INNOVATIVE HOUSING STAFF REPORT

To: Innovative Housing Review Panel

Staff Contacts: Sarah Stiteler, AICP, Senior Planner, 556-2469

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Date: December 15, 2008

Project Name: Rosehill Community Development

Recommended Action: • Authorize applicant to pursue land use entitlements, provided

certain changes are made to the proposal related to setbacks,

home size, and affordability.

Principal Rationale for Recommendation:

The recommendation would improve supply and choice of single-family housing, improve affordability options, result in a community organized around a common open space and a community building, and result in a development consistent

with neighborhood design standards.

I. APPLICANT PROPOSAL

A. APPLICANT AND CONSULTING PROFESSIONALS

Applicant: Yuval Sofer

Architect: Sally Roth, Johnston Architects

B. PROJECT LOCATION

7300 and 7306 132nd Avenue NE

C. PROJECT SUMMARY

Site size: 0.99 acres

Underlying zoning: R-6

Unit count: 9 units

Unit types: All single-family detached, as air space condominiums

Unit sizes: Approximately 1,638 sq. ft. to 2,552 sq. ft.

D. DEVIATIONS FROM STANDARD SITE REQUIREMENTS

Item	Standard	Proposed in Project
Density:	6 units/gross acre	9.1 units/gross acre
Maximum units on site:	6	9
Average lot size:	4,000 sq. ft.	N/A – air space condos
Minimum lot width circle:	35'	N/A – air space condos
Building separation:	10 ft.	10 ft.
Minimum lot frontage:	20'	N/A – air space condos
Maximum lot coverage: 1	45%	22%
Maximum impervious	65%	51% (including
surface area:		landscaping above
		garage)
Minimum open space:	20%	40% (landscaping, paths,
		common patios)
Maximum height:	35'	35'
Minimum required off-	2 off-street per unit =	24
street parking:	18 total	
Minimum road width:	28'	20'

¹Lot coverage for this project was calculated on a site-wide basis because no individual lots would exist.

E. SURROUNDING LAND USES

The site is located in a primarily residential area. To the east, north, and south are single-family residences in Redmond's Grass Lawn neighborhood. Single-family lots along the east side of 132nd Ave. NE from just north of NE 70th St. to just south of NE 75th St. measure one-half acre each. Other single-family lots in the area range from about 5,000 sq. ft. to over 10,000 sq. ft.

Within about ¼ mile of the site are Rose Hill Junior High School, Lake Washington United Methodist Church, Snyder's Corner Park, South Rose Hill Park, and a neighborhood shopping center.

II. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

A. CONSISTENCY WITH PROGRAM GOALS

1. Increase housing supply and the choice of housing styles in the community

Staff concludes that the proposal is partially consistent with this goal. The
proposal would add nine primary dwellings to Redmond's housing supply
whereas a standard development on the same site would yield six dwellings. The

Grass Lawn neighborhood contains single-family detached homes, single-family attached homes, and multi-family dwellings. Multi-family zones are located principally along Old Redmond Road, Redmond Way, and 148th Ave. NE. This proposal would be the first site plan in the neighborhood that emphasizes community by arranging the units around a common plaza and a community building while hiding most parking from view. In this way, the proposal increases choice in home styles.

Staff recommends changes to the mix of homes to increase the extent to which the proposal increases choice of housing styles in Redmond and the Grass Lawn neighborhood. Specifically, staff recommends requiring that at least half of the units qualify as "size-limited" dwellings. Such dwellings are no larger than 1,900 square feet, including attached garages (RCDG 20A.20.190, "S" Definitions). The applicant could accomplish this by reducing the size of House Type B from 2,031 square feet to 1,900 square feet.

2. Promote housing affordability and greater choice by encouraging smaller and more diverse home sizes and mixes of income levels

Size

The proposal is partially consistent with this goal; as described above, the project includes nine homes, all of which are smaller than the average size of new construction of single family homes in the City, which is approximately 3,100 square feet. The applicant states that the three different sizes of homes provide variety, as two of the homes are proposed at 1,638 square feet, four additional homes would be just over 2,000 square feet and the remaining two homes would be approximately 2,500 square feet. To achieve even greater variety, staff recommends that the two smaller homes remain the same, and at least three of the four mid-size homes be modified to contain slightly less floor area. This will enable the homes that are 1,900 square feet or less to be considered 'size-limited' by the City's definition. With this recommended modification, housing variety will be significantly improved.

Affordability

As indicated, seven of the nine homes proposed are 2,000 square feet in size or larger. While some relative affordability can be achieved with homes that are smaller than the average for new single family home construction, it is not necessarily the case that homes of this size will be very affordable. The proposal is within the Grass Lawn Neighborhood, which requires that a minimum of 10% of homes in developments of ten homes or more be affordable to individuals or families earning no more than 80% of the area median income (AMI). At nine units, this project would not be subject to these affordability requirements; however, the goals of the Innovative Housing Demonstration Program clearly identify the need for a proposed project to indicate how it addresses housing affordability.

To meet this goal, staff recommends requiring that one of the homes be affordable to a family earning 110% of the AMI. As such, one home of the nine would be priced below the market rate of the proposed homes; it would likely be one of the homes proposed at just over 1,600 square feet.

3. Promote high-quality design that is compatible with surrounding single-family development

Staff believes the proposal is partially consistent with this goal and could be made consistent with this goal with changes as described below.

Single-Family development in the Redmond's Grass Lawn neighborhood and Kirkland's South Rose Hill and Bridle Trails neighborhoods is diverse in size and style. The area surrounding this proposal provides a good illustration of that point. A typical home in the Strattonwood neighborhood, a 1960s development just east of the proposal, measures 1,700 square feet. By contrast, new construction west of the proposal exceeds 3,000 square feet. Older and smaller homes typically occupy less of their lot, while newer and larger homes occupy larger portions of their lots. The immediate vicinity of the proposal is wooded, providing a high degree of privacy for residents.

Grass Lawn neighborhood design regulations (RCDG 20C.70.25) focus on providing variety and visual interest that is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. The regulations call for the use of patios, porches, and other architectural details; variety in housing size and type; minimizing visual dominance of garages; and using modulation and articulation techniques to reduce the perceived size of large infill structures.

The following table evaluates how the proposal meets the Grass Lawn neighborhood regulations.

Provision	Proposed in Project	
Variety and visual interest	Three floor plans, manifested as six distinct	
	building footprints; patios, pitched roofs and	
	varied roof forms; window trim; awnings; and	
	multiple siding materials.	
Living spaces oriented toward	This site is located on an arterial. To preserve	
street	the wooded character of the site, the applicant	
	proposes to save a cluster of trees along the	
	arterial frontage and to use the balance of the	
	frontage for access. All homes would front	
	onto a community plaza, part of which doubles	
	as an emergency access.	
Home proportional to lot size	No subdivision proposed. If staff	
	recommendation is adopted, at least half of	
	proposed homes would qualify as size-limited.	
	Proposal meets citywide standards for building	

	separation, lot coverage, and impervious
	surface area coverage.

To improve compatibility with surrounding single-family development, staff recommends requiring the applicant to increase the south building setback to ten feet. There is an existing home approximately eleven feet from the south property line. Further, rear yard setbacks in Redmond for single-family homes are typically ten feet. Increasing the south setback would bring homes 6, 7, and 8 into rear setback compliance, as well as provide five additional feet of buffering between the existing single-family home and the proposed new homes. In order to accomplish this, the applicant may need to reduce the size of the community building. With this change, staff believes the proposal meets this goal of the Innovative Housing Ordinance.

4. Allow flexibility in site and design standards while promoting projects that are compatible with existing single-family developments

The site requirements table in section I.D. indicates that the applicant requests flexibility in density, rear yard setbacks, and road width.

Increasing density allows for the provision of a greater number of smaller single-family homes, increasing variety in housing choices in Redmond's single-family areas. This assumes the Review Panel adopts staff's recommendation to require that at least half of the homes qualify as size-limited.

The applicant has requested five-foot external setbacks on the north, east, and south sides of the property. Typical rear yard setbacks are ten feet. Reducing the setbacks allows for adequate common areas and internal building separation. On the north and east sides of the property, staff believes this is an acceptable request for deviation. The parcel to the north is vacant and so placing structures within five feet of the property line would not create privacy concerns. The lot to the east contains one single-family home accessed from NE 75th St. – about two blocks away. No residential dwellings are located immediately east of the site, but rather are located on the other side of a 30-foot-wide lot. Thus privacy concerns here are also reduced.

As noted previously, staff recommends that the south setback be increased to ten feet. This would apply to residential structures, but not the parking area at the west end of the property. Patios could encroach into the setback up to three feet, per the standard set in RCDG 20C.30.25-080(2)(i).

Reducing road width allows the applicant to reduce impervious surface area of the site, consistent with City goals. The applicant has worked closely with the Fire Department to ensure that the proposal meets emergency access needs.

5. Help identify a work plan and any zoning code amendments that are necessary to support the development of innovative housing choices within single-family neighborhoods in Redmond

The proposal includes size-limited homes, which are currently permitted but infrequently constructed. It also includes below-grade common parking for single-family homes, which would be new in Redmond. The applicant also proposes to meet or exceed 4-star BuiltGreen standards. Staff recommends that this be required as part of the Review Panel's recommendation. If the Review Panel authorizes the proposal and it is eventually constructed, staff and the community will be able to evaluate how those factors affected the quality of the development and the neighborhood overall and whether such methods of site development should be encouraged on a broader scale.

B. PROCESS TO EVALUATE INNOVATIVE HOUSING DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

RCDG 20C.30.62 sets forth the process for reviewing applications submitted under the Innovative Housing Demonstration Program. Under this process, the applicant hosts an open house and the Innovative Housing Review Panel considers the proposal according to the criteria set-out in RCDG 20C.30.62. The Innovative Housing Review Panel is the authorizing body for this process.

III. PUBLIC REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. Neighborhood Meeting

The applicant held a neighborhood meeting on October 6, 2008. Sixteen residents, property owners, and interested citizens attended the meeting. Written comment and a summary of oral comment is attached as Exhibit C.

The City will organize an additional public meeting to be held while the land use entitlement application is under review.

B. Appeals

Decisions by the Review Panel may be appealed to the City Council pursuant to the requirements of RCDG 20C.30.62.

IV. EXHIBITS

Exhibit A: Criteria Matrix

Exhibit B: Applicant Submittal Package

Exhibit C: Public Comment

Robert G. Odle, Director of Planning	Date
and Community Development	