



**ARAPAHOE COUNTY  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
January 6, 2009**

**Members**

Arnold Hayutin  
Brian Weiss  
Leah Martin  
Brett Larson  
Kim Herzfeldt  
Paul Rosenberg  
Mark Brummel

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Jan Yeckes  
Ron Hovland  
Carol Kuhn  
Sherman Feher  
Sue Liu  
Chuck Haskins  
Tom McNish  
Joleen Sanchez

**OPENING COMMENTS**

Ron Hovland, on behalf of Division Manager Jan Yeckes, stated that there is a nice article in the I-70 Scout about downtown Strasburg getting Arapahoe County zoning protection after approval by the Board. The article in the paper doesn't address the Planning Commission hearing; however, the Board unanimously approved the zoning, and the property owners that were interviewed for the news article spoke glowingly of this action. Mr. Hovland said there was only one citizen providing public comment at the public hearing, and that comment was supportive. He said the PC did a good job; the best work is often the work that is done without any recognition.

Mr. Hovland reported that Item 2 on tonight's agenda has been properly noticed with mail notification and posted signs but that case needs to be continued. He explained that there are still outstanding issues, including a TRC (Technical Review Committee) variance, which will be discussed tomorrow. He said currently, that is the only case that will be heard on the 20<sup>th</sup>, so that should be a short meeting. He asked the PC to formally continue that case.

**The motion was made by Mr. Rosenberg, duly seconded by Mr. Weiss to continue Case No. P08-012, River Run Plaza/Final Development Plan to January 20, 2009.**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Hovland further stated that the same Planning Commissioners have served for over a year, so in February there will be Planning Commission (PC) elections.

## **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**The motion to adopt the minutes from the November 18, 2008 Planning Commission hearing was made by Mr. Rosenberg, duly seconded by Mr. Weiss.**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**The motion to adopt the minutes from the December 12, 2008 Planning Commission hearing was made by Mr. Weiss, duly seconded by Ms. Martin.**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

There were no Consent Agenda items.

## **REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS**

### **Item 1 – P08-018, Easter Lima #02/Easter Lima Self Storage/Final Development Plan**

Carol Kuhn, Senior Planner, stated that there is one correction to the draft motion. She clarified that the PC members could recommend approval, but could not approve this case. She handed a copy of the corrected draft motion to the PC chair. She established jurisdiction. She said this 3.41 acre site is located at the northwest corner of S. Lima Street and E. Easter Avenue. She said the applicant is also concurrently processing a replat to subdivide Block 1 of Easter Lima Subdivision into six lots including the lot for this self storage facility. She said the applicant is also vacating a portion of a drainage easement in Block 1 of this subdivision. She further stated that the vacation and replat are not heard by the PC. She explained that the proposed FDP is based on the 1985 approved Arapahoe Partnership Preliminary Development Plan (PDP), Case No. Z84-038. Ms. Kuhn said the proposed site plan is for a two-story self storage facility on 70,000 square feet with a caretaker residence on a 3.41 acre site. She said the caretaker residence and the storage facility are allowed uses in the Arapahoe Partnership PDP; the project is subject to the recently adopted CAEPA (Centennial Airport Environs Planning Area) regulations. She commented that the Cottonwood Creek drainage way bisects the entire 25-acre parcel; the applicant has been working with the County and SEMSWA (Southeast Metro Stormwater Authority) to make improvements to the drainage way. She said the Arapahoe Partnership PDP allows this use and has a minimum lot size of one acre; the applicant is meeting that requirement with the replat. She said the CAEPA regulations govern this area, and she discussed those regulations.

Ms. Kuhn explained that the architecture complies with the CAEPA regulations and has four sided and horizontal architecture and vertical articulation. She said the applicant also has pedestrian-oriented design amenities; however, some of them do not necessarily fit with this vehicle-oriented site. She said no one would show up on foot with all of their possessions in hand, but would show up in a vehicle. She said some of the pedestrian circulation and lighting do not fit well with this vehicle-oriented use. Ms. Kuhn confirmed that the trash enclosure does meet the screening requirements and the loading area does meet the spacing requirements. She stated that the parking lot landscaping is not applicable to this site because of

the small number of parking spaces required for this site. She said the Land Development Code (LDC) requires that there be a landscaped island for every 40 parking spaces, but this site is only required to have seven spaces. She said staff has deemed that the building foundation landscaping is not applicable because the applicant has indicated that there are difficulties with the soil. She stated that CAEPA specifies that parking area edges shall be screened from public streets and sidewalks. She explained that this site sits back behind Lots 2-6 and would be screened from S. Kenton Street when that street is built. She said the perimeter landscaping is there, but there would be no berming. She further stated that there would be a significant number of trees and the applicant has asked for additional trees to count for shrubs, which is allowed in the LDC. She said the applicant has also provided sidewalk connections to S. Kenton Street and a master landscape plan for S. Kenton Street.

Ms. Kuhn stated that the issue that staff has grappled with is the mini-warehouse/self storage section in CAEPA. She explained that CAEPA specifies that every mini-warehouse/self storage facility be screened by a masonry perimeter wall of no less than 6 feet in height. She noted that the applicant hasn't provided a solid perimeter wall, but has provided a non-security redwood fence with masonry columns. She said the setback of this lot and the screening from the other lots does lend itself to screening from the right-of-way. She said this is not a typical one-story mini-storage area where there are several units with garages. She said this is a two-story facility that doesn't look like mini-storage. She said staff felt that the wall would have to be 27 feet tall to screen this building and wondered how this building would be truly screened. She said CAEPA regulations also specify that flat roofs are prohibited. She said technically all roofs have to have some pitch to the snow and rain come off, but this in essence, is a flat roof. She said when looking through the CAEPA regulations and understanding what the goal is, staff felt that the intent was to minimize the single-story self-storage facilities that were being developed throughout the County with a bunch of garages; this is not like that and staff felt that this facility does provide visual interest and articulation and a roof line and does not have the flat roof monotony typical of the single-story self storage facilities.

Mr. Larson asked about the soil.

Ms. Kuhn stated that there can be no building foot plantations on this site; CAEPA states that if there are soil difficulties and the landscaping cannot be there, then the landscaping is not required. She said Engineering confirmed that there could not be landscaping there.

Mr. Larson asked about the solid wall versus a regular wall.

Ms. Kuhn explained that CAEPA says there must be a solid wall screening the entire facility. She said the applicant is not providing that. She said staff agrees that the intent of that regulation in CAEPA was to screen the single-story flat-roofed, monotonous units of 10-12 buildings with many garage doors. She said this development is completely different, as two elevations have doors and the other two don't.

Mr. Larson asked if staff is comfortable with the wooden fence.

Ms. Kuhn said yes. She said staff wants the PC to look at the elevations, but staff is comfortable with the rooflines as well. She said since there will not be a lot of garage doors lined up and since some of the access is internal, the developer doesn't need the security of the solid masonry fence.

Mr. Hayutin asked about the floodplain.

Ms. Kuhn said Engineering would discuss that, as that is a separate issue from this application. She said the creek improvements would be done in the future; that was mentioned in the staff report as background and history of this site.

Sue Liu, Arapahoe County Engineering Services, said the floodplain is on the east side of Kenton Street and is not related to this development. She said there is a CIP (Capital Improvement Project) proposed by SEMSWA and that improvement project is currently under review; the timeline for construction is unknown at this time. She said the 404 Floodplain Permit is already in place.

Mr. Hayutin said that project has no bearing on this application.

Ms. Liu agreed.

Ms. Kuhn explained that the floodplain improvements were mentioned in the staff report to provide background information on the entire 25 acre site and the surrounding area. She said across the street from Kenton there would be drainage improvements to the creek with drop structures.

Gary Harrison, Concepts West Architecture, distributed a handout, a copy of which has been retained for the file. He introduced the development team. He referenced page two of the handout. He said the zoning was established in 1985 as a Mixed Use PUD, which allows a wide range of uses such as retail, office, warehousing, light industrial, and self storage. He said the property has been divided into three super blocks. He explained that Blocks 2 and 3 straddle both sides of Cottonwood Creek. He concurred that the Cottonwood Creek project is completely different but he does want to talk about what is going on with the site.

Mr. Harrison said the site is behind the Wal-Mart on the corner of Lima and Arapahoe Road. He said South Kenton Street is currently under construction and should be completed this spring. He said this road would connect with the portion of Kenton that would then connect Easter to Briarwood, which would provide the needed vehicular connection. He said that would be a public road. He stated that the rest of the site has been master planned with utilities and storm drainage, as well as two detention ponds along the creek. He said page 3 of the plan shows a conceptual drawing for Block 1. He said this development would be very market driven; because this is not primary retail space, there would be no fast food or retail.

He said there would be a lot of traffic on Easter and Kenton, so the vision is to build light industrial, contractors' offices, warehousing, rental places, etc. He said in this economy, the development would focus on what is in demand and what is allowable per the zoning. He said all the roads are private off of Kenton. He said there is only one approved access from Kenton. He said the applicant has worked with the fire department on road arrangements that allow fire trucks access to the site, and the fire department has approved of the plan. He said there is a pedestrian connection from S. Kenton into the self storage project. He said as each other site develops, there will be pedestrian connections for those lots. He said Lots 2-6 are only conceptual and the applicant would be back to the PC with more plans for approval in the future. He said there is a street tree concept plan on the FDP, which indicates how the landscaping along Easter and Kenton would be done.

Mr. Harrison referenced page four of the handout and said that is an overview of the development, taken from Google Earth. He said the buildings shown were imported into the graphic and he said the building is sited back and out of the way. He said the 2-story building is visible from Easter and Kenton but is not prominent. He said this is a destination business and is a good use for that back corner of the property. He said most of the units are interior units and there are a few outdoor units with overhead doors. He said most of the spaces have controlled access interior to the building, which is well secured.

Mr. Harrison then presented a depiction of the site plan. He said customer traffic would come in from the private driveway from Kenton. He said prospective customers would have a parking lot outside the fenced area where they can check into the manager's office. He said current customers would have a code to open the gates, which would be monitored; the entrance into the building would also be monitored. He said there is an on-site manager that would live there full time, which is always a great asset. He said there are some exterior doors on the west and south sides, and that is why the parking lot is right up against the building. He said the main entrance is on the east side, and that is where a tenant could use a cart to wheel boxes to his/her unit. He said the parking numbers are very low, based on good marketing; self storage units do not have much traffic and don't need much parking. He said the parking lot looks small but it does meet the code and the business plan. He said the fire department would have access to the gate to allow them to get in any time, day or night. He said fire trucks can go around the building and there is a secondary driveway and gate for the fire department only, which goes back to the main driveway.

Mr. Harrison stated that there is one CAEPA criteria that the applicant did not meet intentionally, and that was the fencing. He said there was a lot of debate within the development group regarding whether or not the fence was necessary, and if so, what type should it be. He said the fencing is meant to be very light security. He commented that if someone really wants to break into this building, they are going to do it whether there is a wood fence or a masonry fence. He said that is not likely because of all the security within the building. He said the applicant decided that there should be fencing, but the building would be well below grade from Easter, so the first 10-12 feet of the building would not be visible. He said in addition, there would be all the other development in front of this building. He said the fencing isn't visible from the right-of-way (ROW). He said the applicant has proposed a wood fence instead of masonry because of the cost. He said there would be 700 feet of fencing that isn't visible and isn't meant to be high security. He said there was also discussion regarding a steel picket fence, which is less prone to vandalism, and provides minimum security. He said the criterion was for a solid fence and that is why the applicant asked for the PCs consideration for a solid wood fence versus solid masonry.

Mr. Harrison said other than that, the applicant has met all the CAEPA criteria as it applies to this project. He said it is hard to see the grading on this site, but the building would be down in a hole, so there would be retaining walls on the west; there would be no fencing there, but the retaining walls provide the necessary security so no one could drive into the development. He said the landscaping will have low water usage, but there would be a little Blue Grass on the south side for water quality purposes. He said that would be visible from inside the fence. He said there would be evergreens and dry land grass.

Mr. Rosenberg asked where prospective clients would park.

Mr. Harrison referred to page five of the plan and pointed out the unsecured parking area. He said there are four parking spaces and a handicap stall. He said that is where those customers would park.

Mr. Rosenberg asked where the manager would park.

Mr. Harrison said there is a single car garage for the manager and there is room for a second car.

Mr. Brummel asked if there would be any outdoor storage.

Mr. Harrison said there would be no RV or boat parking.

Ms. Kuhn said outdoor storage is not allowed with this zoning.

Mr. Larson asked about the wood fence.

Mr. Harrison said the design is on page two of the FDP. He said the pickets would be  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch thick, but they would alternate. He said people would not be able to see through the fence.

Mr. Larson said his concern is that the wood fence would look bad in a few years.

Mr. Rosenberg said there was a lot of discussion in the JPA (Joint Planning Area – now renamed to CAEPA) meetings about self-storage facilities. He recalled that Centennial had great concern about them. He said this meets most of Centennial's concerns, but he is also concerned about the fence. He said there is no need for a 20-foot tall fence, but there is no reason why the fence can't be a 6-foot brick or masonry all the way around as the rules required. He said other than that, he really likes this plan.

Mr. Harrison said the applicant has requested a non-masonry fence because the building is out of sight until one is actually on the property. He said 700 feet of masonry fence is a very big ticket item and it is a business issue for the developer. He said the other thing that was discussed was a vinyl fence; if wood is a concern, some type of other long-term exterior fence would be acceptable.

Mr. Hayutin asked what the regulations state.

Ms. Kuhn explained that the regulations specify that there must be a masonry fence. She said the regulations also talk about screening the facility from the ROW. She said this building is set back from the ROW and other buildings would be in front of it and there is a lot of perimeter landscaping in the form of trees, not just shrubs. She said there is another project, which staff reviewed for cost comparison purposes, that has about 740 linear feet of masonry wall and that price quote was \$125,000.

Mr. Hayutin said there is a reason why a masonry wall is required.

Ms. Kuhn argued that the intent was to screen a single story, flat roof, monotonous, garage door facility. She said this is a different type of building.

Mr. Larson asked the attorney for legal advice.

Mr. McNish said the decision is up to the PC.

Mr. Hovland said this is an issue of form following function. He asked, if there was not a sign on this building that said "mini-storage", would any one know this was a storage facility or would they consider this a light industrial or warehouse building? He said he would be happy with no fence of any kind because it would look better in the long run. He said as long as the outside roll-up doors are kept locked there should never be an issue and there shouldn't be a reason for a wall. He stated that some of the PC members were present when the new regulations were created, and he understands the absolute fear of having rows of 12-foot tall mini-storage units with flat roofs that would dominate this landscape. He said this building is not like that. He reiterated that this is a two-story building that does not look like mini-storage; it looks like a warehouse building which is totally appropriate. He said this applicant does not need a fence for security purposes and what they are proposing is probably an acceptable choice in terms of any screening that may be necessary. He said he uses the word "may" cautiously because he doesn't feel this development needs any screening based on location and the function of the building. He said that is why staff supports this recommendation. He said he doesn't want to over-design and over-burden with things that don't need to be there. He said having a masonry wall for a two-story building where there is no outdoor storage is really kind of pointless.

Mr. Herzfeldt asked if the applicant wants the fence as part of the operation to control security and access.

Mr. Hovland said from the staff's position, the building's design and the security system makes the fence superfluous.

Mr. Weiss said it looks like there are masonry columns. He asked how far apart those are.

Mr. Harrison said 18 feet. He referred to sheet two of the FDP. He said the goal is to find a middle ground between something that is aesthetically nice with minimum security that comes off well without being monotonous masonry or wood.

Mr. Weiss asked how high the redwood fence would be.

Mr. Harrison said six feet tall.

Mr. Weiss asked how high the overhead garage doors are on the south side of the building.

Mr. Harrison said about eight feet.

Mr. Weiss clarified that the entire site is depressed.

Mr. Harrison said yes. He referenced Easter and said the site drops down.

Mr. Weiss said the overhead doors could not be seen from the ROW or from the property line.

Mr. Harrison agreed.

Mr. Weiss said if anything, one would see two feet of the eight foot doors.

Mr. Harrison said yes, worst case.

Mr. Weiss asked about the east side.

Mr. Harrison said future development would block that side. He said people would see a two-story building and there are two overhead doors on the east side.

Brian Horning, DCB Construction, 909 E. 62<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Denver, addressed security. He said with a self-storage facility of this kind, the intent is to keep track of who goes in and out of the facility; he said the applicant wants a fence of some kind for security purposes and to keep vandalism to a minimum. He presented the north and west elevations and said the CAEPA regulations were followed. He said the company strived for four-sided architecture with a few bump-outs and changes in materials. He described the proposed building. Mr. Horning said the roof would be a tan color. He said there would be a focus point at the entry way of the facility with a two-story manager's office with a residence above the office and that would be the central point for visitors to enter. He pointed out the main entrance on the rendering of the east elevation. He said once the lease is set up, there would be a security gate that would be in front of the main doors that would require a code to enter. He then stated that the doors on the south elevation would most likely not be visible over the top of the security fence, but the doors are a similar color to the brick so there would not be a stark difference. He said the rooftop units would be screened. He referenced page 1 and said the rooftop units sit towards the main part of the building so the units would barely be visible from the sight line. He said this is a very aesthetic building and it has a low impact to the area and will match the future development. He said this is a good development for the area and would blend in well with the surrounding environment.

Mr. Weiss asked what the length of the south side of the building is.

Mr. Horning said 180 feet.

Mr. Weiss said on the drawings that were distributed at the beginning of the hearing, on page two, the trash enclosure is depicted on the south side and it is shown on the east side on other drawings, including the FDP drawings. He added that the FDP plan shows 21 columns along the south side whereas the plans handed out today show only six or seven.

Mr. Horning said sheet two is not representing the line of columns. He said the FDP shows the columns spaced at a maximum of 18 feet, but it most likely would be less than that because the land slopes uphill towards the west. He said in order to make it look proper, there would be less spacing.

Mr. Weiss said that is more like seven columns instead of 21.

Mr. Horning said that side of the fence is about 250-300 feet.

Mr. Harrison said the drawing handed out is his. He said it was not intended to show the number of columns on the plan view.

Mr. Weiss clarified that he wants to know how many columns there would be on the south side.

Mr. Harrison said the FDP states every 18 feet. He said that graphic could be clarified.

Mr. Weiss said it is an aesthetic issue, and the item that is being discussed is how much wood the fence would have versus a masonry fence.

Mr. Harrison said regarding the trash enclosure, he used a very old concept plan. He said that enclosure has been moved a couple of times; he apologized for the error.

Mr. Larson said the fence would have ¾ inch pickets. He asked if that would be a short-term or long-term fence and he asked about the maintenance.

Mr. Horning said that would be a high maintenance fence. He said at the minimum, the client would want a vinyl fence that would look like redwood. He said there would be less maintenance in the future.

Ms. Kuhn said any change to the fencing material must show up on the FDP and cannot show up at the CD stage. She said the Planning Division would have to know about it. She said if the fence does deteriorate, the developer would be violating the zoning.

Mr. Herzfeldt clarified that on the west side of the site there is a retaining wall; there would be no fence because of the slope.

Mr. Horning said that is correct. He currently the FDP doesn't show a fence on that side.

There were no public comments.

Ms. Kuhn said there was a note that the galvanized roofing materials would be changed to a buckskin color, and that is a condition of approval; the applicant has complied with that. She said regarding the other conditions, the applicant is willing to add the crosswalk between the two parking stalls and the main parking area. She said there is a will-serve letter for the entire 25 acres, but staff is working on getting a will-serve letter for this project; once staff gets that letter, it will be forwarded to the State Engineer's office.

**The motion was made by Mr. Rosenberg in Case No. P08-018, Easter Lima #02/Easter Lima Self Storage/Final Development Plan, that the Planning Commission has read the staff report and received testimony at the public hearing. The Planning Commission finds itself in agreement with staff findings 1 through 4 including all plans and attachments as set forth in the staff report dated December 30, 2008, and recommends approval of this case subject to the following conditions:**

- a. The applicant shall address all Public Works and Development comments and concerns as identified within this report and associated redlined drawings 3 weeks prior to scheduling this item for consideration before the Board of County Commissioners.
- b. The applicant shall address all Engineering Service Division comments and provide revised plans 3 weeks prior to scheduling this item for consideration before the Board of County Commissioners.
- c. The applicant shall provide the necessary water supply information to the State Engineer's office prior to scheduling this item for consideration before the Board of County Commissioners.
- d. The applicant shall provide a painted pedestrian crosswalk to connect the curb ramp from the east to the main customer parking area to the west.
- e. The applicant shall submit an updated will-serve letter from Havana Water and Sanitation District at least 3 weeks prior to scheduling this item for consideration at the Board of County Commissioners.
- f. The applicant shall provide a copy of the avigation easement to Centennial Airport at least 3 weeks prior to scheduling this item for consideration before the Board of County Commissioners.
- g. The applicant shall provide a less-reflective roofing material.
- h. The Vacation of Easement and Replat must be approved prior to final approval of this Final Development Plan.

**Mr. Rosenberg added condition i:**

- i. The fencing shown on the plan be as required and be a brick or masonry perimeter fence.**

**The motion died due to the lack of a second.**

**Mr. Brummel moved the draft motion as written, duly seconded by Ms. Martin for discussion.**

Mr. Larson clarified that if the PC approves this case with a wooden fence, then the applicant must install a wooden fence.

Mr. Herzfeldt said masonry is overkill and wood is not good enough. He said there should be an option to allow staff to approve a suitable quality product as an upgrade from wood to bridge the gap. He said he trusts that staff would arrive at a material that the PC would find acceptable.

Mr. Rosenberg pointed out that the rules are written for a reason and the rules were written in conjunction with a neighboring city. He said this piece of property is immediately next to that city, not four blocks away. He said for the PC to change the rules that were agreed on with an adjacent city is the wrong thing to do. He said he wouldn't want that city to do that to Arapahoe County.

Mr. Weiss agreed that a solid masonry fence is too much. He said aesthetically, it takes away from the architecture of the building; the developer has worked very hard to make sure the building doesn't look like a regular self-storage facility. He further stated that the intent of the CAEPA rule was to hide less desirable elements of self-storage facilities, and that has been taken care of in this regard. He said he likes the way the wood looks but there are maintenance issues and there is vinyl fencing that looks like wood. He said the motion on the table is for a wooden fence.

Ms. Martin asked how the applicant could be allowed to install a vinyl fence.

Ms. Kuhn said an administrative amendment or a technical amendment would be necessary and the request would not come back to the PC. She said before the final plans are done the applicant could swap the materials. She said if the plans are approved with wood, the applicant would have to get an amendment at some time.

Ms. Yeckes said the applicant is proposing wood, so there is no reason to expect the applicant would come back and request an amendment. She said if the PC has a concern about wood, it should be addressed here.

Mr. Horning remarked that the current owner of the facility would prefer vinyl for maintenance reasons.

Ms. Kuhn announced that could be done now as a condition of approval.

**Mr. Brummel amended the motion:**

**Condition i: The fencing would be constructed of vinyl, with the masonry columns, instead of redwood.**

**Ms. Martin agreed to the amendment.**

**Vote:**

**For: Herzfeldt, Weiss, Martin, Brummel, Larson, Hayutin**

**Against: Rosenberg**

**The motion passed 6-1.**

**Adjourned at 7:32 p.m.**

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**Arnold Hayutin, Chair**

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**Joleen Sanchez, Asst Clerk to the  
Board**