



MEMO

Date: May 13, 2016
To: Planning Board
From: Chad Hall, Senior Planner
Re: Summers Walk, Master Plan

1. INTRODUCTION

APPLICANT INFO

- **Owners:** Summers Walk Investments, LLC
- **Representative:** Jeremy Horton (Cole Jenest & Stone)
- **Location:** Summers Walk Boulevard (Parcel ID: 00747101, 00747112 and 00747113)
- **Area:** 19.87 acres

REQUEST

The applicant proposes a Master Plan for Phase 6 of Summers Walk. The property is located within the Neighborhood General Planning Area, which requires a mixture of housing types. The proposal illustrates 43 lots; 30 single-family lots would be located on the east side of Summers Walk Boulevard and 13 townhomes would be located on the west side.

SUMMARY OF PETITION

The proposed Master Plan for Phase 6 illustrates 13 townhomes on the west side of Summers Walk Boulevard and 30 single-family homes on the east side. As illustrated on the plan, the typical lot size for the townhomes will be 25'x80' (2,000 SF lot). Nine will be located along Summers Walk Boulevard and four will be placed along a new road that will provide future access to properties to the west.

The thirty single-family homes are of two different lot sizes. Several lots facing Summers Walk Boulevard are approximately 50'x120' (6,000 SF lot) and the others will have lot sizes averaging 61'x120' (7,320 SF lot). Five lots will front Summers Walk Boulevard while the remaining homes will front new public streets. Fourteen of these homes will be alley loaded, meaning that garage access will be from a rear alley. A connection is provided to the east for future connectivity.

The applicant is completing a Master Plan for the Summers Walk development. Process B of the Master Plan process includes a Public Input Session (held February 3, 2016) and Planning Board review and comment. Planning staff has conducted a technical review concurrently with Mecklenburg County; after the first cycle of review, comments from the Town and County are minimal and do not impact the design. As a result of the Public Input Session, a previously volunteered buffer abutting property to the east of Phase 6 has been illustrated; the 75 foot wide buffer had not previously been identified. This area is not labelled, so it is unclear if the buffer will remain undisturbed.

The applicant has met the documentation and public notice requirements as set forth in the Davidson Planning Ordinance (DPO).

2. PLANNING STAFF REVIEW

BACKGROUND

The applicant's design team has met with planning staff multiple times since August 2015 to discuss the development of Phase 6 for Summers Walk.

Summers Walk was originally developed under the Rural Planning Area with Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay (TND-O) regulations, which required a mix of housing types and also required a portion of commercial development. The approved Master Plan, as amended in 2012, illustrates a "Future Phase 6" which flanks Summers Walk Boulevard nearest its intersection with Davidson-Concord Road (NC 73). This future phase of the master plan does not indicate roads or lots and is simply described as an area for future development.

This proposal was submitted on October 21, 2015 and the application was deemed to be complete. This review considers compliance with the DPO adopted May 1, 2015, as amended.

PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Between the Public Input Session and Planning Board, Planning staff conducted a technical review concurrently with Mecklenburg County. A summary of that review, in addition to any outstanding questions/issues which originated at the Public Input Session, is provided below.

LAND USE

The proposed Master Plan for Phase 6 illustrates 13 townhomes on the west side of Summers Walk Boulevard and 30 single-family homes on the east side. This type of residential development is permitted based upon the Neighborhood General Planning Area, where no more than 70 percent of the units shall be detached and no more than 50 percent of the units shall be attached, townhouse, live/work or multifamily.

The original master plan for Summers Walk, including amendments made since, continued to illustrate a 75' vegetated buffer for approximately 400 feet along the east property line of Phase 6 from Davidson-Concord Road adjacent to the Bradford property. From there, the buffer indents to a thirty foot wide buffer to a point where it reaches the 100' SWIM buffer. Since the Public Input Session, the buffer has been included on the site plan. The buffer needs to be labelled as vegetated, as originally approved. The adjacent property owner is satisfied with these changes.

ACCESS and TRANSPORTATION

The property is accessed from NC-73 via Summers Walk Boulevard. This proposed Phase 6 illustrates future connectivity to properties to both the east and west. The adopted NC73 Small Area Land Use and Economic Study demands a parallel road to NC73. In order to protect the buffer for the adjacent property owner, the applicant will dedicate right-of-way for the road extension to the eastern property line, but will not build that small section. It should also be noted that the illustrated street section for a Neighborhood Yield street requires on-street parking on one side; though the illustrated width is consistent with the Ordinance, the 12' travel lanes are in excess of Ordinance requirements.

In lieu of providing a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA), the applicant has chosen to pay \$350 per lot to the Connectivity and Traffic Calming Plan. Payment will need to be made prior to preliminary plat approval.

An outstanding issue within Summers Walk is the existing conditions of the roads, and the potential for damage by construction traffic which will use Summers Walk Boulevard to access Phase 5 in Cabarrus County. Staff is working with the developer to address the outstanding street improvement issue.

OPEN SPACE and PARKS

The Neighborhood General Planning Area requires 20 percent open space. The proposed site plan indicates 50 percent open space (9.99 acres) as being preserved, including functional and riparian spaces. The farthest lot in Phase 6 is within ¼ mile of a proposed park, located within the close (Road A), meeting park requirements, as established per the Davidson Planning Ordinance. The existing dog park is proposed to be replaced with townhomes.

TREE PRESERVATION, LANDSCAPING and SCREENING

Street trees are provided per the Ordinance; spacing and a variety of trees are also indicated. A tree save area is shown adjacent to NC-73. Additional screening along the rear of lots backing up to NC-73 has also been volunteered in addition to a 50' tree save/undisturbed buffer area.

A buffer that was volunteered as part of the original approval – and shown on all subsequent amendments - adjacent to the parcel to the east which fronts Davidson-Concord Road, further identified as Parcel 00747107 and owned by EGB Holdings, LLC, has been illustrated. It is unclear if this buffer is to remain undisturbed, but it is to be vegetated per the original 2002 approval.

GREENWAYS, MULTI-USE PATHS and SIDEWALKS

The Walks and Rolls Plan calls for a greenway along NC-73; this portion was previously constructed. The plan illustrates a soft trail connection internally to existing trails within Summers Walk.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The outstanding balance of the required affordable housing units for all of Summers Walk is eight. This plan shows thirteen units to satisfy that outstanding affordable housing requirement, including the requirement for five units for Phase 6. It is not known if these units will be constructed or if a payment in lieu (PIL) will be employed. If they are to be constructed, an Affordable Housing Plan will need to be approved prior to preliminary plat approval. If payment in lieu, those fees will need to be paid prior to final plat approval per 5.2.B.

EXISTING MASTER PLAN (AMENDED IN 2012)

A Master Plan Amendment is required to remove the requirement for storefront/workplace and civic building types and to allow for the townhome building type. The applicant has submitted an application for the master plan amendment. Approval of the Master Plan for Phase 6 is contingent upon approval of the master plan amendment by the Board of Commissioners.

3. PLANS AND POLICIES

Below is a list of town-adopted plans and policies summarizing each document's applicability to the proposed master plan.

- The ***Davidson Comprehensive Plan's (2010)*** Targeted Growth Plan illustrates a Neighborhood Service Center in close proximity (1/2 mile) to Summers Walk; the center would be a ten-minute walk – and shorter bike ride – from Summers Walk and would adequately provide services nearby.
- The ***Davidson Planning Ordinance (2015)*** contains several references that speak directly to this proposal, including:

Principles

- We must create an environment that fosters diversity (General Principles Item 4);
- We must enhance our quality of life through architecture and design: Livable environments include well-designed buildings, a dynamic public realm, and seamless connections between the two (General Principles Item 7).

Consistency with All Adopted Plans

- Any amendments to, or actions pursuant to, this ordinance should be consistent with these adopted plans and policies, as amended (1.5.1).

Neighborhood General Planning Area, Description

- The Neighborhood General Planning Area is established to accommodate medium density development with a variety of housing types within cohesive neighborhoods in close walking or biking proximity to Davidson's planned mixed-use nodes and employment centers. These neighborhoods should be designed at a pedestrian scale with parks and other public amenities as gathering places. (2.2.13.A).

These references underscore the DPO's emphasis on interconnected policies and land use patterns that support the diversity of residential areas, including higher density building types, especially in proximity to identified nodes.

4. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The proposed Master Plan illustrates building types and permitted uses consistent with existing plans and policies. Future connectivity is provided via street stubs and right-of-way dedication to both the east and west with Phase 6. Open space is provided at 50 percent, in excess of the 20 percent open space required. The site plan also illustrates a trail connecting to existing trails in the neighborhood.

Along NC-73, four lots have the rear of their property oriented toward the highway. While staff would normally have some concern over this orientation, a 50' undisturbed buffer in addition to a 15' planted buffer at the rear of the lots mitigates concerns staff would typically have regarding visibility of the rear of those homes from street frontages. A buffer has also been provided, per the original approval, for the property to the east.

An open space area within the close will be utilized as a park. Standard infrastructure and amenities will be required in this park area, as required per the Davidson Planning Ordinance.

There are outstanding issues with the current streets and required street improvements. The developer will need to work with staff to address the street improvement issue, exacerbated by construction traffic travelling to Phase 5 in Cabarrus County via Summers Walk Boulevard.

In conclusion, the recently-adopted DPO's change of planning area designation signifies that the proposed master plan is consistent with the town's current development policies. The proposed master plan for the townhomes and single-family homes of Phase 6 presents a request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and meets the spirit and intent of the DPO.

Staff recommends approval of the master plan, as proposed.

5. RESOURCES & ATTACHMENTS

- Resources: Links to referenced policy documents.
 - Davidson Planning Ordinance (2015): <http://www.townofdavidson.org/1006/Planning-Ordinance>
 - Comprehensive Plan (2010): <http://www.townofdavidson.org/340/Davidson-Comprehensive-Plan>
- Maps:
 - Approved Master Plan (2012)
 - Proposed Master Plan for Phase 6