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The process of gaining approval for this large project has made the timeline for final approval a multi-meeting affair, with numerous stops and starts along the way.

There have been more than two dozen letters and emails sent to the City of Florence, and to councilors, who have raised concerns with several elements of the plan. Those concerns have been recognized by city staff and addressed in public hearings and virtual meetings that have been taking place since spring.

Many of these concerns were repeatedly mentioned by residents, three of whom filed official objections to the Planning Committee decision. These three appeals outlined their respective objections and the official documents related to those appeals were presented to councilors at Monday's meeting.

During a Planning Commission meeting held Sept. 8, the discussion and deliberation of the applications included the results of new traffic counts and studies, as well as peer review comments, initial discussions of stormwater removal and the necessary inclusion of native vegetation in landscaping for the PUD.

The end result of the Planning Committee meeting was the conditional approval of Resolution PC 20 07 PUD 01 and PC 20 08 SUB 01, with 36 conditions that need to be met prior to the issuance of Certificates of Occupancy.

The PC's decision to approve the application, pending fulfillment by the applicant of conditions required by the city, resulted in appeals being filed by three individuals whom claim the process and the results are flawed — thereby invalidating the application filed by 3J Consulting on behalf of the applicant, APIC Florence Holdings.

Three appeal requests were submitted to the city during the 12-day window allowed in response to the PC decision, and the reasons for the appeal were detailed in the forms needed to process the appeal.

These items were discussed individually by FarleyCampbell and two petitioners who participated in the last Monday's meeting: Alan Matisoff and Steve Williams.

In the materials provided to councilors, staff provided a summary of the issues raised by the appellants.

According to the staff report, "Steve Williams, Darryl and Debra Fisher and O. Gary and Frances Plunkett filed appeals per FCC 1-1-7 related to timing, design and installation of Rhododendron Drive and its intersection with 35th St., density, stormwater plan design and infiltration, native vegetation retention, quality of life, internal parking, short term rental mitigation, neighborhood compatibility, required setbacks, wetland mitigation and construction bonding."

The list of items presented to the councilors included questioning left-hand turn lane requirements from Rhododendron onto 35th Street, questions as to the possible usage of the properties for short-term rentals, stormwater management, neighborhood incompatibility

and a lack of a Phase 1 Site Investigation Report, and density standards, among other concerns.

Each of these issues was reviewed and planning department staff responded in detail, citing City Code and precedent in the responses.

The lack of a site investigation report is one of the more challenging of the concerns raised by the appellants, as any building in an area that has wetlands must be investigated before any construction can be approved.

Staff responded directly to this point by highlighting a decision made by the Planning Commission, which was included in the materials provided for the meeting.

"Prior to receiving approvals for final PUD or final plat, the developer shall obtain the services of a qualified hydrogeologist (not only a geologist) and perhaps someone that is a coastal geomorphologist to supplement the proposed stormwater plan and assist in preparation of the Phase 1 Site Investigation Report that can bring a better understanding of all the factors in play related to how infiltrated groundwater affects hydrology in this sub-basin and those adjacent up and down-grade," staff wrote. "In the event the Phase 1 Site Investigation reveals wet areas and wet soil types, then a Phase II Conditional Use permit would be reviewed before the Planning Commission as required by Title 10 Chapter 7."

That would require the applicant to demonstrate how they would mitigate the risk of hazardous soil types through their stormwater management design.

"There is risk to the applicant should they proceed in advance of completing this investigation work; required Site Investigation work must be completed prior to site disturbance," staff wrote. "The above condition addresses this requirement."

FarleyCampbell was not pressed by the council on the comments included in the appeals, with the council expressing that information shared by staff was comprehensive in its rebuttal to most of the

concerns raised.

Mercedes Serra of 3J Consulting was the point person for the applicants and presented a recap of the areas which the applicant believed countered four of the main. These were issues of compatibility, compliance with development standards, stormwater management plans and traffic and safety concerns.

There was also the city requirement that "development enhancements" be added to the PUD proposal and Serra detailed those enhancements.

"The first development enhancement includes providing high quality designs using Old Town and Main Street architectural standards. The proposed development will meet the Old Town design requirements as defined by city code," Serra said. "The second development enhancement is to provide more recreational space than required. The project exceeds the recreational space requirement and the third enhancement is to provide onsite amenities reflecting value for both active and passive recreation."

Serra next addressed the more challenging issues in the appeal — stormwater removal and traffic concerns — by pointing out that the PUD applicant had hired firms to conduct additional traffic studies and to create a stormwater plan, which would not add to the water removal

done by the city. Both of those firms' reports were accompanied by data and illustrations, and were included in the meeting materials.

After nearly two hours of testimony and review of dozens of pages of information, the council decided to delay a final discussion and vote until Nov. 9, when the council will hold a special session on the application.

This was done to allow for legal review of the evening's work product and to allow staff to respond to any additional concerns which might be created by actions of the developer.

In addition to the main item on the agenda, there were an additional three items which were passed by consent with little discussion.

There has been some confusion among residents regarding the PUD proposal and a requested annexation by Benedick Holdings LCC for property located on Oceana Drive. The proposed annexation will be discussed at the Nov. 10 Planning Commission meeting and is separate from the Rhododendron and 35th Street development — which is a proposed development within city boundaries.

All of the materials presented to the city council are available for viewing online at ci.florence.or.us.

The next regular meeting of the Florence City Council will be Nov. 2, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

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