

Sage Mountain Townhomes Design Review Comments
400 & 402 Sage Rd, Ketchum, ID
May 09, 2023

To: City of Ketchum Planning & Zoning Commission Members & Staff Planners
From: Will Chinn, 394 Sage Rd, Ketchum, ID 83340
Date: May 05, 2023
Re: Sage Mountainside Townhomes Design Review Comments

Introduction:

Buildings, both residential and commercial, are normally designed to accommodate the building site with attention paid to light, view, topography, adjacent structures and other features specific to the building site. In this case, however, it is the building site that is being asked to accommodate the proposed factory-built homes which are of fixed footprint and floor plan. The numerous constraints of the site (existing non-conforming structure, Avalanche and Mountain Overlay Zones) make it very difficult to accommodate the homes as proposed as there is no flexibility in the design.

Specifics:

The Sage Mountainside Townhomes development as proposed appears to conflict with City requirements in the following areas:

- Design Review Compatibility of Design 17.96.060.E.1: The amount of flat facade and lack of undulation in the units exteriors is not complementary to the Sage Rd townscape.
- Design Review Architectural 17.96.060.F.2: The modular nature of the proposed units incorporate few architectural features. The lack of architectural features in turn emphasizes the boxy, modular nature of the factory-built units. This is not complementary to the Sage Rd townscape.
- Design Review Architectural 17.96.060.F.5: The modular nature of the proposed units does not provide for undulation / relief in the units' facade. The lack of undulation / relief does not reduce the appearance of bulk and flatness - if anything it emphasizes the modular, boxy nature of the factory-built units.
- Mountain Overlay Zoning District 17.104.030.A: The proposed development encroaches into the 25% hillside slope line north of Warm Springs Rd while the existing duplex does not appear to.

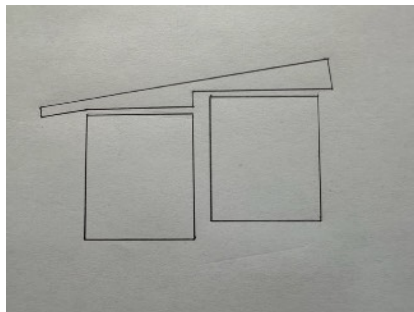
The existing duplex structure, built in 1966, appears to be “non-conforming” with respect to current City of Ketchum requirements in several areas:

- Does not comply with Avalanche Zone District A requirements (no avalanche mitigation structure);
- Does not conform to 15' front yard setback requirements;
- Note that existing duplex appears to be located, in its entirety, south of the 25% hillside slope line north of Warm Springs Rd;
- Note also that new development footprint appears to exceed and extend outside of existing building footprint - conflicts with City of Ketchum Zoning Code Interpretation 22-001.

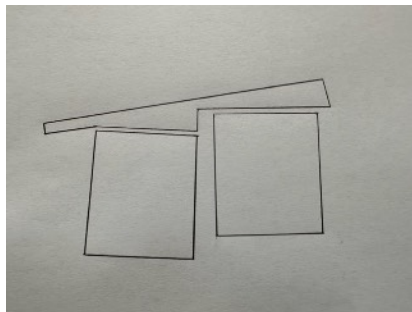
The development as proposed presents 80' of flat facade paralleling / facing Sage Rd. Few if any other residential or commercial developments in Ketchum contain this amount of flat facade. This could be reduced by altering the exterior design and floor plans of the units, but this is said to not possible due to the modular / fixed floor plan nature of the design as proposed. Staggering one of the units further into the hillside is also an option, albeit with minimal end effect, as it would still result in 80' of flat facade facing Sage Rd. This option would also require revisiting the design of the avalanche wall which may not be possible due to snow deflection concerns. Angling both units away from Sage Rd and towards the mountain view, which is to the right if one were standing inside one of the units looking south across Sage Rd, represents one option to somewhat reduce the flat facade / lack of undulation issue. There would still be 80' of flat facade, but the facade would not parallel Sage Rd.

Angling units to west towards mountain view would:

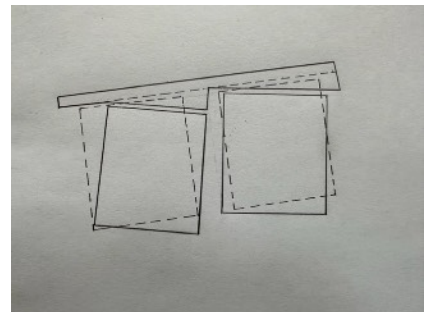
- Reduce amount of flat facade by providing undulation. Likely no residential projects and few community core projects present the same degree of flat facade;
- Only slightly increase elevation of the avalanche wall on hillside - elevation of units would remain unchanged;
- Basically equal the intrusion into the north side of the 25% slope line from that currently shown;
- Harmonize with orientation of existing home to east as well as new single family home to be constructed on west side of project (both 394 and 406 Sage Rd are angled away from street towards mountain view). Angling of Sage Townhomes would result in four adjacent homes orientated towards the mountain view, as are many of the newer homes on Sage Rd;
- Result in enhanced side-to-side privacy between the two Sage Mountainside Townhome units (mainly front deck);
- Likely increase attractiveness of units to potential buyers (enhanced view, more architectural character, increased privacy);
- A triangular configuration incorporated into the unit side of the avalanche wall (plan view) would accommodate angling of the units. This would not change the orientation / azimuth of the avalanche wall with respect to the hillside from that currently proposed.



Angled & Parallel



Angled & Offset



Angled & Offset w/ Original

Note that the current four-pitch roof with no overhangs only serves to emphasize the modular / boxy nature of the project, while compounding the flat facade / lack of architectural detail issue. Incorporating overhangs into the present roof design would represent an improvement. Alternatively, a single pitch roof sloping downward from front to back with 2'-3' overhangs on all sides would add needed character to the units vs that proposed. It would also provide for a vented / cold roof configuration vs the current unvented concept. If properly designed, the single-pitch roof would also be able to protect the gap between the avalanche wall and the back side of the new units by directing rain and snow to the uphill side of the

avalanche wall vs in between the avalanche wall and the units. At present it is unclear how this requirement is being met.

Observations:

- City requirements governing the building site have numerous site-specific constraints;
- Options to reduce the amount of flat facade, improve undulation and incorporate architectural features into the townhomes as proposed are very limited;
- Modular nature of proposed units with fixed floor plan and 8' x 40' highway truck delivery size requirements offer little in the way of design flexibility needed to address the numerous site-specific constraints;
- Fixed floor plan dictates that floor-to-ceiling living room atrium faces east down Sage Rd towards Ketchum vs capturing mountain view to the west. This is a site specific issue that modular construction does not address as the floorplans are fixed (constructing mirror image not even possible). Value and neighborhood compatibility would be enhanced if atrium captured mountain view;
- Narrower but longer units angled toward mountain would be a better fit for the building site. They would cover more of the current building footprint, but would intrude further into the 25% slope line (400 Sage Rd / east unit). Not possible, however, as floor plans are fixed and units must conform to 8' x 40' highway truck standard;
- Common wall construction vs detached as proposed would reduce amount of structure outside the existing building footprint;
- Stick-built construction would better accommodate the numerous site-specific building constraints without variances and allow for incorporation of architectural features required to reduce amount of flat facade.
- Cost / benefit of high-end single family residence angled towards mountain might exceed townhome concept.

References:

City of Ketchum Code of Ordinances Title 17 Zoning Regulations:

- Chapter 17.92 Avalanche Zone District A
- Chapter 17.96 Design Review
- Chapter 17.104 Mountain Overlay Zone
- Chapter 17.136 Non Conforming Uses and Non Conforming Buildings

Other:

- Ketchum Planning and Zoning Commission Zoning Code Interpretation 22-001 "Non-Conforming Building Footprints in Mountain Overlay Zone"
- 2014 City of Ketchum Comprehensive Plan - Community Character

TO: City of Ketchum Planning and Zoning Commission Members and Staff Planners

FROM: Ted and Pam Beeler (417 Sage Road)

DATE: May 4, 2023

RE: Sage Mountainside Townhomes as Proposed

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding the proposed SFR's at 400 & 402 Sage Road. Recognizing the age and disrepair of the current Living Springs Townhomes it is refreshing to see that our neighborhood community will benefit from two new homes on the site. In this context, we were pleased to see the Notice from the City and review the detailed plans for the proposed homes. Additionally, as a closeknit neighborhood many of us have exchanged thoughts on the matter and offer a number of observations and suggestions as part of the review and approval process.

First, my wife and I have read and concur with the comments submitted by Will Chinn who resides next door to the proposed SFR's. We also have read the staff report issued by Adam Crutcher and agree with the findings and needed modifications related to:

- Compatibility of Design
- Architectural Features
- Avalanche Wall Screening
- Encroachment into 25% slope area

In addition, one general observation is that the style of the modular unit is neither designed, sited or planned with "snow country" in mind. Instead, the site is forced to accommodate the box like modular structures rather than specifically designed and well sited tandem homes by an architect. This is a major issue or constraint with modular design and construction. Certainly, as the staff report notes there are many different styles of homes on Sage Road, including newer mountain modern structures. However, as proposed the Sage Mountain Townhomes lack a sense of design which needs to be addressed prior to gaining approval from the City.

To add to some of the comments we have read or discussed with neighbors, we would also question the roof style/angle, gutters, lack of overhang, space between the avalanche wall and the house, etc. especially when considering snow deposition in a snow country environment.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed Sage Mountainside Townhomes.

Sage Mountain Townhomes Design Review Comments 400 & 402 Sage Rd, Ketchum, ID May 09, 2023

From: Baird & Chelle Gourlay

405 Sage Rd. Ketchum

Directly south of said project

I believe Will Chinn's comments address a lot of our concerns, but I have several more.

1. We are very concerned about the Attenuation device and its design. My understanding is that these devices are designed to block and retain any snow that is associated with an avalanche and additionally protect the structure(s) downstream. My fear is that having a wall that is not an integral part of the designed, in other words attached, could allow a slide to pass over it and damage or move the structure below it. All the other buildings on Sage are designed such that the attenuation device is integrated into the structures design.
2. I don't see a snowmelt system in the design. If there isn't one, then the snow storage areas are horribly undersized. This lot had 6-8 foot snow banks without any driveways plowed last winter. And in the past, the former owner needed a front end loader that piled snow in the 50'x50' area between Will's townhouse and the current duplex. Will and I both have snow melt systems, yet are snow banks still reached 10'-14'.
3. Finally, we've experienced really challenging construction mitigation issues on Sage rd. Mostly with parking, as it seems like the subs park wherever they want. But for this project, the staging seems problematic. Where will the cement trucks stage, where will the crane stage, where are all the materials staged, and where is the dumpster and recycle staged. The current submittal doesn't seem to address a project of this magnitude.

Thanks for your public service, Baird & Chelle Gourlay

From: [Participate](#)
To: [Heather Nicolai](#)
Subject: FW: Sage Mountain Townhomes comments
Date: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 8:53:57 AM
Attachments: [Sage Townhomes Design Review Comments \(Will Chinn\).pdf](#)

Public comment.

LISA ENOURATO | CITY OF KETCHUM

Public Affairs & Administrative Services Manager

P.O. Box 2315 | 191 Fifth St. W. | Ketchum, ID 83340

o: 208.726.7803 | f: 208.726.7812

lenourato@ketchumidaho.org | www.ketchumidaho.org

From: Jeff Jensen <jeff@jensenconsult.com>
Sent: Monday, May 8, 2023 6:19 PM
To: Adam Crutcher <ACrutcher@ketchumidaho.org>; Participate <participate@ketchumidaho.org>
Cc: john@johnwlundin.com; willchinn@gmail.com
Subject: Sage Mountain Townhomes comments

May 8, 2023

P&Z Members and Staff,

I live on Sage Road, 216 Sage Unit B, and want to enter my comments into the record for this project.

My primary concerns revolve around maintaining the neighborhood as a cohesive and appealing village.

This project seems far from visually melding into and joining the neighborhood. It is structurally quite different from every other home on the Street, let alone the Warm Springs village.

Prefab structures are far from the homes that have been recently constructed on Sage.

Building in this neighborhood is tough with the overlays and the avalanche designation, but these are not new challenges. The other new homes that were built all overcame them are visually consistent with the rest of the neighborhood.

My neighbor, Will Chinn, wrote a very thoughtful letter about this project and rather than repeat all that he said here in my letter, please accept that we agree with all of his points.

I have attached his letter for the record.

I strongly encourage you to send the developer back with instructions to do better with his plan.

Sincerely,
Jeff Jensen
216 Sage Road
Unit B
Ketchum, ID 83340

From: [Adam Crutcher](#)
To: [Planning and Zoning](#)
Subject: FW: Ketchum P&B Staff Report 400 & 402 Sage Rd
Date: Monday, May 8, 2023 8:44:43 AM

Additional public comment for 402 Sage Rd

ADAM CRUTCHER | CITY OF KETCHUM

PLANNING AND BUILDING | ASSOCIATE PLANNER

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o: 208.806.7008 |

acrutcher@ketchumidaho.org | www.ketchumidaho.org

****Please sign up for the NEW Planning and Building quarterly newsletter. Click [HERE](#) and select "Planning and Development"**

From: chiyo parten <chiyoparten@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 6, 2023 8:50 AM
To: Adam Crutcher <ACrutcher@ketchumidaho.org>
Subject: Fwd: Ketchum P&B Staff Report 400 & 402 Sage Rd

We concur with our Sage Road neighbor, Will Chinn, the following comments:
Thank you for acknowledgement.

John and Chiyo Parten

Parten Children's Family Trust , homeowners of 409B Sage Rd, Ketchum, Id, 83340

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Will Chinn <willchinn@gmail.com>
Date: May 5, 2023 at 1:13:07 PM MDT
To: Ted Beeler <tbeelersv@gmail.com>, chiyo parten <chiyoparten@gmail.com>, Gourlay Baird <bairdg7@gmail.com>, hondurashadley@me.com, Mickey Smith <hmsmith@martin-smith.com>
Subject: Ketchum P&B Staff Report 400 & 402 Sage Rd

All,

Thanks for taking the time to look at everything. Attached is the P&Z Staff Report on the project that went out to all of the P&Z reviewers. I met with Adam Crutcher who is overseeing this project for the City last week and was made aware of most of their concerns that are voiced in the staff report - those being bulk, flatness, lack of architectural character, intrusion into the 25% grade line, etc. Thus the comments that I put together which are attached to the end of the staff report. Ted Beeler also put together comments and emailed them to Adam direct and also copied the City's public email. If you wish to do the same, here are the addresses:

acrutcher@ketchumidaho.org

participate@ketchumidaho.org

You could also email a copy of my comments to the above addresses and indicate your concurrence - see attached, which I have updated to include to / from / date / subject, etc.. I unfortunately neglected to include that in the copy that went out with the staff report.

In reading through the staff report I gleaned that they are not providing snow melt. That may be an error, but likely not. I would think any new home that sells for what they're asking would include snowmelt! As well as architectural features, facade relief, etc.

Thanks,

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Will Chinn
832.792.3092

<ITEM-Attachment-001-b27d4e5d717a49e9a8186b55dcb68c21.pdf>

<Sage Townhomes Design Review Comments (Will Chinn).pdf>

From: [Participate](#)
To: [Heather Nicolai](#)
Subject: FW: Sage Mountainside Townhomes, 400 & 402 Sage
Date: Monday, May 8, 2023 4:12:00 PM

Public comment.

LISA ENOURATO | CITY OF KETCHUM

Public Affairs & Administrative Services Manager

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From: Brad Pratt <bradpratt@outlook.com>
Sent: Monday, May 8, 2023 12:29 PM
To: Participate <participate@ketchumidaho.org>
Subject: Sage Mountainside Townhomes, 400 & 402 Sage

RE: 400 & 402 Sage

I have reviewed the materials posted on the city website related 400 & 402 Sage and believe the proposed design is consistent with the purpose of the mountain overlay district and will improve the neighborhood.

The project will not be visible from Warm Springs Road or any other major view point. In addition, the project will install an avalanche wall providing protection to the houses across the street that they do not enjoy today.

Further, because of the unique nature of the lots along Sage road, the zoning and planning commission needs to apply flexibility in certain areas in an effort to achieve the intent and purpose of the mountain overlay. In an effort to assure that property owners are not deprived of an economically viable use of their property it may become necessary to allow the encroaching on the 25% grade of the property as long as the project achieves the intent and purpose of the code. Very few lots if any on Sage road have buildable footprints outside of the 25% grade that would allow for a structure that would preserve the property owners economically viable use of their property. The buildings in the 400 & 402 sage road project are well positioned and the fact that they encroach somewhat on the 25% grade should be allowed with the recognition that in doing so the purpose of the code is more accurately applied than by not allowing it.

The current structure was built in 1966 and since that time every other structure on Sage has been constructed. To confine the property to the original footprint of the existing structure would be in direct conflict with (17.104.020 - Purposes, M. To assure the property owner is

not deprived of economically viable use of his/her property). Especially when all other purposes outline in 17.104.020, A-L are achieved.

The project does a good job balancing the interests of the community with the desired use of the property owners and should be approved for construction.

Thank you,

Brad Pratt
406 Sage Road
425-269-4000

From: [Participate](#)
To: [Heather Nicolai](#)
Subject: FW: Living Springs Townhome
Date: Monday, May 8, 2023 4:12:10 PM

Public comment.

LISA ENOURATO | CITY OF KETCHUM

Public Affairs & Administrative Services Manager

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From: Doug Waddell <doug@waddellpropertiesinc.com>

Sent: Monday, May 8, 2023 12:24 PM

To: Participate <participate@ketchumidaho.org>

Subject: Living Springs Townhome

Dear Ketchum Planning and Zoning Commissioners and Ketchum Planning Staff:

We have been in the Warm Springs area for over 20 years and I would like to voice my support for the proposed Living Spring Townhome project located at 400 & 402 Sage Road. I have reviewed the planning staffs report and various other renderings of the residences and find them to be visually appealing offering a nice variety of architecture into the neighborhood. In particular, I like how they are daylighted into the hillside reducing the overall bulk and scale, and feel it fits into the lot nicely.

Doug Waddell
3020 Warm Springs Road – B
Ketchum, ID 83340
206-300-2599