

JOINT MEETING
OVERLAND PARK CITY COUNCIL/PLANNING COMMISSION

August 7, 2002

Mayor Ed Eilert called the joint meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission to order at 6 p.m. The following members were present:

Mr. Carl R. Gerlach, Council President; Councilmembers: Mr. Byron C. Loudon; Mr. Jim Hix; Mr. Thomas C. "Tim" Owens; Ms. Marcia A. Gilliland; Mr. Neil S. Sader; Mrs. Terry Happer Scheier, Mr. Terry Goodman; and Planning Commissioners: Mr. Charles Hunter, Chairman; Mr. Ed Reitzes, Vice Chairman; Mr. Richard Collins; Mrs. Charlene Conrad; Mr. Tom Lance; Mr. George Lund and Mr. David White.

Also present were: Mr. John M. Nachbar, City Manager; Mrs. Lori Knadle, Assistant City Manager; Mr. John Rod, Administrator, Long-Range Planning; Mrs. Florence Erickson, Administrator, Management Services; Mr. Sean Reilly, Manager, Communications; Mr. Bart Budetti, Senior Assistant City Attorney; Mrs. Leslie Karr, Senior Planner; Mr. Bryan Bear, Planner; Mr. Bob Lindeblad, Administrator, Current Planning; Mr. Roger Peterson, Director of Planning and Development Services; Mr. Bob Watson, City Attorney; Ms. Erin Fitzgerald, Kansas City Star; and Mrs. Barbara Potts, Recording Secretary. Approximately 20 persons were in the audience.

Mayor Ed Eilert indicated that staff will be giving an overview of the Proposed Design Guidelines this evening. He explained that no course of action needs to be taken following the presentation. He said that the Planning Commission and City Council have future meetings scheduled for consideration of these guidelines.

PROPOSED DESIGN GUIDELINES:

Administrator, Long-Range Planning John Rod said the purpose of this meeting is to allow for the review and discussion of the three sets of design guidelines that have been developed and are being presented for adoption.

Mr. Rod reported that the Planning Commission authorized staff to hold a public hearing in regard to the three sets of Design Guidelines: 1) Infill and Redevelopment Guidelines and Standards; 2) Multi-Family Design Guidelines and Standards; and 3) Commercial Design Guidelines and Standards. He explained that the City wishes to establish the relationship of these three documents with the other provisions of the Unified Development Ordinance. The reference to "adoption by reference" has been added to comply with Kansas law. He said that Kansas is one of the few states that requires a publication of the entire ordinance in the official newspaper before it becomes effective. He explained that the technical term, "adoption by reference," means that the three sets of design guidelines will be fully effective ordinances without having to publish the three documents and will have the same legal authority as the UDO that is actually published in the newspaper.

Mr. Rod said the City Council authorized the development of the three sets of design guidelines in response to recommendations made by an advisory committee, the Infill and Redevelopment Guidelines Task Force. In order to develop specific guidelines, the

Task Force recommended the creation of architectural and site planning design guidelines for use in evaluating infill and redevelopment projects. He said that staff also made a recommendation to update and expand the two existing sets of Design Guidelines, the Shopping Center Design Guidelines and the Multifamily Design Guidelines, to include a broader coverage for all commercial developments and multifamily development, which would involve a major rehabilitation of existing commercial or multifamily, as well as consideration of new design trends. Therefore, the Council authorized staff to do a nationwide search for a consultant team. He said that staff also created two advisory committees to oversee the development of these design guidelines. One committee was the Multifamily and Retail Review Committee and the other committee was the Infill and Redevelopment Review Committee.

The consultant team was hired in October 1999, and since that time, they have met with several developers to solicit their perceptions of the current design guidelines and to obtain their ideas for improvements. Mr. Rod said that several drafts have been prepared of each of the three documents, and multiple meetings have been held with both of the committees, as well as three joint meetings with the Planning Commission/City Council to review the status of various points. At one of the meetings, staff received direction to include both the general guidelines and the required standards, and thus, they are being proposed for adoption as part of the Unified Development Ordinance.

Mr. Rod commented that several informational meetings have been held with representatives of the development community, as well as neighborhood leaders. He said that two informational meetings were held prior to the Planning Commission's public hearing on July 15, 2002, and many of those comments have been incorporated into the documents. He indicated that several of the comments made at the July 15, 2002, Planning Commission meeting related to the Multifamily Design Guidelines, which seems to be the most controversial of the three sets of Design Guidelines. He said the main concerns focused on open space requirements and the incentives offered for increasing densities in the Multifamily Design Guidelines. Since the July public hearing, staff has met to consider further modifications in light of those comments, and modifications have also been proposed by the Site Plan Review Committee.

The three sets of design guidelines and standards will be used in addition to the UDO. Mr. Rod said that in some cases, the design guidelines will supercede the requirements of the UDO, particularly in the case of the Infill and Redevelopment Design Guidelines and Standards, which will have greater flexibility and less restrictions than what is required by ordinance or in the current Multifamily and Commercial Design Guidelines. He explained that, basically, the Infill and Redevelopment Design Guidelines have more unique circumstances than the other two guidelines. Once adopted, the design guidelines and standards will be applied to all new commercial and multifamily developments when a rezoning, special use permit or new preliminary development plan with substantial changes is proposed. Any plan that is already approved or currently in the process would be allowed to proceed under the current guidelines and would not be required to meet the new guidelines and standards. The three sets of design guidelines are structured so that the Infill and Redevelopment Design Guidelines and Standards will be applied to the area north of I-435, and the Commercial and Multifamily Design Guidelines will pertain to the area south of I-435. Mr. Rod indicated that this is a slight change from what has been talked about in

earlier proposals, which was to include the Stanley area for the Infill and Redevelopment Design Guidelines. He explained that one of the modifications suggested by staff was to eliminate that area and only put in new zoning districts that would create aspects of the design guidelines and standards to cover the main issues.

Mr. Rod said that the Infill and Redevelopment Design Guidelines and Standards would apply to all new single-family subdivisions and lot splits that are infill projects north of I-435, all infill and redevelopment projects, major rehabilitation of multifamily and commercial, and in some cases, minor rehabilitation of larger commercial centers. He said the design guidelines are divided into three different sections including single-family, multifamily and commercial. The single-family section would apply to all of these, including a new proposed infill district in which the current draft allows a little more flexibility. He indicated that staff will return at a later date with specifics for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council.

The single-family section is split into two main components, site planning and site layout development pattern. Mr. Rod said that natural features would be the key focus. Initially, a tree survey/preservation plan is to be submitted and building footprints would be required to be shown. He commented that the preservation of significant trees is encouraged. However, if it is not possible to preserve the defined significant trees, a tree replacement plan should be submitted. He noted that groupings of trees may also be identified as significant trees.

Mr. Rod said another issue is the front yard setback. For example, when a new home is built, the preference is that the new home needs to be within a reasonable difference of blending with the rest of the front building lines of the homes on the same block and across the street, rather than to be set further back or forward. He explained that the idea is to blend the new single-family homes into the surrounding neighborhood for compatibility of infill and redevelopment. The new home should be similar in setback, location and orientation to the other homes on the block.

In terms of attached garages, Mr. Rod said this is one of the few architectural issues that is dealt with for single family. He explained that the idea is to make the garages less dominant on the single-family homes and to be set back slightly. He commented that a strong recommendation from the Advisory Committee was to have less domination of the garage for the main structure. The request is for the front wall plane of the attached garage to be recessed behind the front wall plane of the dwelling by a minimum of four feet. Street connections were also found to be a key component by the Advisory Committee with the intent to provide a complete connection through the site to tie into the existing streets. He said that further expansions of existing culs-de-sac should be avoided, which places limitations on redevelopment. Some other issues that have been raised during the various discussions were changing the rights-of-way and street widths. For example, in the northern area of Overland Park, there would have been some possibilities for connections if consideration would have been given initially, rather than after the fact. Therefore, in a number of cases, there were missed opportunities to have connections.

One of the issues raised was the fact that there were no standards for duplex development. One of the goals is to make the duplex development appear as a large single-family home with a similar level of finish on all four sides and windows all around. Another goal is that the garage not be the dominant feature on the duplex.

Mr. Rod said that the garage should not be more than 50 percent of the front of the building. In addition, the exterior materials are required to be 40 percent brick or stone.

According to Mr. Rod, the sections regarding multifamily or commercial development have a higher level of detail than the single-family component. The multifamily guidelines will be applied to all new infill and redevelopment projects, whether it is a single building or the complex multiple buildings, as well as major rehabilitation of apartment complexes. The requirements would include better common open space; preservation of natural features, particularly significant trees where possible; limitations on the extent of grading; and specific proposals regarding the height and number of retaining walls. The maximum height of the retaining wall would be five feet with a maximum number of four tiers. He commented that it would add more natural space into these infill projects.

Mr. Rod indicated that a number of recreational amenities are also offered. In the infill and redevelopment category, applicants are allowed to build by right to the maximum density of the zoning district. The density bonuses would allow applicants to have a density that is 25 percent above the maximum density of the zoning district. For example, the RP-3 zoned district, which is a maximum density of 12.4 units per acre, would be allowed to build up to 25 percent more if they are able to meet several of the incentives. He explained that this is different than the multifamily design guidelines, which could be a mixture of housing types, such as apartments, town homes and duplexes. The developers would be given an allowance for increasing the number of total units if they have such a mixture. Also emphasized in the guidelines are multifamily circulation and access, attractive and better designed pathways for pedestrians, vehicular circulation and landscaping in parking areas. Breaking up the parking with additional landscaping was also addressed, as well as reducing the mass of buildings. He explained that there is a substantial amount of attention towards architectural details and some bonuses built in for adding beyond the base requirements. He said that better screening and better lighting standards are also goals. There is the ability to build three-story structures in RP-3 if they meet certain additional or greater setback requirements. He explained that the density in the high development standards was raised at the three joint meetings, along with the various committees. Emphasis was placed on the quality of development. To make this attainable and to encourage infill and compatible development, he said more flexibility is needed in how this is achieved.

The Infill and Redevelopment Design Guidelines for commercial projects pertain to both small and large projects, such as an individual building or an entire shopping center. It would also be applied to major rehabilitations and some minor rehabilitations of commercial development. This category requires the preservation and protection of natural areas, the limitation of significant grading and retaining walls, site amenities for the larger centers and attention to street frontage. Buildings are to occupy 30 percent of the street frontage, and the remaining 70 percent of the street frontage is required to be well landscaped. In many cases, the street frontage will be required to have a solid hedge or low walls to screen the parking areas. When there is an intersection of two thoroughfares, parking areas and drive-through facilities are not allowed within a 150-foot radius, which is measured from the center

of the two thoroughfares. The parking and/or drive-through would be in the back or outside that area. In addition, development located within a 150-foot radius from the intersection of the thoroughfares requires a focal point for all major commercial intersections of two thoroughfares. The use of pad sites is encouraged to serve as amenities which define and reduce the scale of the centers. The guidelines have removed the limitation on the number of pad sites located within a shopping center and require more intensive operations to be well designed and away from residential areas. There is also a focus on pedestrian circulation and vehicular activities in these areas. The parking field is required to be divided so that 30 percent of the parking is in an area other than the front of the main building, such as in the case of Macaroni Grill Restaurant which defines the boundary of Regency Park Center. In terms of the parking ratio, there is an incentive with the simplification of the parking requirements, particularly for the larger centers, as the requirement for having a separate ratio for restaurants would not be applied. The requirement would be to have four parking spaces per 1,000 square feet.

Attention is being applied to entrances as well as to other architectural features, with the attempt to make the structures more attractive. Emphasis has also been placed on better lighting requirements.

Mr. Rod said that, in conclusion, there are basically three different areas in the proposed guidelines. One is to remove the limitation on the number of pad sites for a shopping center. The second area is to encourage the use of pad sites in shopping centers as an amenity to the center, and the third is to reduce and simplify the parking standards. He said those are the main incentives and the general overview of the Infill and Redevelopment Design Guidelines.

Mr. David White asked whether the proposed guidelines would be used in the area on 95th Street and Metcalf Avenue, where the former Venture store used to be located and the Home Depot Store currently exists. He questioned what the differences would be today on adopting these guidelines from the way it was handled in the past.

In response, Mr. Rod said the difference most noticeable would be the parking. He explained that the parking field would be located more to the side of the store. In addition, there would be more landscaping. In terms of pedestrian circulation, he said there would be more pathways in the parking areas.

Mr. White referred to Metcalf South Shopping Center, which he believed will have a major renovation in the future. He asked the percentage of change that will need to take place before the proposed Infill and Redevelopment Guidelines would be enacted.

Mr. Rod explained that an area is broken down by the appraised value. When the improvements reach a certain percentage of the appraised value, the guidelines would then be established. If the percentage is less than the appraised value, it would be considered a minor rehabilitation, and the guidelines would not be instituted.

Mr. White commented that he was trying to get some parameters for what possible areas would be affected. Mr. Rod said that 50 percent was believed to be a reasonable value, because that would be a significant change.

Mr. Richard Collins asked the motivating factor for not considering the use of the infill guidelines for the Stanley area. Mr. Rod said that after reviewing the Stanley area, staff observed 14 malls that have been approved as part of the 151st Street Corridor Design Concept Plan. Staff believed some of those would conflict with the new infill design guidelines of the City and be more restrictive than the infill guidelines. It seemed to be easier to remove the key elements of the infill guidelines and place it in the new zoning district, as opposed to trying to apply it to the 151st Street Corridor Design Concept Plan. He explained that it would be simpler to incorporate some of the new amenities into the newly zoned district.

Mayor Eilert asked if discussion had occurred in regard to these requirements inhibiting any kind of redevelopment. Mr. Rod said that is one aspect that staff reviewed. He said the standards are higher for single-family development, but there are no requirements for single family except for the base requirements for platting, etc. He explained that both community leaders and the Advisory Committee referred to the compatibility of the infill and redevelopment issues during the discussion in joint meetings. Although the standards are higher, staff has attempted to build in a number of incentives to encourage these changes. He said that once the design guidelines are acted upon, the Advisory Committee will also be discussing more incentives beyond the initial ones. He commented that several of these requirements are not as significant as for the new development to the south.

Referring to the earlier question regarding the Home Depot Store at 95th Street and Metcalf Avenue, Mayor Eilert stated that the intent was to redevelop these design guidelines, but it was discovered that if the result would be more expense and more requirement than developers wanted to undertake, they might decide not to take on a new project or only make a partial effort. It seemed to him that there could be potential unintended consequences that need to be examined.

Secondly, Mayor Eilert referred to the issue regarding the saving of significant trees. He recalled a situation in another city where there was some controversy, and a requirement was made to complete a tree inventory on the site, including that which was contained in the range area. He pointed out that, ultimately, it became a tactic to be used to prevent projects from moving forward.

Mr. Rod replied that, as written, the guidelines provide more flexibility in regard to where the trees are located on these infill tracts. He said the infill areas in the north are probably smaller in size, so there would be more flexibility than on the new larger tracts to the south. He stated that the wording is indicating "where possible" rather than as a requirement. He said the only way to preserve those trees is to know what is initially on the site, and that is the intent of the tree survey required at the forefront.

Mayor Eilert asked how the judgment is made between a mature tree and saplings along the drainage area. Mr. Rod referred to the definition of significant trees. He said deciduous trees have 12-inch minimum calipers, and evergreens are 12 feet tall or higher. He added that a stand of ten or more trees with a caliper of six inches or more is also considered to be significant.

Mr. George Lund applauded staff in regard to the landscaping ideas. He believed that one issue where care is needed would be in requiring too many interior trees within

the parking lots. He believed this could cause problems, such as having specific lighting patterns when a mature tree is located on the site. He expressed concern, however, that when trees die, there is no requirement to replace them.

Senior Planner Leslie Karr said there is a lack of landscaping in City parking lots, and Overland Park feels that other communities of the same caliber as the City are creating better landscaped parking lots. She believed the City should strive to create better landscaping in the parking lots. She referred to an earlier comment by one of the Planning Commissioners "to keep the park in Overland Park." Thus, she explained that landscaping and maintaining trees has been a priority of this project in an attempt to keep Overland Park beautiful in a natural way. She believed there should be flexibility in regard to where trees are planted and the kind of trees that are planted, but the intent is to break up the parking lot to eliminate the vast expanses of pavement in front of buildings.

Mr. Tom Lance said that developers tend to leave the lighting pattern for last when submitting a plan. In his opinion, the lighting pattern should be the initial concern.

In reference to an earlier comment regarding the possibility of additional pad sites as an incentive, Mr. Terry Goodman referred to the shopping center where the Service Merchandise store was located. If a redevelopment plan would be considered for that particular shopping center, he asked whether the existing incentives would be sufficient to obtain someone's interest in developing a major project.

Mr. Rod believed the fact that restrictions would be removed in regard to the number of pad sites is a significant incentive for a developer. In addition, he said the setback requirements are less, so that would give developers more flexibility. He also referred to the parking simplification, which he believed would be an incentive and would encourage developers to reconsider that location.

Mrs. Karr agreed that the pad site is one of the biggest incentives that is being offered. She was told that where many developers make their money is in selling pad sites. Thus, staff believes this to be a huge incentive to develop or redevelop property.

Mr. Thomas C. "Tim" Owens said that a comment was made regarding the infill requirements on duplexes, where the amount of frontage would be reduced. He asked how simple that would be when most people want a two-car garage. He believed that it would be difficult to place a duplex on a piece of property with the additional requirement that garages can only be less than 50 percent of the fascia.

From a design standpoint, Mr. Rod agreed that it is more restrictive. He said that garages on the recently constructed duplexes are the dominant feature and well exceed the 50 percent. However, many examples show garages placed in the rear of the structure. He indicated that the consultants have shown many examples throughout the country, and he believed it is a reasonable standard to expect in duplex development. Although it is a different design than what some developers have done, he believed it is reasonable to achieve, especially with the density bonuses that are introduced.

When asked by Mr. Owens if Overland Park has existing duplexes that are less than 50 percent, Director of Planning and Development Services Roger Peterson said there are many single-family residences that require side entry garages. He referred to the apartment complex at 135th Street and Lamar Avenue, which shows garages from all different angles. He explained that it is a matter of design, and he believed it stretches the design sensitivities of the developer and the architect.

Mayor Eilert asked what would be done with a site that is longer and more narrow, where the developer would not have the ability to make a side entrance or rear entrance garage. Mr. Rod said it is also dependant upon the depth of the site and the amount of space available. He said the development could also consist of fewer units that are larger in size, which is a new trend. He added that the orientation of the living area is another consideration.

Mrs. Karr indicated that part of the reason staff included architectural standards for duplexes is that the existing duplex development has some of the least attractive residential developments in Overland Park. She explained that it was staff's opinion that there needed to be some improved designs within duplex development.

Mayor Eilert concurred except for one point. If the guidelines precluded the property from being developed, he expressed concern that nothing would be accomplished. He explained that the actual restrictions would be that the lot size would prevent this concept from being completed. He believed there must be some way to make an adjustment.

Mr. Rod suggested that the developer might consider the new zoning district, because there will be more flexibility available than constructing a duplex development. He said, for example, the rear yard setback may be substantially less, and with a little more flexibility on the side yard, this might become an average-sized project rather than a total limitation, such as R-1a zoning.

Mrs. Karr pointed out that the developer would also have the opportunity to apply for deviations. She said it would either be the Board of Zoning Appeals or the Planning Commission who would make the decision, which would provide some staff relief in regard to the required standards.

Mrs. Karr referred to the next portion of the presentation, the Multifamily Design Guidelines and Standards, and explained the purpose is to update the 1987 Multifamily Design Guidelines, to add RP-2 and RP-4 projects under the required review of the guidelines, to make natural features a priority, to increase common open space requirements, to restructure the density bonus system, and to prescribe certain architectural features. The Site Plan Review Committee, which is a subcommittee of the Planning Commission, meets with developers of multifamily projects to review their compliance with the guidelines and to help them achieve density bonuses. She explained that the density bonuses will allow the developer to go from a base density, which is less, to the maximum possible density in a zoning district.

Based upon developer input received by staff, Mrs. Karr said developers are proposing an increase in coverage requirement (40 percent for RP-2, Planned Duplex, and RP-4, Planned Cluster Housing projects, which are new to the guidelines). She said the guidelines are also establishing an attainable density for those projects, a maximum

possible density, which is not changed from what the UDO allows. Required open space is being included and the requirement has been decreased from 30 percent to 23 percent, based on input received from the development community. The lot coverage requirements in RP-3, RP-5 and RP-6 districts are not changing with the new guidelines, nor is the attainable or maximum density for those districts. The most significant change is the required common open space, which is being increased from 10 percent of the landscaped open space to a percentage of net site area for both RP-3 and RP-5, and 20 percent for RP-6.

Mrs. Karr said that staff has attempted to simplify open space in the new guidelines. The current guidelines have some confusing definitions and calculations, and staff wants to make certain that the open space is accessible to persons who live in the developments. The idea is to maximize the undeveloped area through careful site layout, and the density bonuses have been revised for open space. The feeling was that the current open space requirement was so low that many density bonuses were being obtained for open space that was already provided. She said staff also included a clarification in the document that parkland dedicated to or acquired by the City as part of our Greenway Linkages Program could meet open space requirements if eligible for density bonuses. The open space bonuses provided are to allow an increase in density for each additional one percent of common open space above the amount required. This percentage has been modified based on input received from the development community at the last public hearing held during the Planning Commission meeting on July 15, 2002. Staff also provided up to a 20 percent bonus for a centralized open space in the form of a neighborhood green area. She explained that this is requiring a certain percentage to be aggregated, based on the number of units that are in a project. She referred to an example of a project that was recently approved in Overland Park at 159th and U. S. 69 Highway, which shows how a central green area can be incorporated into a project, providing a usable open space for the people who will reside there.

In terms of preservation of natural features, Mrs. Karr said a tree survey is being required. The Multifamily Design Guidelines are requiring that 40 percent of the significant trees be maintained. She indicated that the same definitions apply for infill development, which is the 12-inch caliper trees, 12-foot high evergreens and significant stands of trees. The same limits apply to retaining walls.

Mrs. Karr said that staff is providing two density bonuses related to natural features. One is a 5 percent increase for each additional 10 percent of trees preserved, and also, a 20 percent increase for preservation of significant natural features. She referred to an example of a development in Overland Park at 123rd Street and Metcalf Avenue, the Woods at Cherry Creek, which is part of this project. She said they dedicated to the City a three-acre green space that is part of our Greenway Linkages Program. She explained that this example shows how those areas can be incorporated into development.

Pedestrian connections are being required as part of the proposed guidelines. The guidelines require that pedestrian connections be provided so that residents in the community can access the various amenities that are provided.

The guidelines are also requiring recreational amenities based on a sliding scale, depending on the number of units in the project. The recreational amenities can include swimming pools, sports courts, etc.

Mrs. Karr said that mixed housing is an area that is not being required. However, the City is proposing to offer a significant density bonus when more than one kind of housing is constructed within the development. She explained the idea is to obtain a mix of housing types, so there would not only be apartment type buildings within a development. Although it is not a requirement, it is an area bonus that a developer can receive. She said it is proposed on a sliding scale, so there is a variety of ranges.

When asked by Ms. Gilliland if different standards would apply with the mixed housing, Mrs. Karr said it would still be subject to the architectural requirements and the open space requirements, because those would be based on the zoning district.

Ms. Gilliland clarified that she was referring to an earlier comment regarding duplexes with specific requirements for the percentages allowed in terms of garages. Mrs. Karr said that, as discussed earlier, the document referred to the requirements for duplexes and multifamily being separated. However, it is now combined in one document, so the same requirements (the limit of 50 percent of the garage as part of the structure) would apply regardless of whether it was an apartment or a duplex.

In response to Mr. Owens' question whether there is a market for mixed housing, Mrs. Karr referred to a project in Overland Park that has provided a mix of housing within their development at 127th Street and Metcalf. She indicated that the development is Deer Creek apartments, which is a combination of apartments and single-family attached homes. In some cases, it may require that two different developers come together to make it happen. One person may specialize in duplexes, and the other person may specialize in standard apartments. She said the City is not requiring this to be done, but offering it as a potential incentive for someone who is interested in that kind of project.

Mr. Goodman asked the difference between a fourplex and four attached town homes. Mrs. Karr said the difference is in how they are designed. She explained that attached town homes would be homes vertically side by side, and a fourplex might be more of a horizontal design.

Mrs. Karr said the guidelines are offering an incentive for crime prevention by incorporating environmental design principles. She said they envision working with the Police Department to review projects that might provide exceptional design under those principles. She indicated that one of the Overland Park police officers has had training and experience in this area. She indicated that, in working with the Police Department, developers could also receive a density bonus for those techniques.

In terms of site layout, the goal outlined in the guidelines includes better designed street edges, better internal organization, and an appropriate transition to adjacent single-family areas through building orientation and also architectural design. Mrs. Karr presented an example of a site layout from a project in Overland Park at Nall Avenue and 133rd Street, with buildings oriented towards the street, internal parking courts, orientation towards open space, preservation of natural features, and some of the other factors included in the guidelines.

Based on developer input, Mrs. Karr said the current requirements for covered parking are being maintained. The recommendations are parking blocks to break up internal parking lot layouts, retaining the parking areas internally to have better view from the street edges, and limiting the lengths of carports and garages.

The building design is being prescribed in a number of different ways, such as variety in wall and roof planes, single-family house design for smaller buildings, or town home development where there is individual articulation for each of the units. The guidelines include a minimum of 40 percent of the materials to be brick or stone as the primary material. Mrs. Karr explained that these suggestions have been from the Site Plan Review Committee, which has been a goal of theirs in the last couple of years while working with apartment developments. She presented a picture of a multifamily project, Overland Park Woods of Cherry Creek, as an example to illustrate the incorporation of many of those features.

Mrs. Karr said the current process is a negotiation process between the developer, staff and the Site Plan Review Committee. She indicated that the purpose of the guidelines is to take some of the burden off staff and the Site Plan Review Committee, creating a more level playing field when a developer submits a plan. As she explained, the developer knows up front what is expected in terms of architectural design.

According to Mrs. Karr, increasing the amount of brick or stone on the exterior, clay or concrete tile roofs, and various forms of architectural features, are all new bonuses to the design guidelines. The guidelines are also recommending that garages be no more than 50 percent of the multifamily façade, and that every two single-bay garage door or every double-bay garage door be offset by four feet from the plane of an adjacent garage door, so the structure will not be dominated by garages. She said the requirement for a landscaped island between the garage doors has been eliminated. Based on input received from the Planning Commission, staff has included a requirement of a maximum grade percentage for driveways leading up to individual garage doors.

Mrs. Karr showed an example of a side-loaded garage with an offset between the garage doors. She said that staff proposed to change the current density bonus for attached garages to allow a one percent density bonus for each ten percent of units with an attached side- or rear-loaded garage. Based on the concerns expressed by the development community, this has been changed to one percent density bonus for each five percent of the units with attached garages, regardless of whether it is a side- or rear-loaded garage.

Mrs. Karr said some of the current landscaping requirements are being changed. One is for perimeter landscaping, which was previously proposed as a requirement, but based upon developer input, staff has changed this to a potential incentive. She said that density bonuses are provided for increasing the size of the required landscaping or for providing additional trees above those required.

Mrs. Karr said a number of comments were made from the development community at the July 15, 2002, Planning Commission public hearing. Staff has made two revisions to the guidelines based on those comments, and an additional meeting with the development community has been held to review those changes.

Mr. Hunter said one issue that was raised during the Planning Commission public hearing was that these guidelines would not allow some of the existing projects. He asked if staff has examined specific projects to verify that these guidelines would work.

Mrs. Karr replied that staff met with the development community and observed some of the existing projects. She explained that part of the confusion was in reference to

the definition of open space. Therefore, staff redefined this and changed some of the requirements. Although some of the projects might have been modified in some manner, staff believes the required modifications are appropriate for those projects. She confirmed that the majority of the projects that were discussed at that meeting would still be able to be developed.

In response to Mr. Hunter's question whether there would be any risk that the units could be too close together as a result of the modifications, Mrs. Karr pointed out that there are various ways that a site can be laid out.

Ms. Gilliland questioned the comment that windows in the garage are considered to be a bonus. She explained that she was told that windows in garages are a security issue. Mrs. Karr said the belief has been that any time windows are included in a façade, it is considered to be a better design. She commented that this may be a conflict in some of the principles, but it is not a requirement.

Mr. Rod indicated that it depends on the height of the windows. He said the higher windows are not considered to be security problems.

Ms. Gilliland believed the Density Bonus Plan would be more work for staff. Mrs. Karr replied that it would not necessarily change their process. She said the hope is that some of the negotiations made by staff and the Site Plan Review Committee will make the process easier. She explained that the guidelines will be more complete and concise, letting the development community know what is expected or required of them prior to their first sketch plan. She explained that for the developers who are out of town and have never developed in Overland Park, the process can become cumbersome, because they are not always aware of what is expected of them.

Mr. Peterson added that the Site Plan Review Committee of the Planning Commission spends endless hours negotiating with developers, and often times, the developer has to completely redraw and spend thousands of dollars, so staff is trying to bring some certainties to the process.

In response to Ms. Gilliland's inquiry of what would happen if there were no density goals for a project, Mr. Peterson explained that this would result in unwanted projects. The density bonuses help developers earn the maximum by incentives to have better designed projects.

Mrs. Karr said the final document is the Commercial Design Guidelines, which is to update the existing 1988 Shopping Center Design Guidelines, increase landscaping, improve street edges and intersections, encourage pad sites to enhance the streetscapes, and to prescribe site layout and architectural features. She indicated that natural features are also a priority with commercial projects. She explained that 20 percent of the significant trees are proposed as a requirement to be maintained, as well as limitations in regard to retaining walls.

In terms of site layout, there is a requirement for 30 percent of the parking to be provided at the side or rear of certain buildings and an option for more parking to be located in front with additional landscaping being provided. Mrs. Karr provided a picture of an example located at 159th Street and Metcalf Avenue, which shows approximately 30 percent of the parking on the side of the building. She said it is also recommended that buildings frame the intersections and main streets and

enclose site amenities, which is a developing trend in commercial development. To improve the appearance of thoroughfare intersections, she said that 60 percent of the frontage is required to be occupied by building site amenities, such as landscaping features. She also noted that within a 200-foot radius of the intersections, no parking is allowed and focal points, such as fountains or some type of distinctive architecture, are required.

Although staff is proposing to lift the limitation on pad sites, Mrs. Karr said they are attempting to be more restrictive and discriminatory about how pad sites are incorporated into the site. Therefore, rather than having single pad sites within the parking area, the idea is to group them together so that it provides a better street appearance and a better design. There is also a requirement for site amenities in which the percentage is based on the amount of parking that is being provided. She believed this suggestion was mentioned at one of the joint Planning Commission/City Council meetings. She said the site amenity areas can also be used for focal points and transition requirements.

Mrs. Karr referred to a picture of a commercial project in Lincolnshire, Illinois, with commercial development on both sides of the public plaza in the development. She indicated that a significant tree was maintained as part of this area. She pointed out the restaurant located on one side, a strip center on the other side, and an office building at the end of the site. She commented that this is an example of how all of these features can work together to improve the design of commercial.

Transitions to other uses are being articulated more with requirements not being limited to fencing, additional setbacks and landscaping. Mrs. Karr said the idea is to observe building designs as a way of transition from one use to another.

Pedestrian access is being required in terms of connecting walkways in front of buildings, so that people do not exit from a store into the main driving aisle.

The Planning Commission expressed a desire to place a cap on parking spaces for commercial developments. Staff has proposed that for commercial developments over 150,000 square feet, there will be a minimum of four parking spaces and a maximum of five parking spaces and no special parking requirements for restaurants. Mrs. Karr said one concern that staff had in doing this is that restaurants require more parking than the standard retail square footage, and staff did not want a commercial development to be unable to have a restaurant in their development because of parking limitations or caps. Therefore, the proposal is not to require extra parking for restaurants, but rather base the parking on the square footage of the restaurant.

In terms of wall articulation, Mrs. Karr said the requirement for street facing facades is to have more than one customer entrance for large commercial buildings. She said the goal is to establish the requirement, so that developers know what is expected, and hopefully, this will improve the quality of the building plan submitted.

Mrs. Karr said that landscaping requirements are being increased fairly significantly. The current requirement is for six percent of the parking lot to be landscaped. The change would be to require a parking lot island for every ten spaces; to require parking lots to be screened from the street view with either a berm, landscaping or a wall; or a combination of those elements and also break up the parking lot with landscaping.

Mrs. Karr referred to a new requirement in regard to an issue discussed at length with the Planning Commission. For the areas where outdoor storage or seasonal inventory is located for sale, or where vending machines are located outside a building, she said those areas would be in a permanently defined area with screening walls or landscaping. She said that many retailers will place concrete blocks or railroad ties around these areas. She explained that the idea is to require them to make the area more attractive. She noted that some of the Planning Commission items that were discussed with applicants are being incorporated into the guidelines, such as the requirement of downspouts to be concealed, parapets to screen rooftop equipment, and handicapped parking located adjacent to sidewalks and building entrances.

Mr. Loudon believed a lighting plan for commercial developments should take precedence over the landscaping plan. As he explained, once trees mature, it could destroy the potential lighting of the site. He said his concern is based upon security issues, which he believed to be most important.

Mr. Rod announced that this item will be heard at the August 12, 2002, Planning Commission meeting and at the September 9, 2002, City Council meeting, depending on the action taken.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m. Minutes transcribed by Barbara Potts.

Ed Eilert, Mayor