

Project Name: Stoll Rd. Apts
Concept Review, 10/25/2018
Checklist filled out by Nicole Floyd, Senior Planner

File #: 18-0709

CITY OF OLYMPIA
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
Chapter 18.170

18.170.010 Grading and tree retention			
A. REQUIREMENT:			Incorporate existing topography and mature trees in the project design to the extent feasible.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Minimize encroachment into areas of site containing steep slopes.
- ☐ When grading is necessary, minimize impacts to natural topography through use of contour grading.
- ☐ Locate buildings so that rooftops do not extend above the natural bluff.
- ☐ Minimize encroachment into areas of site containing mature tree stands.
- ☐ To facilitate stormwater infiltration, minimize disturbance of natural open space areas.
- ☒ Design buildings with continuous perimeter foundations; avoid cantilevering large portions of the building over slopes.

Staff Analysis: The site is more than 6 acres in size, but the vast majority of it is encumbered by a high value wetland system. The proposed project occupies just over 1 acre of the site and is situated on the eastern edge of the steep sloped (geologically hazardous) area leading down to the wetland. In order to provide the desired amount of parking for the project, approximately 10,000cy of fill and an 8' tall retaining wall is proposed along the edge of the wetland buffer and edge of slope. Retaining walls are also proposed along the north and south property lines. These walls allow the surface parking lot design to facilitate vehicular travel. Staff has encouraged the applicant to look at alternative designs that more closely align to the existing site topography. In response, the applicant has shifted the parking to include "tuck under" parking associated with the building, but has not significantly reduced the amount of site grading. As environmental review associated with impacts to the wetland and steep slope area has not yet been completed, it is unclear if additional modifications to the parking area will be required to achieve code compliance.

One way in which the site could be modified to better meet this provision would be to reduce the total amount of parking onsite. The standard number of parking stalls required is provided as a range between 63 to 76. The applicant has proposed 65 parking stalls, which is well within the range allowed. Parking reductions of up to 40% can be approved administratively provided specific criteria is met. This site appears to meet these criteria, and therefore the project is eligible to reduce parking. Such reductions have the potential to significantly reduce site grading, wall height, and wetland buffer impacts. For example, reducing the parking ratio from 1.5 stalls per unit down to 1 stall per unit would represent a 35% reduction and would allow for the removal of the full aisle and parking on the west side of the site.

Staff encourage the board to discuss potential ways in which the site design could facilitate use of the existing topography.

18.170.020 – Pedestrian and vehicular circulation

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies



Conflicts



N/A



Integrate the project with the existing neighborhood through pedestrian and vehicular connections. Provide attractively designed pedestrian and vehicular connections to adjacent public rights-of-way, including any existing or planned bus stops. Provide adequate pedestrian and vehicular access to site features such as mailboxes and other shared facilities.

B. GUIDELINES:



Mark pedestrian pathways with vertical plantings.



Distinguish pedestrian pathways through use of surface material such as colored concrete or special pavers.



Provide internal pedestrian connections (apart from public rights-of-way) between project and adjacent properties.



Provide barrier-free pedestrian access to all shared facilities such as mailboxes, recreation centers, and open space areas.



Provide parking and bicycle parking at shared facilities.

Staff Analysis: Pedestrian access and circulation are provided in and around both the back and front of the site. A pedestrian pathway to the dumpster enclosure and the wetland viewing platform has been identified. The pathways across the parking areas are shown as painted, rather than a change in surface material. Staff recommends asking the applicant to modify this to an alternative material because paint is not typically as durable or long lasting. Additionally, the long expanses of walkway adjacent or parallel to the drive aisle may be more inviting to the pedestrian if marked in a way that firmly defines the area as pedestrian space, rather than drive aisle.

Recommended Condition of Approval: Show an alternative surface associated with the pedestrian walkways (not simply paint) where they are adjacent to vehicular circulation routes with the detail design packet submittal.

18.170.030 – Parking location and design

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies



Conflicts



N/A



Reduce the visual impacts of driveways and parking lots on pedestrians and neighboring properties by constructing parking facilities with materials that match or complement the building materials.

B. GUIDELINES:



Break-up large parking lots by designing significant landscape areas with walkways for pedestrian access.



Share driveways with adjacent property owners.



Minimize width of driveways linking the project to the public right-of-way.



Landscape areas along all driveways and drive aisles that are visible from the street.

- ☒ Limit parking lots on street frontage to thirty (30) percent of the street frontage.
- ☐ Screen parking lots or structures adjacent to residential properties with a landscape area at least ten (10) feet wide.

Staff Analysis: The parking lot is tucked behind the building with driveways on both sides of the building. Vegetation has been provided around the driveways, but does not achieve a 10' setback. Given the existing low density residential development pattern of the area, the applicant has proposed a 6' tall cedar fence on both the north and south property lines combined with 5' of dense vegetation. Staff believes this adequately addresses the design criteria related to reducing impacts to adjacent residences from the parking lot. Additional consideration should be paid to the placement, make, and shielding of parking lot lighting to reduce lighting impacts to adjacent residences.

Recommended Condition of Approval: Provide a lighting plan with the detail design review application that demonstrates how the lighting for the parking lot has been designed to minimize impacts to the adjacent residences.

18.170.040 – Usable open space			
A. REQUIREMENT:			Provide usable open space for use by residents of the development that is not occupied by buildings, streets, driveways, or parking areas. Usable open space shall include a minimum dimension of ten (10) feet with an overall grade of less than ten percent (refer to each zoning district for specific open space requirement).
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Situate playground areas in locations visible from residential buildings.
- ☐ Provide a mix of passive and active recreation areas. Active recreation areas may include facilities such as sport courts or swimming pools.

Staff Analysis: The proposal is to convert an existing shed into a picnic shelter with low mount lighting. It is unclear if a new foundation and floor will be provided, or if the structure is intended to be covered. The location, increased intensity of the pedestrian activity and lighting are potentially problematic due to the wetland and habitat functions. Review of the project related to the Critical Area Ordinance may find the use to be inappropriate in the proposed location. The size of open space appears consistent with code because this zoning district does not establish a specific amount of usable open space. The design criteria of no less than 10' is the only standard that applies. If the proposed location is found to be incompatible with the wetland buffer, an alternative location will need to be provided with the detail design review application.

Reduced parking would allow for a variety of alternative locations that would be more compatible with the wetland buffer.

Recommended Condition of Approval: Provide the specific design of the open space feature, such as the type of materials to be used and structural components proposed with the detail design review application.

18.170.050 – Fences and walls

A. REQUIREMENT:			Minimize the use of fences that inhibit pedestrian movement or separate the project from the neighborhood. Front yards shall be visually open to the street. Where fencing is used, provide gates or openings at frequent intervals. Provide variation in fencing to avoid blank walls.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Provide variation in fencing though use of setbacks, or stepped fence heights.
- ☐ Provide variation in texture, color or materials to add visual interest.
- ☒ Provide landscape screening to break up expanses of fencing.
- ☐ Repeat use of building facade material on fence columns and/or stringers.
- ☐ Provide lighting, canopies, trellises, or other features to add visual interest.

Staff Analysis: Fencing is proposed along all but the front property line (east). Both the north and south property lines include a 6' tall cedar fence. The western edge of the project includes a 8' tall retaining wall with a 4' tall guardrail. These fences do not inhibit pedestrian movements in the areas they are intended. The front yard is visually open to the street.

18.170.060 – Landscape plant selection

A. REQUIREMENT:			Select plants that are compatible with available planting conditions. In particular, ensure that trees will be suited to the planting location at their natural mature size. Avoid use of species that have a high potential to invade or disrupt natural areas.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☒ Provide visual continuity with the existing streetscape by coordinating tree and shrub species with established, healthy landscaping.
- ☐ When choosing a tree species, consider the size of the tree at maturity in relation to: the dimensions of the planting area, the soil type and water holding capacity of the soil, and the depth of the planting bed.
- ☒ Create a natural appearance by using a limited number of plant species.
- ☒ Follow recommendations from the Thurston County Noxious Weed Control Program in regard to problem and noxious weeds.
- ☒ Choose native plant species for landscaping. When established in the appropriate location, native plants are drought tolerant and provide food and/or habitat for native birds and other wildlife.

18.170.070 – Screening mechanical equipment

A. REQUIREMENT:			Screen mechanical equipment and utility vaults so that they are not visible from adjacent public rights-of-way, parks, or adjacent dwelling units. Screen roof-top mechanical equipment on all sides.
Complies	Conflicts	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☒ Locate mechanical equipment and utility vaults on the least visible side of the building and/or site.
- ☐ Screen at-grade mechanical equipment utilities with vertical plants such as trees, shrubs or ornamental grasses.

- ☐ Screen or paint wall-mounted mechanical equipment to match the building.

Staff Analysis: Review of the screening of mechanical equipment will occur with the detail design review. Given the site configuration, it is unlikely that utility boxes will be placed in the front of the building.

18.170.080 – Site lighting

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies

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Conflicts

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N/A

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Provide adequate lighting along all pedestrian walkways and building entrances. Site lighting shall not unduly illuminate surrounding properties. Direct lighting away from windows of residential units. Locate all light posts away from tree canopies (at least half the width of canopy at maturity).

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Use low-intensity landscape lighting along walkways.
- ☐ Use fixtures with directive shields to prevent lighting spill-over.
- ☐ Use light posts of medium height to avoid spill-over lighting.

Staff Analysis: The site lighting will be reviewed with the detail design application. Conceptual locations of lighting appear to be placed evenly throughout the site. Lighting shown near adjacent residential properties might need to be modified to ensure lighting does not unduly illuminate surrounding properties.

18.170.90 – Screening blank walls and fences

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies

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Conflicts

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N/A

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Use vertical landscaping to screen or break-up long expanses of blank building walls or fences.

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Screen walls or fences with a combination of trees, shrubs and vines.
- ☐ Use trees or shrubs planted in raised planter boxes that are irrigated.
- ☐ In narrow planting areas adjacent to walls or fences, use espaliered trees or shrubs and vines.

18.170.100 – Building orientation and entries

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies

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Conflicts

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N/A

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Provide a clearly defined building or courtyard entry to the building from the primary street.

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☒ Use distinctive architectural elements and materials to indicate the entry.
- ☒ Define the transition space from the sidewalk to the entry with a terrace, plaza, or landscaped area.
- ☒ Avoid the use of exterior stairways to second stories that are visible from the street.

Staff Analysis: The elevation plans provided include all of the requisite features to provide a clearly defined building entry from Stoll Road.

18.170.110 – Neighborhood scale and character**A. REQUIREMENT:**

Complies

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N/A

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The building scale identified for the district may be larger than the building scale that exists in the neighborhood. Minimize any appearance of scale differences between project building(s) and existing neighborhood buildings by stepping the height of the building mass, and dividing large building facades into smaller segments. Reflect the architectural character of the neighborhood (within 300' on the same street) through use of related building elements.

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Step the roof on the building perimeter segments to transition between a proposed taller building and an existing residential structure.
- ☐ Replicate or approximate roof forms and pitch found on existing residential structures in the neighborhood.
- ☐ Use wall plane modulation to divide the building facade into house-size building segments.
- ☒ Use window patterns and proportions similar to those on existing residential structures in the neighborhood.
- ☒ Use building facade materials similar to those used on existing residential buildings in the neighborhood.
- ☒ Maintain a relationship to the street (i.e., building setbacks and entryways) similar to existing buildings.

Staff Analysis: This site is unique because it is the first property to redevelop from single family residential to the myriad of allowed uses within the General Commercial Zone that encompasses the neighborhood. This zone allows for heights of up to 60'. The applicant has attempted to blend the proposed structure into both the existing neighborhood scale and the anticipated future scale.

Efforts to minimize impacts to the adjacent residences are seen in the elevation plans and include:

- Providing building modulation,
- Careful placement of windows. Windows are minimized on the sides of the building facing existing residences.
- Providing additional roof forms throughout the façade to reduce the visual height of the building.
- Tucking the 4th story into the middle of the building to reduce massing.

Through the use of these elements staff believes the project has adequately addressed the design criteria related to neighborhood character and scale.

18.170.120 – Building modulation**A. REQUIREMENT:**

Complies

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N/A

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Use building modulation at least every 30 feet to reduce the appearance of large building masses.

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☒ Modulate the building facade at regular intervals.
- ☐ Articulate roofline by stepping the roof and by using dormers and gables.
- ☒ Incorporate prominent cornice, fascia or soffit details that emphasize the top of the building.

- ☒ Use prominent roof overhangs.
- ☒ Provide porches, balconies, and covered entries.
- ☐ Provide deeply recessed or protruding windows.
- ☒ Provide light fixtures, trellises or architectural to accentuate modulation intervals.

Staff Analysis: The building appears to be adequately modulated. Specific details regarding the types of materials to be used is anticipated with the detail design review application.

18.170.130 – Building windows

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies

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Conflicts

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N/A

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Provide relief, detail, and visual rhythm on the facade with well-proportioned windows. Minimize window locations where residents from one unit may look directly into another unit.

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Use vertically proportioned windows (i.e., windows that have a height of at least one and one-half times their width).
- ☒ Use multiple-pane windows.
- ☐ Provide windows that are designed to create shadows (either recessed or protruding).
- ☒ Use visually significant window elements (i.e., frame dimensions, lintels, sills, casings, and trim).

Staff Analysis: Windows are consistent with the existing residential neighborhood. Additional detail regarding the anticipated window design is anticipated with the detail design review packet.

18.170.140 – Materials and colors

A. REQUIREMENT:

Complies

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Conflicts

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N/A

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Use building materials with texture and pattern and a high level of visual and constructed quality and detailing. Reserve brightly saturated colors for trim features.

B. GUIDELINES:

- ☐ Use natural appearing materials such as painted or natural finish horizontal lap siding, brick, stone, stucco, ceramic or terra cotta tile.
- ☐ Coordinate change in materials and color with building modulation.
- ☐ Use changes in colors or building materials to differentiate the ground floor from upper floors of the building.
- ☐ When remodeling or adding to an existing building, use materials and colors that preserve or enhance the character of the original building.
- ☐ In multi-building projects, vary building colors and/or materials on different buildings.

Staff Analysis: Elevation plans show a mix of exterior building materials, but it is unclear at this time what those will be made of and what colors are anticipated. Additional detail regarding the anticipated building materials is anticipated with the detail design review packet.