right-of-way. The proposed 7' setback will allow for the "front" of the townhomes, as they sit on the lot, to take more advantage of the views to the Boise Foothills and portions of Downtown Boise. Due to the way in which the railroad right-of-way is developed, with the reduction, there will still be approximately 45-50' between the tracks and the proposed townhomes. Additionally, this portion of the rail line is a "spur" used to store train cars at various times, for short periods of time, and no direct railroad traffic would be moving in front of the townhomes. Due to these circumstances, we believe this variance to reduce the setback to 7' along this property line will not adversely affect the adjacent properties, or this proposed project's future residents.

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The current zoning of the parcels is R-3D, and the zoning is proposed to remain the same. The creation of the 18 buildable lots will require the PUD process in order to reduce interior setbacks on the proposed lots, reduce the size of the lot to below the R-3D zone average, and reduce the frontage requirement for each lot. While the lots vary between just under 19' wide to just over 16' wide, by creating 3 unit buildings, the mass of the buildings is approximately 54' in width. This massing is in keeping with many of the single-family residences in the area. There are also multi-family apartments across W. Kootenai St. that are similar in size and mass. This project does fall within the Design Review overlay district, and a future application will be submitted for Design Review, after the preliminary plat and Planned Unit Development process has been completed. This will allow for any revisions required during the preliminary plat and PUD process, without requiring the additional step of a Design Review modification application. This will also allow the applicant additional time in preparing detailed architectural elevations, finishes, and materials that will enhance the surrounding residential neighborhood.

This property has surface water rights, and conversations are on-going with the Boise Project Board of Control and the New York Irrigation District to ensure that the water right can continue to be effectively delivered to the property for use without impacting other existing users on the lateral. The condition of the lateral varies from the diversion at Columbus and Overland St. to the site. Some of this is tiled (piped) and some is open ditch. The BPC has indicated that while they do not provide maintenance for the delivery lateral itself, they will provide confirmation that the 0.99 AC water right can be diverted and delivered within the existing system. Assuming confirmation of delivery, there will be a pressurized irrigation system (pump station and main) designed and installed to provide for irrigation on the landscaped areas within the proposed development. A backup cross-connection with the potable water system will be provided for irrigation in the off-season, as necessary to maintain the health of the landscape. The proposed development will ensure the continued delivery of the surface water to downstream users through the tiling (piping) of any portions of open ditch along the perimeter of the property, as well as repair or replacement of structures as necessary. This will improve the delivery and reduce the maintenance requirements for the users along this portion of the lateral.

We believe that this proposed development will provide for high-quality housing in close proximity to Downtown Boise, while enhancing the surrounding existing neighborhood by providing for the development of these vacant parcels. The owner-occupied, single-family townhomes will also encourage the continued elevation of the Central Bench neighborhood, while providing much needed housing near commercial retail and office space.

Please contact me directly with any questions regarding the project at 208-340-5215 or ben@reandpartners.com

Sincerely,
Rodney Evans + Partners, PLLC

Ben Semple, PLA
Partner