

Paula Smith

From: Keith Stahley
Sent: Tuesday, August 27, 2019 2:42 PM
To: Tim Smith; Steve Hall
Cc: Leonard Bauer; Paula Smith
Subject: RE: Harrison Ave Mixed Use Site Plan Application 16-9112

Hi Tim,

Pursuant to 18.60.080 Application –Review process Revised 5/19 SHARE 

C. Referral to Hearing Examiner. If in the Director's opinion a project is extraordinarily complex or presents significant environmental, design or compatibility issues, the Director may refer the project for a public hearing before the Hearing Examiner. A decision of the Director to refer a project to the Examiner may be made at any time.

I am referring this matter to the hearing examiner for decision given the complexity of this project and transportation and environmental issues related to it.

Let me know if you have questions.

Thanks,

k

From: Tim Smith <tsmith@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Sent: Tuesday, August 27, 2019 2:31 PM
To: CityCouncil <citycouncil@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Steve Hall <shall@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Cc: Leonard Bauer <lbauer@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Paula Smith <psmith@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Keith Stahley <kstahley@ci.olympia.wa.us>
Subject: FW: Harrison Ave Mixed Use Site Plan Application 16-9112

City Council,

The Harrison Mixed Use Binding Site Plan project is currently under a second round of review by City staff. The applicant, Kern Rexus submitted revised plans on July 12th. The City hosted a 2nd neighborhood meeting last Thursday (8/22) at City Hall so that staff could discuss the revised plans with the neighborhood and get feedback on their concerns. Traffic, street connections to existing residential neighborhoods, and stormwater management were the major issues raised by the neighborhood. The City has created a project page on the City's website that explains the project status and how to provide comments. A complete list of concerns from the neighborhood meeting will be posted on the project website at <http://olympiawa.gov/news-and-faq-s/construction-news/harrison-ave-mixed.aspx>.

It's likely that staff will be requiring additional changes to the site plan layout and will require a third round of review. CP&D is coordinating closely with Public Works/Engineering staff in the evaluation of street connections with the guidance provided in the Comprehensive Plan for making street connections to existing residential areas (GT5 – Goal 5 of the Transportation Plan). This project is subject to the review process outlined in OMC 18.60.080.B.

Back in April 2019 I provided some background information on this project to the City Council via email (4/26/2019). I have included this project background information below.

Please contact me with any questions.

Tim Smith, AICP | Principal Planner

City of Olympia Community Planning & Development
P.O. Box 1967 | 601 4th Avenue E | Olympia, WA 98507-1967
(360) 570-3915
tsmith@ci.olympia.wa.us

Project Background:

The Harrison Avenue Mixed Use project consists of a binding site plan application that proposes to create four commercial lots for a mixed use development. The project is located at 4004 Harrison Avenue NW, just east of the Bark and Garden Center. Mr. Kern Rexius is the applicant, and is also the owner/operator of the Bark and Garden Center.

Upon the filing of the complete application by Mr. Rexius in late 2016, CP&D notified the adjacent neighborhoods by mailing the attached Notice of Application (NOA). A notice board was also posted on the site. The NOA informed the neighborhoods of the opportunity to comment on the project. In addition, notice of a neighborhood meeting was provided which was subsequently held on January 4, 2017.

City staff then completed the first review of the project and CP&D staff issued a Substantive Review comment letter to Mr. Rexius. Typically, an applicant is given six months to respond to the comments and re-submit information to the City to start a second round of review. For projects with complex issues, the City does have the code authority to extend the 6-month deadline and will do so if an applicant demonstrates that they are making a good faith effort towards a revision submittal.

This project has significant challenges with both the internal street system/design and with stormwater management. The applicant has met with City stormwater and transportation staff on numerous occasions over the past several months to discuss these technical issues. The applicant has requested City documents, such as the as-built drawings for the Harrison Avenue improvement project, to assist in design alternatives for the stormwater system and the discharge of stormwater within the three drainage basins that cover the project site. In several instances, the time it has taken for staff to research and provide the requested information to the applicant has resulted in additional time needed by the applicant to prepare design alternatives for the project.

CP&D staff will host a second neighborhood meeting and invite additional public comment on the project when the revised application is submitted to the City for review. Notice of the second neighborhood meeting will be mailed to the adjacent neighborhoods and posted onsite. This will give the public an opportunity to review the updated proposal and provide feedback to staff on any concerns they may have.

From: Leonard Bauer <lbauer@ci.olympia.wa.us>

Sent: Monday, August 26, 2019 4:37 PM

To: Steve Hall <shall@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Keith Stahley <kstahley@ci.olympia.wa.us>

Cc: Paula Smith <psmith@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Tim Smith <tsmith@ci.olympia.wa.us>

Subject: RE: Harrison Ave Mixed Use Site Plan Application 16-9112

I am copying Tim to draft an e-mail update for Council describing where we are in processing this revised application. Note that the revisions were received from the applicant in July, so staff review is still underway. The applicant had received several extensions to submit material previously requested, and the long delay has been interpreted by many neighbors as the City not addressing their concerns.

It is interesting that Mr. Ruth was at the neighborhood meeting last week, because many of the issues he brings up were discussed and information shared by staff that he does not acknowledge in his e-mail, e.g. that fire department review is occurring and that Harrison Avenue will be the primary access.

Also copying Paula, who is the lead planner. We have received a very large number of e-mails and phone calls, far too many for her to respond individually to every one of them. However, we have attempted to respond to specific questions, and Paula keeps the project web page up to date with all documents and information. We also have a large list of interested parties, which we send updates at key milestones in the process.

From: Steve Hall <shall@ci.olympia.wa.us>

Sent: Monday, August 26, 2019 4:20 PM

To: Keith Stahley <kstahley@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Leonard Bauer <lbauer@ci.olympia.wa.us>

Subject: FW: Harrison Ave Mixed Use Site Plan Application 16-9112

From: Cheryl Selby <cselby@ci.olympia.wa.us>

Sent: Monday, August 26, 2019 2:11 PM

To: Steve Hall <shall@ci.olympia.wa.us>

Subject: Fw: Harrison Ave Mixed Use Site Plan Application 16-9112

What's the best way to get council briefed on this project and the concerns of the neighborhood? It would also help to understand who's responding from staff to the emails we're getting. Thanks!

Cheryl Selby
Mayor, City of Olympia
Cselby@ci.olympia.wa.us

From: Chuck Ruth <pcruth@msn.com>

Sent: Saturday, August 24, 2019 10:21 AM

To: psmith@ci.olympia.wa.gov <psmith@ci.olympia.wa.gov>

Cc: Cheryl Selby <cselby@ci.olympia.wa.us>; Fire <Fire@ci.olympia.wa.us>

Subject: Harrison Ave Mixed Use Site Plan Application 16-9112

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Ms Smith

Below is a summary of comments my wife and I offer for City of Olympia staff consideration:

Harrison Ave Mixed Use Binding Site Plan Application 16-9112

Comments on Site Plan based on review of Plan and City of Olympia/Neighborhood Meeting of
8/22/19

From: Charles Ruth, PE & Shari Oliver, MS, MFCC - Grass Lake Homeowners

The following professional opinions are submitted for consideration by the City of Olympia during the review/approval process for the subject site plan:

- My name is Charles Ruth. I am a licensed Civil and Structural Engineer in the states of Washington and California. I was present at the neighborhood meeting on August 22, 2019 at Olympia City Hall. I have over 45 years of professional engineering experience, and I am currently employed as a consulting engineer. I have participated in the design of numerous civil and structural residential, commercial, and public transportation projects. My former experience as an Assistant City Engineer in a moderate-sized city in Northern California gives me some insight into the city planning process. My wife, Shari Oliver, is a retired university professor and psychotherapist with professional expertise in the area of stress management.
- My general impression from the Aug 22 meeting was that a vast majority of the adjacent Grass Lake community residents were against the subject site plan as currently proposed. Many passionate pleas were made for the City of Olympia to consider and respond to legitimate concerns of the area residents. These concerns have been voiced repeatedly in the past. It appears that the City of Olympia has been remiss in responding to the Grass Lake community concerns. This apparent lack of consideration and response is not consistent with responsible and responsive city public service.
- A major concern of the Grass Lake community is the use of 3rd Ave as a primary entrance/outlet for automobile traffic generated by the subject development plan. It is my professional opinion that 3rd Ave and intersecting road of Yauger Way (extension) were designed to accommodate residential community traffic only. Using this current residential street configuration to accommodate the inevitable significant increase in development-related traffic is not only a poor plan, it represents a likely hazardous living environment for the Grass Lake community and the new community associated with the proposed development. Not only will the current residents at or near the 3rd Ave and Yauger Way intersection experience major congestion, traffic noise, and risk to area children and residents, but they will also experience significant loss of property value. A major improvement to the project would be for new development traffic to enter and exit from/to Harrison Ave only.
- The proposed site plan also represents a major concern for emergency vehicle access, such as fire trucks/ambulances. There appears to be little or no consideration given to how emergency vehicles would achieve immediate access to the site area, in view of the vehicle

congestion associated with so many apartments and commercial businesses. It is **strongly recommended** that the City of Olympia fire department be allowed to comment on this plan. It is further **strongly recommended** that any recommendations provided by the fire department be incorporated into the site plan. If these emergency vehicle concerns are not addressed, it is my professional opinion that the City of Olympia, the developer, and the developer's engineer would be putting the associated residents and businesses at significant risk and would be accepting an extreme immediate and future liability risk.

- The proposed site plan and associated parking/vehicle access does not appear to give adequate consideration to the need for service vehicle access for delivery of goods and services to/from the commercial businesses on the ground floor of the proposed buildings, nor to trucks/vehicles that must deliver or pick up furniture and supplies to/from the proposed apartments.
- There does not appear to be any play area in consideration of the children who will undoubtedly be part of the residential demographic.
- The parking provided as part of the site plan, appears to be inadequate. In peak periods of commercial activity, apartment residents will be forced to use the already limited Grass Lake community parking along Yaeger Way. Given that this area is already crowded, such an increase will create extreme social and environmental impacts.
- I also have major technical concerns regarding the storm water that will be generated by this proposed site plan as well as how this storm water will be managed. The soil conditions at this site were described at the Aug 22, 2019 meeting as "hardpan". Many of us who live in Grass Lakes can attest to this. It is nearly impossible to aerate lawns or to plant shrubs or trees of any size. If this is the case for the general area, it is my professional opinion that intrusion swales have little chance of functioning adequately. In any case, extreme rainfall on successive calendar days may quickly overwhelm any proposed intrusion swale storm drainage system. It is imperative that the proposed storm water management system have an overflow mechanism that diverts the likely overflow storm water off the site, directly towards Harrison Ave, not towards the Grass Lake community.
- Additionally, my wife Shari has profound professional concerns regarding the inevitable stressors that will occur for everyone involved in both the Grass Lakes community and the proposed development. At minimum, the resulting population density will radically increase noise, competition for parking, and safety risks for all residents involved. There will also be unintended negative consequences. It is important to consider that the stress from such heightened density many times leads to increases in aggressive behavior and crime. Will there be sufficient law enforcement to patrol for safety? What will the quality of life

become? Is each member of the City Council willing to say that they will gladly move into the area?

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed subject site plan. It is our hope that the City of Olympia will seriously consider our concerns and suggested improvements. Such reasonable and logical concerns should result in plan modifications that meet the needs of the Grass Lake community, while still allowing the developer to build in a manner that generates a reasonable profit.

Please let us know if you have any questions regarding our comments. We are ready and willing to meet with City of Olympia staff to discuss our concerns and ideas, at your convenience.

Sincerely,
Charles C. Ruth
WA CE/SE License #13622; CA CE License #21292; CA SE License #1933
360-480-1208
Shari L. Oliver
415 Cimmaron Ln, NW
Olympia, WA 98502

Cc: Grass Lake HOA

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10