

Meeting Minutes, Boulder Town Planning Commission

June 5, 2017

Fox Grove Preliminary Application, Public Hearing

Commissioners present: Carla Saccomano, Colleen Thompson, Perry Tancredi, Donna Jean Wilson, and Tabor Dahl. Secretary, Peg Smith; Town Council Liaison, Pete Benson. Members of public: Bill Muse, Tom and Caroline Hoyt, Pete and Cookie Schaus, Elizabeth Julian, Ace Kvale, Mary Jane Coombs, Ashley Coombs, BJ Orozco, Mark Nelson, Daniel Kennedy, Marian and Steve Johnson, Caitlin Gorman and Sebastion, Lisa Varga, Blake Spalding, Tim Ridges, Donna Owen, Arum Barsch.

Carla opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m.

Comments from the Public

Carla introduced the process: Kennedy will lay out the plan, then comments.

Daniel Kennedy: old Hansen property, purchased last Dec. Subdividing 4 lots in front, and proposing access road on north end of the property that will access the back lots that aren't part of the subdivision. Remainder is what we want to farm and keep.

Perry: about the PC and Boulder: We can interpret the ordinances and write new ordinances, but the way the town develops is more in the hands of the landowners than the PC. I imagine the houses on each 5 acre lot and an access road to each. Not the way I like to think of lower Boulder, but is how the ordinances allow things to be developed. When the landowners get together, can maybe remedy some of the potential problems, and conforms better to general plan by supporting and encouraging use of land for ag. You guys have a lot of control over what happens and we can help. But all we have to work with is the ordinances.

Carla read the comment from Todd Coleman and Vanessa... Own Lot 2 in Muse Subdivision. Opposed to making our road a public road.

BJ Orozco: Lot 1 of Muse. We're against our road becoming public road. We bought with idea of that being the case.

Ashley Coombs: I'm opposed to any changes he wants to take place and I think things should stay the way they are.

Mary Jane Coombs: I would prefer the access road be on the north side. We already have significant traffic going by our place: South Central mechanics building across from us, 1700 So, a large space in front of our place where people come to use their cell phones and we can hear them talking, Blake's farm, people turning around there. There's enough traffic.

Caroline Hoyt: I'm confused. I thought these lots were off a private road. (Perry clarified on map). So you're saying that ultimately the ordinance currently allows Lower Boulder being accessed by lots and lots of little roads.

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Blake Spalding: Are private roads in lieu of driveways? Tabor clarified access; the access road is for the back lots, not the front subdivision lots. Just for clarification, driving down the road, there will be four driveways in? [yes]

Bill Muse: asked if the access road is still running 200 feet parallel to Lower Boulder? I would like to publicly object to that. It would be a parallel road and could be a potentially big road--- 50 foot easement, as big as Lower Boulder, running parallel with fence in between, about 15 feet apart. I would like to have it looked at by a safety engineer.

Pete Benson: (read his written comments, included in file)

Donna Owen: I appreciate what Peter has written. The purpose of the conceptual phase is to get ideas out, and the idea of clustering was never even given a chance. My feeling is that the conceptual plan time should have been used to discuss these things, including the concept of a clustering subdivision.

Blake Spalding: I don't really know the regulations, but my reaction to seeing the septic piles disturbed me. I don't like seeing four houses blocking the view. Yes, a tasteful, beautiful type of subdivision like Whynots or Full Moon, but I was aesthetically offended by the row of septic tanks and I don't like the idea of four driveways right there. Also, I have distinct memories of that property being flooded. It seems ill conceived and aesthetically unappealing.

Bill Muse: I think the road should go along the south, not the north of the subdivision. [Bill started with a detailed history of the road easements on what is now 1700 So. Carla asked him to hold those comments as they seemed more of a legal discussion that pertinent to the subdivision as described by Kennedy.]

BJ Orozco: To review: First, the Muse subdivision lots, one of which he owns. We're on a private road. We don't have fire hydrants. That road is supposed to service the four Muse lots. Some of the other options include the southern access (1700 So). It's another access on an existing road. It's the same thing type of problem as the north access road. Third option is coming through the middle which also isn't good because it's a wet land and would split the pasture. Three bad options, and down to who can complain the most.

Donna Owen: If there's a burden it should be on the subdivision and not the adjoining landowners. The middle access seems like a great solution.

Pete Schaus: Has the easement description been submitted to town attorney? (Yes).

Bill Muse: What suggestions did the town attorney suggestions have? Donna Jean said he just said the roads as described meet our ordinance.

BJ Orozco: Just to clarify, the access road under discussion is road with this subdivision even though the actual subdivision isn't in question, but by doing the subdivision it's to not landlock the back lots.

Donna Owen: I thought by making these four part of a subdivision, the other (back) lots need to be conforming too. Donna Jean: the back lots were subdivided off before the ordinance was in place, and they had separate owners. Carla said each of the properties meet the length/width requirements of the ordinance.

Tabor: Just to generate comments: We've talked about the south road, for the sake of all of us, I'd like to hear your opinions of using it to access those backlots.

Pete Schaus: When the easement was granted by Dee Hansen with the family trust, the lots in back had already been subdivided and they weren't included. Later, Dee had sent letter asking us to sign off on access to those lots from the road, and we didn't do it. Some paperwork was filed afterward that was not accurate which seemingly granted a right-of-way to those lots.

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Tabor: So there is one right-of-way that could be transferred to one of those lots. And there's an additional three lots in the back that have access yet to be described, correct?

Lisa Varga: We prefer the northern access. We have four lots on our access. It's a smaller road, because when that road was put in, it is only a 30 foot easement on our property. That size is an issue.

Blake Spalding: Did you buy this as a speculative, money-making thing? It seems counter to the culture of Lower Boulder road, eliminating peoples' view shed and the access problems.

Lisa Varga: I also would like to speak for Keith Watts. He agrees with my comments.

BJ Orozco: I know the view shed is an issue, but if you look at Springhill farmhouse, it's right on the road, and it is a great way to minimize impact on the pastures. It keeps the land open. Plus, a lot of people won't want to build right along the road.

Cookie Schaus: It does seem like all of us are reacting to this huge seeming thing to us, maybe not to Daniel. Why couldn't two of the houses share a driveway to their properties, instead of four entrances to those. I'm just trying to think of an less impactive thing.

Bill Muse: I've talked to Daniel about this too. I had a dream of Boulder, and it was that big family ranches were going and would turn into a series of smaller, independent family farms. Dan agreed to leave all the lots in six acres. They're not every 10 feet. These are six-acre lots. This is an example of clustering. A large piece of ground surrounded by smaller tracts of land. There could be a covenant about keeping the center green. We don't need to be as afraid as we seem to be. I would like to see the roads spread out fairly. We have freedom, rights of land ownership, Dan can do this as long as he's following the ordinances. It's going to start happening. Al sold his place.

Arum Barsch: Three points. I've known Daniel since he was knee high to short frog. He's come all his life here. I don't know a better individual in this world. He's an honest, ethical, good person. He'd make a great neighbor. Second, I know exactly how everyone here is feeling. I've felt that way for the last 30 years. We fall in love with Boulder, and keep it the way it is, which means shutting the door behind us. I'm personally opposed to subdividing land. There used to be lots of big properties, and lots of agricultural industry. But change is inevitable. The fact is, Donna Jean, Colleen, and Tabor are the only people who don't live on subdivided property. All of us live on pieces that have been subdivided mostly within the past 30 years. I would encourage you all to feeling a bit accepting about Daniel. Lastly, we're all Americans here. It's important to have rights and privileges, and to recognize the rights and privileges of others, even if something is happening we don't particularly care for, like more houses and roads going in. As long as he follows ordinances. Boulder is still a beautiful place and good place to live. We have two good roads that access a particular point. It seems foolhardy to run another gravel strip across more pasture. We need to try to protect the diminishing pasture we have. The road on the north makes the most sense. The Dee Hansen property is the main one needing access. If one more person was driving on that road, it probably wouldn't be too bad.

BJ Orozco: (asking Daniel if he had a child) That's one more child for the community.

Daniel: Thanks for coming out to the public hearing. To address Blake's concern about the visual eyesore. There are houses along the road, so depending on the homeowner, we're planning to put a requirement on the landowner to plant some number of trees to buffer the impact, depending on where they build. There are some drainage issues, some water problems through the middle. It's not my vision to have a bunch of three story houses along there. I'm leaving the building envelopes up to the purchaser. They all come with irrigation water. I plan to practice real estate here. We just moved down here last weekend; we're now living here year round, in the barn. Regarding the back lot access road, I'm presenting my own solution to the problem.

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I'm putting it on the north because it is a shorter distance to access the back. Just because put in now, can talk about adjoining down the road. Donna asked if the empty land will be irrigated. Daniel said if a buyer doesn't want to farm it, he will be irrigating the land. We're farming the big remainder lot (Lot 5).

Bill Muse: Would you consider putting a size limit of no bigger than 2500 sq ft? Daniel said he doesn't have any stipulations on it right now.

Carla: Thanks for coming. We will be taking this up at the regular meeting on Thursday.

Carla adjourned the meeting at 8:08 p.m.

Peg Smith, Planning Commission Clerk

Date

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