

March 5, 2020

Brandon Cammarata
City of Aurora, Planning and Development
15151 E. Alameda Parkway, 2nd Floor
Aurora, CO 80011

Re: Sterling Hills Filing 15: First Submittal – Letter of Introduction

Dear Brandon,

Enclosed please find the submittal items requested for the Sterling Hills Filing 15 Major Site Plan and Replat (1st submittal). The intent of this application is to thoroughly express our design intent for the Sterling Hills Filing 15 Property. We have made adjustments to reflect many of the comments received. A letter has been provided, under separate cover, to respond to the items noted by staff.

The following team members contributed to this submittal:

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Site Introduction

Sterling Hills – Filing 15 is a 9.1-acre residential development located within the Sterling Hills community, east of Sterling Hills Parkway, south of E. Villanova Place, and north of E. Waters Drive. Surrounding land uses include multi-family condominiums to the east and west, single-family attached townhomes to the south, and single-family detached to the north. Both multi-family complexes and the townhomes surrounding the property are zoned PCZD-MF, and the single-family detached homes are zoned PCZD-SFD.

Sterling Hills- Filing 15 is also currently zoned PCZD-MF but will be converted to R-3 with the City's current zoning code update. Filing 15 proposes 64 single-family detached homes, with a mix of alley-loaded and front-loaded products. 53 alley-loaded homes are proposed along the western portion of the site, and 11 front-loaded homes are proposed along the eastern boundary of the site, adjacent to the existing utility easement.

All homes proposed are a for-rent product, which will be maintained and managed by American Homes 4 Rent, a national home provider. Homes range in size from approximately 1,900 sf- 2,350 sf. Homes will be a variety of single and two-story residences with inviting front elevations and covered entryways. A mix of contemporary and traditional architectural styles are proposed which complement the existing architectural character of the community.

Each home will have a minimum of two (2) enclosed parking spaces. Two additional driveway spaces are provided for the front-loaded residences. In addition, on-street parking is permitted within internal public streets, E. Villanova Place, and E. Waters Drive.

Site Access

Alley-loaded homes will be accessed from the rear of the property via 20-foot private alleys with each home fronting on a public street. Front-loaded homes are accessed via private driveways off of an internal public street. Main access into the site is facilitated through three surrounding streets, Sterling Hills Parkway (public), E. Villanova Place (public), and E. Waters Drive (private). Access from Sterling Hills Parkway is limited to one (1) right-in-right-out intersection at the main entrance of the community and a full movement intersection at E. Waters Drive. During recent community meetings held between the Applicant and adjacent property owners, concerns were noted about making left-hand turns onto Sterling Hills Parkway from E. Waters Drive. It was recommended that this intersection have limited access. The Applicant has no objections with limiting this intersection to a ¾ or right-in-right-out movement so long as there are no issues from a traffic or life safety perspective. There are also full movement intersections at Dunkirk and E. Villanova Place as well as Dunkirk and E. Waters Drive.

Site Restrictions

Due to proximity to the Buckley Air Force Base the site is located within the Airport Influence District of Buckley Air Force Base, the site includes various aviation easements that require notification of ownership groups with this site plan application. In addition, there are multiple easements existing on site that will require relocation or abandonment. Required easement releases will be submitted under separate cover.

Currently on site there are prairie dogs inhabiting the property. These animals will be relocated at the time of development according to state regulations. There are no existing trees, landscaping, or historically significant elements currently present on site that would require salvage.

Site Amenities and Connectivity

There are multiple nearby amenities including a park on the northern side of E. Villanova Place, Central Recreation Center to the west, Switchgrass Park and the Conservatory to the east. In addition to nearby amenities, there is a

small common space for residents to use as a passive recreation area. The space includes a common lawn, mail box kiosks, pet waste station and shade trees.

Waiver/Adjustment Requests

The Applicant is requesting the following waivers from the existing City of Aurora Unified Development Ordinance:

Code Section 146-4.2.2:

1. Reduction in minimum lot area from 5,000 sf to 2,700 sf. This reduction in lot area is warranted due in combination to the nearby park and open space amenities provided with this community as well as complimenting the nearby densities adjacent to the site. The smaller single-family homes provide a desirable transition of density from the multi-family homes located to the north of the site. Reduction in minimum lot frontage from 50' to 30' and a reduction in front setback from 15' to 12'. This reduction is requested to accommodate the urban character of the product. In addition, recreational amenities are provided within the community as well as within walking distance of the site.
2. Reduction in minimum lot frontage from 50' to 30' and a reduction in front setback from 15' to 12'. This reduction is requested to accommodate the urban character of the product. In addition, recreational amenities are provided within the community as well as within walking distance of the site.

Both requested waivers are justified as they help provide an additional product type to the Sterling Hills community and are within the maximum amount of total small lots allowed. Please reference the exhibit attached with this letter for additional details.

Code Section 146-4.7.5:

1. Reduction in number of trees required in curbside landscape area along East Water Drive. This reduction is requested because there is an existing storm pipe (already approved by Aurora) within the tree lawn that precludes tree plantings. The storm pipe cannot be relocated into the street due to existing utility locations. As a result, three (3) fewer trees have been provided in tree lawn than required. Three (3) canopy trees will be provided in lieu of the street trees, with one canopy tree in Tract J and two canopy trees in Tract H.

This waiver is justified as the storm pipe was previously approved in-place and because the trees are accounted for in their relocation in private open space behind the detached sidewalk, at a distance between 4-5 feet from the back of sidewalk.

Code Section 146-4.7.9:

1. Substitution allowing a 6-foot screening fence in lieu of landscape buffer requirement of 1 tree and 5 shrubs per 40 linear feet, due to conflict with existing drainage swale. This condition exists along the existing 50-foot drainage and utility easement, recordation number A9195909.

This waiver is justified as the easement prevents the required landscape buffer from being planted.

Approval Criteria

Sterling Hills – Filing 15 conforms to the Approval Criteria required by Code Section 145-405(F) by the following:

1. The Major Site Plan shall be approved only if:
 - a. The application complies with the applicable standards in this UDO, other adopted City regulations, any approved Master Plan that includes the property, and any conditions specifically applied to development of the property by the Planning and Zoning Commission or City Council in a prior decision affecting the property.

The proposed application complies with all adopted regulations including the newly adopted UDO with the exception of the above indicated waiver/adjustment request.

- b. The City's existing infrastructure and public improvements, including but not limited to its water, wastewater, street, trail and sidewalk systems, have adequate capacity to serve the proposed development, and any burdens on those systems have been mitigated to the degree practicable.

Existing infrastructure is adequate to support the proposed development. Reference associated reports for more information.

- c. Major Site Plans shall be designed to preserve and protect natural areas, ridgelines, swales, natural landforms, water quality and wildlife habitat of riparian corridors, wetlands, and floodplains affected by the proposed development and to integrate those areas into site design where predictable.

There are no naturally occurring landforms or floodplains within the site. However, habitat located within the drainage way is preserved by a drainage easement.

- d. The application will improve or expand multi-modal connections with adjacent sites, neighborhoods, and urban centers.

Roadways and sidewalks are proposed to connect with existing infrastructure from adjacent sites to better promote circulation among the area.

- e. The application is compatible with surrounding uses in terms of size, scale and building façade materials.

The proposed homes type and sizes provide a transition of density and product between the lower density single family homes to the north and the higher density townhomes and multi-family products to the east, west, and south. The proposed density is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

- f. The application mitigates any adverse impacts of the surrounding area to the degree predictable.

Impacts associated with the development of this parcel of land are within expected and anticipated levels.

- 2. A Minor Plat Amendment shall be approved only if the application complies with the applicable standards in this UDO, other adopted City regulations, any approved Master Plan that includes the property, and any conditions specifically applied to development of the property by the Planning and Zoning Commission or City Council in a prior decision affecting the property.

The proposed minor plat amendment complies with all applicable standards within the recently approved UDO and all other City adopted plans and regulations.

Additional Applications

There are no other application being requested at this time.

We are pleased to present you with this application for Sterling Hills – Filing 15. We look forward to working with the City of Aurora on creating another unique community. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the application, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
Norris Design



Samantha Crowder
Senior Associate