



Town of Johnstown

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION AGENDA MEMORANDUM

ITEM:	Public Hearing for the Ledge Rock Outline Development Plan (ODP) and Design Guidelines
DESCRIPTION:	Proposed ODP and Design Guidelines Amendment for 221 acres of Mixed-Use Development
LOCATION:	South of CO Hwy 60, at the High Plains Blvd. intersection
APPLICANT:	Ledge Rock Center, LLC
STAFF:	Kim Meyer, Planning & Development Director
HEARING DATE:	January 12, 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project request is to create a new Outline Development Plan (ODP) and Design Guidelines for a mixed-use center, including higher intensity retail / commercial uses, multiunit residential, as well as single family neighborhoods. This ODP will supersede prior plans for the site.

PROCESS NOTES

An ODP is a high-level “master planning” document that provides guidance on land uses, some development standards if they deviate from typical town codes or regulations, and ensure overall feasibility of the proposed intensity and density of a development with a review of an initial traffic report, a master drainage plan, overall circulation plans, understanding of property encumbrances - all of which require further detail be forthcoming as future development plans are known and reviewed/approved by the Town.

This project will need additional review and hearings to review proposed subdivisions, roadway and utility designs, drainage and stormwater design, architecture and landscape design, and other development details.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1- Vicinity Map
- 2- Proposed Ledge Rock Outline Development Plan
- 3- Proposed Ledge Rock Design Guidelines

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PROPERTY DATA

Zoning / Land Use: Proposed PUD-MU / Existing Ag and Developing Oil & Gas (S&B Well Site)
Current PUD-MU, PUD-B, and PUD-R

Surrounding Zoning / Land Use:

North: PUD-MU – Agricultural and Larimer County Rural Residential
East: Weld County ‘A’ Ag
South: Weld County ‘A’ Ag
West: I-25 and PUD-MU – Welty Ridge ODP (undev)

Floodplain: No

Oil & Gas: An existing oil well located in the center of the property.

PROPERTY BACKGROUND

Historically, the use of this property has been as an agricultural site used for farming. The east quarter-section was annexed into the Town of Johnstown in 2003 as the Ridgeview Ranch Annexation with a PUD-B and PUD-R zoning designation by Ordinance Nos. 2003-706 and 2003-707. An ODP land use and traffic pattern were established at that time. The western portion of the PUD/ODP site was annexed in 2008 as the Johnstown Commercial Annexation with PUD-MU zoning, but no known ODP was approved for that parcel. That quarter section was recently subdivided as the Oxy Land Subdivision, of which this ODP applies to Lot 2 and 4.

Surrounding land uses are primarily agricultural. To the north, additional mixed-use development is anticipated in the “Vista Commons” property, and the Rockbury Ridge residential subdivision also sites to the north. South of the westernmost section of the ODP is a developing oil and gas well site; this should be completed and in production within the next 12-18 months.

SUBMITTAL AND REFERRALS

Based upon the changes proposed, this ODP submittal included the proposed ODP plan set, as well as the updated design guidelines, and master engineering (i.e., grading, drainage, utility) and traffic studies that help the Town assess the feasibility of the intensity and density proposed within the project. These supplemental pieces are not “approved” with the ODP, but provide a baseline of information so the Town can better assess the impact on our services and systems. The project was referred to and reviewed by:

- Public Works Department
- FHU (Town Traffic Engineer)
- IMEG (Town Engineer)
- Front Range Fire and Rescue
- CDOT
- LTWD

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The proposed ODP provides for a large “bubble” land use plan that creates seven (7) Planning Areas indicating a range of uses, densities for residential, and potential square feet (intensity) of commercial. The ODP also notes conceptual layouts for high-level (not detailed) street layouts, grading & stormwater/drainage feasibility, and major utilities. These all must undergo significant additional design, scrutiny, and revisions to reach final approvals with future, more detailed development plans.

Of note is the proposed southern extension of High Plains Boulevard (a major 4-lane arterial) along the project frontages (about ½ mile), and the likely expansion of that intersection at Hwy 60 with turn lanes and eventual signalization, an east-west collector that starts to create potential connectivity of this area

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with future development to the east, and a future street connection back to Hwy 60, along the eastern boundary. An intersection and potential signal in this area is in conformance with the 2003 CDOT Access Control Plan for Hwy 60. All these improvements would occur incrementally, as development of the overall project is phased and constructed. Stormwater would be designed and managed as one complete system for the full PUD.

Planning Area – Acreage & Use

<i>Planning Area</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Use</i>	<i>Density / Intensity</i>	<i>Maximum Units</i>
1	77.4	Commercial/Retail	606,621 SF	
2	31.8	Commercial/Retail	249,285 SF	
3	6.3	Commercial/Retail	40,077 SF	
4	23.3	MultiFamily	Max 25 DU/Ac	583 DU
5	24.2	MultiFamily	Max 25 DU/Ac	605 DU
6	18.9	Single Family Lots	2-5 DU/Ac	95 Homes
7	39.4	Single Family Lots	2-4 DU/Ac	158 Homes

These Planning Areas are capped at a total of 1,440 residential units / homes, and one million (1,000,000) square feet of commercial space within all areas combined. There is the ability to move some of the density and intensity from one area to another, or modify the size/shape of a planning area, by administrative approvals, to allow for changes in design as future development plans are proposed and more is known about final engineering and design needs to meet Town standards.

The Design Guidelines (DGs) were created as a separate document and would govern various elements of the development from permitted land uses, to commercial setbacks, to a unified commercial signage program. This is a large document (87 pages) with significant detail. In areas where the guidelines do not address an issue, the answer would default to Town code, guidelines, and standards. The DGs do also allow for future development of individual lots and sites (i.e., a restaurant on an approved lot / pad site, an apartment complex) to be administratively approved (staff only). Major subdivisions, an amended ODP, and final development plans for the overall site would still be subject to hearings, in accordance with current Town processes.

With the intent of creating a high-quality development, the Design Guidelines cover some basic site design principles including, signage, landscaping, and architectural elevations and features.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The proposed PUD ODP will allow for a variety of uses to be in proximity to each other creating a unique live/work environment with a variety of residential, retail, commercial, industrial and education uses. Staff is very supportive of the overall master planned concept, which is in alignment with the comprehensive plan for this area, and the PUD-MU zoning district.

The ODP sheets are largely acceptable. Staff notes that the myriad of access points notes on that ODP do not meet current Town standards for access spacing along major arterials and highways – these will be further reviewed and analyzed with more detailed development plans and traffic studies. That is a

“conceptual” sheet, and Staff wants to reiterate that street locations, classifications, and accesses will be determined at a future date.

Design Guidelines are largely comparable to the 2534, Johnstown Plaza, and Encore PUD developments, and appear to work hard toward creating a good design foundation for the development. There are some concerns Staff still has, however. One is a noted lack of detailed commercial/retail uses permitted or prohibited (Section 3, pg 2). The DGs reference “Town Code,” but we are aware of the current datedness of the town’s code (being updated in 2022), which means the uses remain ill-defined. Staff would have to assume that would mean any use permitted in any commercial zone in Town. There are also some oddly varied standards from Town code and standards, for example:

- Parking space depth (Section 2, Pg 12)
 - 18’ proposed vs 20’ town code
 - Staff could support up to 25% being compact space at 18’ depth.
 - “Preferred” vs required standards on landscaping in parking – doesn’t meet “preferred” Town Code.
- Signage (Section 2, pg 7 and Section 3, Pg 12)
 - Primary development signage up to 80-feet tall. Current tallest along I-25 approved by the Town as been 70-feet. Staff would prefer that become our ultimate maximum height. This height is only permitted as part of a PUD master sign program that limits overall signs.
 - Also two (2) such signs are proposed within ¼-mile of each other along that I-25 frontage.
 - Permits commercial lettering as large as 6-foot letters, and up to 10% of the façade – Pad sits, small inline tenants. (Section 3, pg 14+) Seven (7) foot tall & 10% for Major & Anchor Tenants, This seems excessive, and Staff has requested examples of what this looks like on an elevation or in a photos to better understand the proposal.
 - Marquee signs, as defined in the DGs, seems to explain signage above a roofline, which is not permitted by Town Sign Code. Again, graphics to clarify may be helpful.

On several of these items, Staff believes these should be consistent throughout the Town – for enforcement, administration, and overall equity, and default to town code; or be modified such that they provide the “as good or better” standard applied to PUDs, “Is it better than we could get with straight zoning and strict application of the code?” Recommended conditions of approval have been added to this effect.

In most other respects, these DGs are excellent, and Staff believes they will serve the development and the community well, and offer a diverse and attractive mixed-use center for the Town at this high-visibility Gateway. Staff has no further concerns related to this ODP and the DGs.

INFRASTRUCTURE

There currently is no Town water and waste water infrastructure to the site. Based on review of submitted documents and reports, Staff and our engineers believe that there is adequate capacity for the uses and densities being proposed within this ODP. Utility plans, grading plans, and circulation plans are fairly conceptual in nature at this ODP level, and will be more fully developed with continuation through the Town development review process.

NOTICE

Notice for the Planning & Zoning Commission hearing was published in the local paper of widest circulation, the Johnstown Breeze, on Thursday, December 23, 2021. This notice provided the date, time, and location of the Planning and Zoning Commission hearing, as well as a description of the project. Notices were mailed to all property owners within 500 feet of the property in question. This notice included a map of the proposed annexation and zoning. No neighborhood meeting has been held. As of the date of this staff report, Staff has received no comments from neighboring property owners or the public.

RECOMMENDED PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION FINDINGS AND MOTIONS

Findings:

1. The proposed ODP amendment is in alignment with the current Johnstown Area Comprehensive Plan and its Future Land Use Plan.
2. The proposed ODP amendment appears serviceable by Town systems, services, and utilities, with required improvements that will be reflected in future development and construction plans.
3. The proposed ODP amendment is in compliance with all Town codes, regulations, and standards and specifications.

Recommended Motion

Based on the application received, associated submittal materials, and the preceding analysis, the Planning & Zoning Commission finds that The Ledge Rock ODP furthers the *Johnstown Area Comprehensive Plan* goals, and is compatible with all other applicable Town standards and regulations, and therefore moves to recommend to the Town Council **Approval** of The Ledge Rock ODP based upon the findings as stated in this staff report, with the following condition:

1. Revise areas noted in Design Guidelines related to uses, signage dimensions and types, and parking design standards, in collaboration with Town Staff.

Alternate Motions

- A. Motion to Approve with no Conditions: "I move that the Commission recommend to Town Council approval of The Ledge Rock ODP as presented"
- B. Motion to Deny: "I move that the Commission recommend to the Town Council denial of The Ledge Rock ODP based upon the following findings..."

Respectfully Submitted:



Kim Meyer
Planning & Development Director

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