



## Polestar Village - PDP Neighborhood Meeting Summary (5-12-22)

### Overview

#### City Staff:

JC Ward, Senior Neighborhood Services Planner  
Pete Wray, Senior City Planner and Project Planner  
Sharlene Manno, Customer Support & Host  
Spencer Smith, Civil Engineer II  
Scott Benton, City Planner  
Tim Dinger, Civil Engineer II  
Tayla Copeland, Intern

#### Owner/Applicant Team:

Ken Merritt, JR Engineering, Principal  
Michael Gornik, Polestar Gardens, Inc (Owner and Developer)  
Daiva Glazzard, Polestar Gardens

Neighborhood Meeting Date: Thursday May 12, 2022

### Proposed Project Review Process

- Purpose of meeting is to share conceptual plans at an early stage in process and gather feedback from neighbors for inclusion in record.
- A formal application of the project has not been submitted to the City.
- A project development plan submittal will start a formal review by staff.
- Staff will determine when the project is ready for hearing.
- Type 2 review and hearing, with Planning and Zoning Commission as decision maker.
- Residents who receive this meeting notice will also receive a letter for the Planning and Planning Commission Hearing.
- The proposed project is within the Residential Low Density (RL) and Low-Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood (LMN).
- The proposed project is for development of a neighborhood center, single family detach housing, single-family attached, multi-family housing, place of worship and community farm.

### Applicant Presentation

- Proposed mixed-use on approx. 20 acres.
- Northern portion of parcel sold to Polestar from Happy Heart Farm.
- Proposed 136 units: 19 Single Family Detached Homes with front access garages, 20 Townhome with alley access garages, 36 Townhome with surface parking, 25 Condominium/Apartment Homes with garages and surface parking, 36 Multi-Family Apartment Homes with surface parking and a 5000 Sq. Ft. – 2 story Elderly Group Home for up to 8 Residents and a Caretaker. Also included are several Polestar HOA Community Buildings which

include an 8000 Sq. Ft. - 2 story Community Center with 6 B&B Guest Rooms, 2 Agricultural Support Buildings and a 3000 Sq. Ft. Temple - Place of Worship.

- Primary access taken from Orchard Place and Plum Street.

## Primary Issues

- Traffic/Street connection Impacts
- Land Use/Other
- Housing
- Trail Connectivity
- Open Space & Natural Areas, Environmental

## Questions/Comments and Answers

### General

#### Traffic/Streets

**Question:** Car access concerns; going through from Orchard to Oak Hill. Will traffic increase greatly west of Plum and Orchard Place?

**Answer:**

**Question:** Concerns of project affecting existing pedestrian walkways and access along the pond area west of the development using Orchard Place easement.

**Answer:** Spencer – the existing sidewalks are narrower and more attached in this area. New streets and sidewalks will be wider and detached sidewalks along Orchard. This is a public street so vehicular and pedestrian access is not limited on this street or sidewalks to areas between development and neighborhood.

**Question:** In general, worries of increased traffic in the neighborhood.

**Answer:** Spencer. As far as vehicular access – there is not a direct Elizabeth connection; traffic engineering identified areas within this community, along Kimball and Elizabeth. Engineering will be analyzing access north of Locust, Plum, and Kimball – traffic study (Transportation Impact Analysis) will look at the traffic patterns along each of these streets. Local streets are functioning properly – these studies have been shown so far. Collector streets for Orchard to Overland Trail still need analysis. Circulation – east of Orchard is built to a lesser standard than Kimbell and Elizabeth. Orchard will meet today's standards (36' cross section width). Overall, pedestrians and vehicles will be separated with no interaction in-between both.

**Question:** Does the developer have any responsibility for extending Orchard to Overland Trail? What is the approximate timeline that Orchard PI will be extended out to Overland?

**Answer:** The developer does not have any responsibility for extending Orchard Place beyond the west property boundary of the proposed development. We have no information regarding future developments within this area that would require Orchard Place to be extended to Overland Trail.

**Question:** Five years ago, Three Seed Development went through a similar process. Traffic is a concern since the traffic increased with that development.

**Answer:** This project is required to submit a traffic impact study to assess the impacts of the proposed development and mitigation improvements needed based on the project traffic numbers.

**Question:** Why is there not a street connection to Elizabeth Street? Should the zoning be changed to allow this street connection?

**Answer:** The existing Happy Heart Farm residence is not part of this project, so a street connection is not feasible. A street connection to Elizabeth Street would not meet the Traffic and Engineering standards for intersection spacing for safety concerns. However, a pedestrian path is planned between the project and W Elizabeth Street in lieu of a street. This project is required to connect proposed public streets to existing public street stub outs of Plum Street and Orchard Place. Zoning requirements include land use and development standards, not street network requirements.

**Question:** What percentage of the development will be paved, specifically pervious surfacing?

**Answer:** The street right-of-way and parking areas will be paved. A portion of this paved areas may include special pervious surfacing.

**Question:** Will overflow parking be on existing streets outside polestar?

Since the plan minimizing parking for cars.

**Answer:** The project is required to provide all its parking within the development, either located off-street in garages or parking lot areas, or on-street. This code requirement is to avoid the need for any overflow parking extending into the adjacent neighborhoods.

#### Land Use/Other

**Question:** How do the short-term rentals and bed/breakfast work within the zoning?

**Answer:** LMN – allows bed and breakfast to have up to 6 units. The Wellness Center will have 8 residential rooms used for elderly who are being cared for within the Polestar Community. The LMN zoning allows short-term primary rentals (owner occupied). Where and how many short-term rental properties are designated within the proposed development? The short-term rentals will be located on the second floor of the community center which have (6) bed and breakfast units for short term stay only (short term rental).

**Question:** Zoning – will there be a change of zoning of the area?

**Answer:** There will be no zoning changes with this project. The development will be working within the designated zoning including LMN and RL residential uses.

**Question:** Since there currently are no commercial spaces within the neighborhood how would this working within the existing neighborhood?

**Answer:** The proposed development is with the LMN Zoning – the proposed commercial uses need to be a part of a neighborhood center that includes a combination of non-residential uses that serve the neighborhood. This neighborhood center will have direct street and pedestrian access from the neighborhood area. The traffic study will look at all existing streets and paths for this development including the commercial center.

**Question:** The neighborhood uses the Orchard easement quite often. If this proposed development is built it will take away the sense of community that is there now. This doesn't seem in line with Polestar's ethic. How do the single-family homes conform with Polestar ethics?

**Answer:** Right-of-way already exists. Orchard's road easement will be extended; this is driven by the City's Master Street Plan. The single-family homes along Orchard buffer the low-density residential zoning which allows for a transition of density to the single-family homes. Density becomes greater in the south of the property. Density is higher in the center and lessens the more you go out – in a ring form. Existing neighbors using Orchard Place for waling to nearby open space can continue since this is a public street.

**Question:** Does Polestar plan on staffing these commercial areas – yoga area and community center? Who will be running the community center?

**Answer:** Yes, the retail center will all be staffed; the community center will have staffing for the common kitchen and dining area. The wellness center will be completely staffed. Some of the staff will be residents of the neighborhood.

**Question:** Will the 136 units be affordable units? Is there any deed restriction?

**Answer:** There are specific requirements to meet affordable housing standards. The project is not planning to designate these units as affordable housing.

**Question:** Will there be an application process to live there?

**Answer:** No application requirements it will be a completely open community development.

**Question:** Will the yoga area/place of worship be only for use by residents, or will it be open to the public? How many visitors are expected daily?

**Answer:** It is intended for use by Polestar Residents and their Guests.

**Question:** How is this development being funded? This is a non-profit: how can you accept investors?

**Answer:** Investors are making loans to the Polestar Gardens Non-Profit that are then converted to an investment in either a Lot or Building Unit once they are available.

**Question:** Is there a wildland fire evacuation plan for this development and neighborhood?

**Answer:** PFA-Sarah Carter. The short answer is that PFA would not preemptively develop a neighborhood evacuation plan on behalf of the neighborhood. At this time, neither the city nor PFA has adopted the International Wildland Urban Interface Code (WUI), and the wildland-urban interface area has not been defined. We would not have the authority to require or enforce such planning. Additionally, we do not have existing individual plans for each neighborhood in our district. There are a significant number of factors that influence firefighting and evacuation strategy, and our crews are training in evaluating each emergency scenario and managing response and resources for the best possible outcome.

If a subdivision wanted to develop a plan, I'm sure that is something we could provide some guidance on. We would first direct them to the provisions of the WUI to consider implementing the requirements for developments under this code, including access, water supply, building construction, vegetation management, and fire protection plan provisions. The WUI is available for free online at [codes.iccsafe.org](http://codes.iccsafe.org). This would be the best place to start and implementing some of these provisions during the subdivision planning process would certainly be of benefit should a wildland fire occur nearby.

**Question:** Will the neighborhood surrounding the proposed development be allowed to use the trails and space within the community Polestar?

**Answer:** Common open space will be maintained.

Open Space, Natural Areas, Storm Drainage

**Question:** There is a recreational space within this neighborhood. The concern is that the development will box in the small recreational open space area. Is there any likelihood to expand that space or are there more open spaces proposed for this development?

**Answer:** The recreational space is Saddle Ridge retention area and trail. There will be a 6-foot-wide soft path that winds its way through the natural area, this will be within a public easement which will make its way out to Overland trail and crossing over Elizabeth St. The proposed development will have 10.4 acres of open space; private open space.

**Question:** Saddle Ridge open space shouldn't be boxed in. Replace the retention pond more on the west of the open space. There currently is a cottonwood tree in this area mentioned that shall stand and have development built around it.

**Answer:** No reply since the question was a statement.

**Question:** Will the cottonwood tree on Orchard be removed for the proposed development?

**Answer:** There are 122 existing trees. One requirement is to have an existing tree analysis. A preliminary analysis has been done. Yes, that tree will be removed due to root problems. The City's analysis with the Forester still needs to occur. There may be some re-location of trees as well as removal. The timeframe/scheduling for moving any trees will have to happen around this October or in April of next year. A maintenance of already fallen trees will still need to be done before the proposed development can be built. Overall, there will be native low water landscaping throughout the proposed development.

**Question:** In regard to the fire season last year. If there are 136 units that equates to approx. 300 vehicles that would have to evacuate if a fire was to occur. The city needs an evacuation plan and timeline for evacuation of a fire.

**Answer:** No response since this is a statement.

**Question:** Will the detention pond area be flat (as it currently exists) or is this going to be dug down like an actual pond?

**Answer:** The detention area will be excavated below the existing ground elevation to accommodate sufficient detention volume for the proposed Development. In the future (timing unknown) the city will do further excavation within the existing detention pond constructed for the Polestar Development to create a Regional Detention Pond within the previously Platted Drainage Easement.

**Question:** What studies have you referred to or conducted regarding how this new development is going to impact water usage in the area?

**Answer:** The homes are being designed with energy and water use efficiency which meet the requirement of the City of Fort Collins at the time of Building Permitting. Polestar Gardens owns Pleasant Valley Irrigation Ditch Water Shares which are planned to be used for irrigating the Ornamental Landscape, Farm and Pocket Gardening areas of the proposed development. The Landscape will be designed with Water Wise Drought Tolerant Plant Material and shall meet the City's required irrigation requirements of the allowed Gallons / Sq. Ft. /Year standards.

## Process/Next Steps

**Question:** What are the next steps here before this gets the go-ahead? Is this inevitable or is there opportunity to alter the plan?

**Answer:** Polestar Gardens will make a Preliminary Project Development Plan and Preliminary Utility Plan Submittal in late June 2022. The City's review will then follow the procedural steps set forth by the City Development Review Process outlined in the City's Land Use Code. The various Residential and Support Land Uses being proposed for the Polestar Village development are uses permitted within the RL or LMN Zone Districts. The proposed Unit Density of Polestar Village is below the Maximum Density allowed for the RL and LMN Zone Districts.

**Staff:** Thanks for attending tonight. The conversation will be summarized and available as public record. Residents that received notice of this meeting will also be notified of hearing. The next step in the development review process is for the applicant to consider refinements to the project design in preparation of a formal project submittal and review by City staff. A second neighborhood meeting is not required, but if the applicant chooses to hold another meeting residents that received the notice will also be notified again. The decision maker for this project is the Planning and Zoning Commission. If

neighbors want to reach out to staff, they are encouraged to contact either Neighborhood Services or Pete Wray in Planning, see meeting notice for contact information.