

Fitch, Abby

From: Karen Kalavity <integradesign1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, July 8, 2024 8:31 AM
To: Public Comment; City of Westminster
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please publish (or re-publish) my housing suggestions with regard to 2040 Comprehensive Land Use Code
Attachments: Request from council.docx

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I was made aware that my post was not published a couple of weeks ago, regarding plausible housing solutions that do not involve Uplands-type activities & shenanigans.

Would you please make sure this post is published today for all readers, not just the city council.

Thanks,
Karen

A few months back, Baseline Engineering came to a study session of the Westminster City Council. They came in with a concept that would allow for attached housing in the older part of Westminster that has over-sized lots with average sized dwellings ... specifically, they were talking about 6 attached and 3-story homes at 7041 Utica Street in Old Town Westminster. Although the concept did not meet PRESENT zoning requirements for the area, it still ended up being similar in scope & density to what the Uplands developers request in the form of "exceptions" and an already altered Re-Zoning agenda - on a monthly basis. And, unfortunately, the Uplands group also gets these things approved - en masse - on a monthly basis. The problem is, that Baseline Engineering and THEIR concept for 6 smaller and attached dwellings on an over-sized lot was summarily dismissed.

Unfortunately, in my mind and in many people's minds throughout the city, Uplands and their investor, Varde Hedge Fund partners, as well as their "site-designer", Norris Design, ALWAYS get their way. And this is usually done at a cost - in the millions of dollars and in terms of goodwill lost to the city and its residents - while other smaller and independent property/homeowners, builders & providers RARELY get their concerns or concepts even considered.

This has got to stop.

With the passage of HB24-1152 at the Colorado State Legislature this year, which would require that the state's largest cities allow accessory dwelling units on single-family lots, there is an opportunity for Westminster to build - or more importantly - to re-purpose land and structures. This will provide for more **AFFORDABLE AND SUSTAINABLE HOUSING with SHARED COMMUNITY PLANNING** that can add to the beauty and purpose of the city rather than to degrade the city, as has been the case with the Uplands and some other proposed large-scale housing projects. I believe that Westminster and its Long-Range Planning Department would be wise to consider smaller-scale alternatives for home builders and individual property owners that better address affordability and building towards goodwill in the community ... which the Uplands (propped up by Westminster's Economic Development Team) and their ilk have NOT been successful in doing.

Attached are a few different concepts/drawings that were created with the help of Google, Google Earth and GIMP. And I would ask that the Long-Range Planning Staff (which is far different than the "Economic Development Team") consider these concepts & examples for inclusion within the 2040 Comprehensive Land Use document which is due for an update this year. Specifically, I would ask that Andrew Spurgin and Mr. McConnell be made aware of some things that I, and some others, would like to see considered as part of a forward-looking vision for the future of Westminster and its housing and community as a whole.

I have included 8 different attachments, showing 8 different ways of accommodating the new Colorado laws related to Accessory Dwelling Units (HB24-1152), new parking standards/restrictions (HB24-1304), and the number of unrelated residents per an individual home (HB24-1007). Most of these examples are based on plan and exterior concepts that might be implemented at 7041 Utica Street ... the same address that Baseline Engineering based their concept on a few months back. I hope that Westminster's

Long Range Planning Staff and City Council will consider these examples as legitimate housing alternative possibilities for our city:

Example A : This shows a small ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) that can be incorporated into an average backyard. It has a solar roof for net zero energy use, as well as fire-resistant materials such as brick that correspond with the existing front residence and a typical glass wall system to let in natural views and light. Pedestrian access connects to the existing garage driveway and street.



Example A

Backyard Accessory Dwelling Unit

Example B: This example shows the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Layout for a Typical Large Lot, with a properly sited-solar roof on the ADU. In this example, the lot also contains the existing garage, but large residential lot owners should be allowed to convert their current garage into an ADU, rather than constructing a separate structure. ADU's can legally range in size from 150 sf to 800 sf. Landscaping for the new ADU includes existing trees, xeric plantings and some lawn areas irrigated with recycled water from an interior washing machine mechanism as well as other plantings irrigated with storm water drainage from "at grade" driveways, streets & drainage swales with NO NEW curb or gutter, etc.

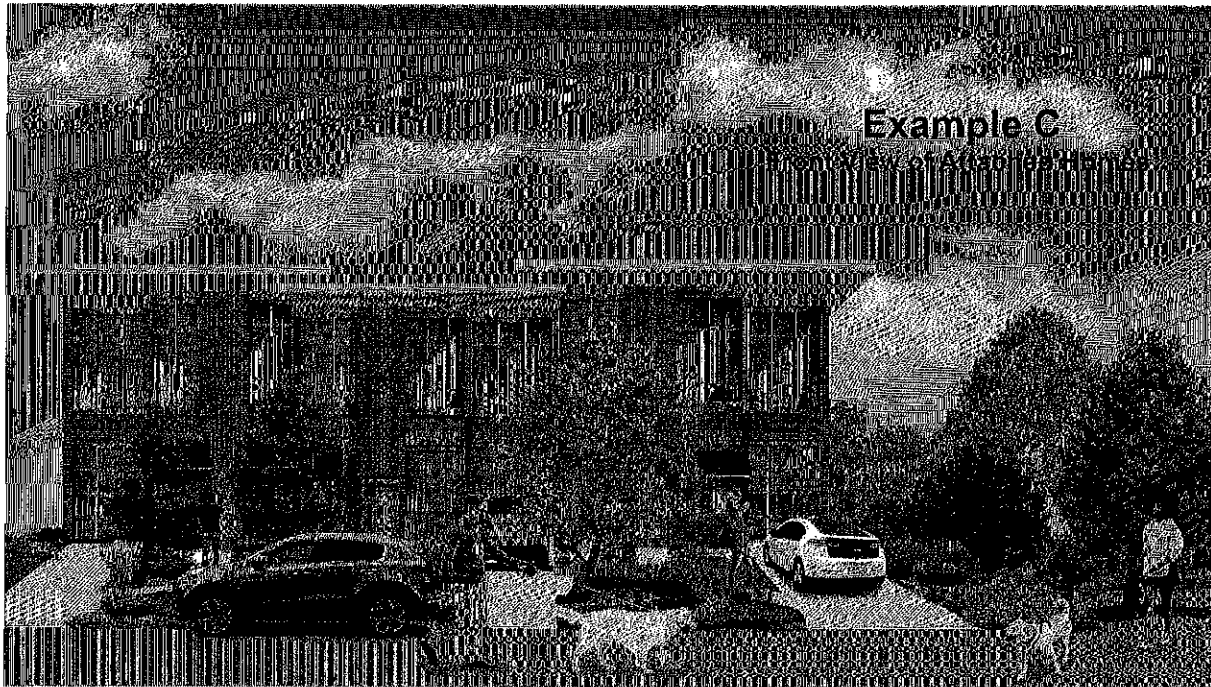


Example B

Accessory Dwelling Unit Layout for a Typical Large Lot

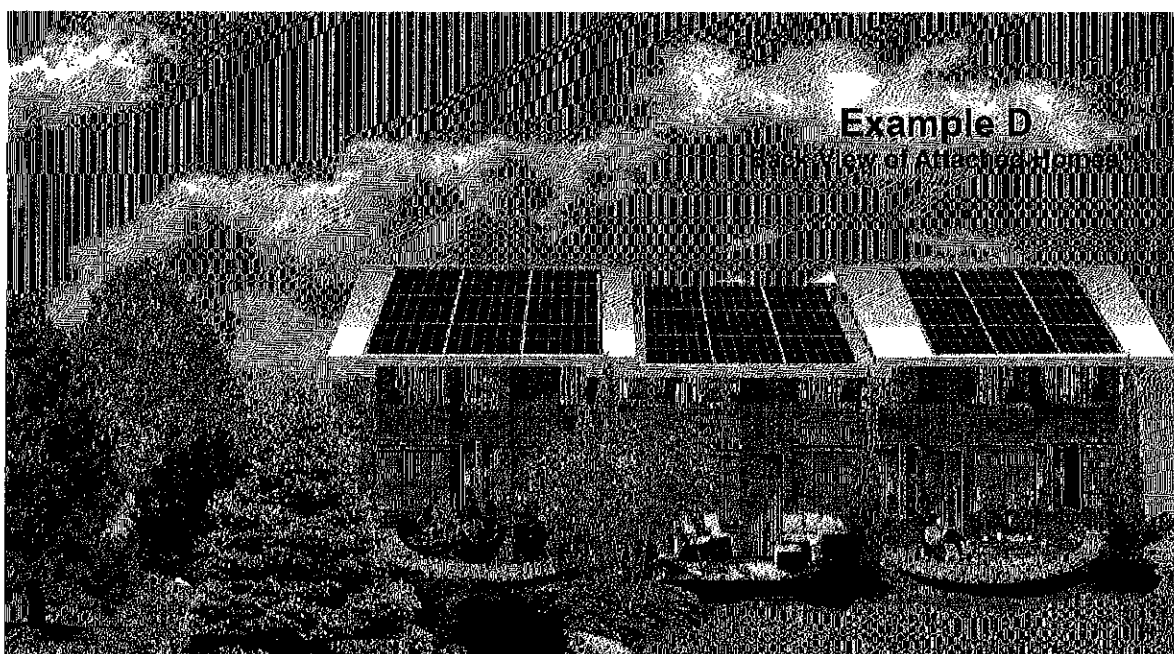
This example shows 1 new Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) with a properly sited-solar roof per single-family lot. In this example, the lot also contains the existing garage, but large residential lot owners should also be allowed to convert their current garage into an ADU, rather than constructing a separate structure. ADU's can legally range in size from 150 sf to 800 sf. Landscaping for the new ADU includes existing trees, xeric plantings and some lawn areas irrigated with recycled water from an interior washing machine mechanism as well as other plantings irrigated with storm water drainage from "at grade" driveways, streets & drainage swales with NO NEW curb or gutter, etc.

Example C: This example shows the front exterior of the new attached housing that can be accommodated on large lots ... that is, with the blessing and agreement from the adjacent large lot owner. A total of up to 3 new attached townhomes can be accommodated on each large lot with the original home in front, counted as a fourth residence. Each home has an attached garage for ONE car with space in the driveway for another vehicle, while all other parking (including for visitors) will be accommodated along the newly created driveway access. This prioritizes first floor living space for humans rather than for vehicles and allows for neighborly activities. Structures can be two-stories tall with a maximum height of 35'. There is also the possibility of a basement. You will also note that the structural building materials are mostly fire-resistant, including brick, other masonry materials and glass.



This example shows the front exterior of the attached housing that can be accommodated on large lots. Each home has an attached garage for ONE car with space in the driveway for another vehicle, while all other parking (including for visitors) will be accommodated along the driveway access. This prioritizes first floor living space for humans rather than for vehicles and allows for neighborly activities. Structures will be two-stories tall with a maximum height of 32'. You will also note that the structural building materials are all fire-resistant, including brick, other masonry materials and glass.

Example D: This example shows the back of the attached housing. By allowing vehicle access from the front, the consequence is that the backs of the units are available for backyard patios and small lawns. This is a real plus for outdoor activities with a degree of privacy that is made possible through landscape screening plantings, rather than by fencing. The patio experience is made even greater by using the Nana Glass Wall system so that homes open to the outdoors. This example also shows the large surface area devoted to rooftop solar for net-zero energy use in these new homes.



This example shows the back of the attached housing. By allowing vehicle access from the front, the consequence is that the backs of the units are available for backyard patios and small lawns. This is a real plus for outdoor activities with a degree of privacy that is made possible through landscape screening plantings, rather than by fencing. The patio experience is made even greater by using the Nana Glass Wall system so that homes open to the outdoors. This example also shows the large surface area devoted to rooftop solar for net-zero energy use in these new homes.

Example E: This example shows up to 3 net-zero energy (solar roofs, geothermal, etc.) and attached townhomes - per over-sized lot - with "cul de-sac" access onto the main street and with the original homes and mature trees kept intact. In this layout, we show a total of 6 NEW homes on 2 adjacent lots, with 2 original homes for a total of 8 homes on two large lots. This arrangement depends on the agreement and blessing of the large lot owners for joint access onto the main street. 12' minimum back and side yard setbacks are in place. Landscaping includes existing trees, xeric plantings and some lawn areas irrigated with recycled water, as well as other plantings irrigated with storm water drainage from "at grade" streets with drainage swales and NO curb and gutter, etc. These new homes have one car garages with front access & back yards. These residences will, likely, be re-platted & have separate "for-sale" deeds.

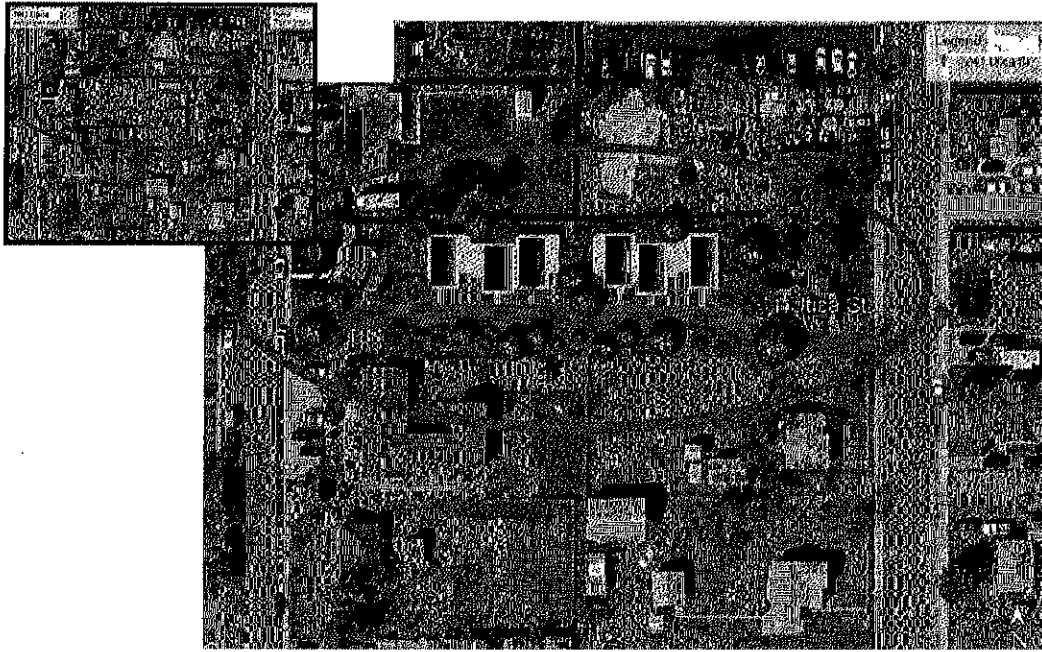


Example E

3 Attached Homes per Large Lot with Agreement from Adjacent Property Owners for a Total of 6 New Homes

This example shows 3 net-zero energy (solar roofs, geothermal, etc.) and attached townhomes - per over-sized lot - with "cul de-sac" access onto the main street and with the original homes and mature trees kept intact. 12' minimum back and side yard setbacks in place. Landscaping includes existing trees, xeric plantings and some lawn areas irrigated with recycled water from interior washing machine mechanisms, as well as other plantings irrigated with storm water drainage from "at grade" streets with drainage swales and NO curb and gutter, etc. These homes have one car garages with front access & back yards. These residences will, likely, have separate "for-sale" deeds.

Example F: This example shows up to 3 net-zero energy (solar roofs, geothermal, etc.) and attached townhomes - per over-sized lot - with "through street" access onto the main streets and with the original homes and mature trees kept intact. This layout also requires an agreement from Adjacent Property Owner for a Total of 6 New Homes and two existing homes for a total of 8 homes between the 2 lots and with joint access. 12' minimum back and side yard setbacks are in place. Landscaping includes existing trees, xeric plantings and some lawn areas irrigated with recycled water mechanisms, as well as other plantings irrigated with storm water drainage from "at grade" streets with drainage swales and NO curb and gutter, etc. Buffer plantings separate these homes and their lots from existing homes. These new homes have one car garages & back yards with large solar rooftop overhangs and might, likely, have property lines re-platted and have separate "for-sale" deeds.

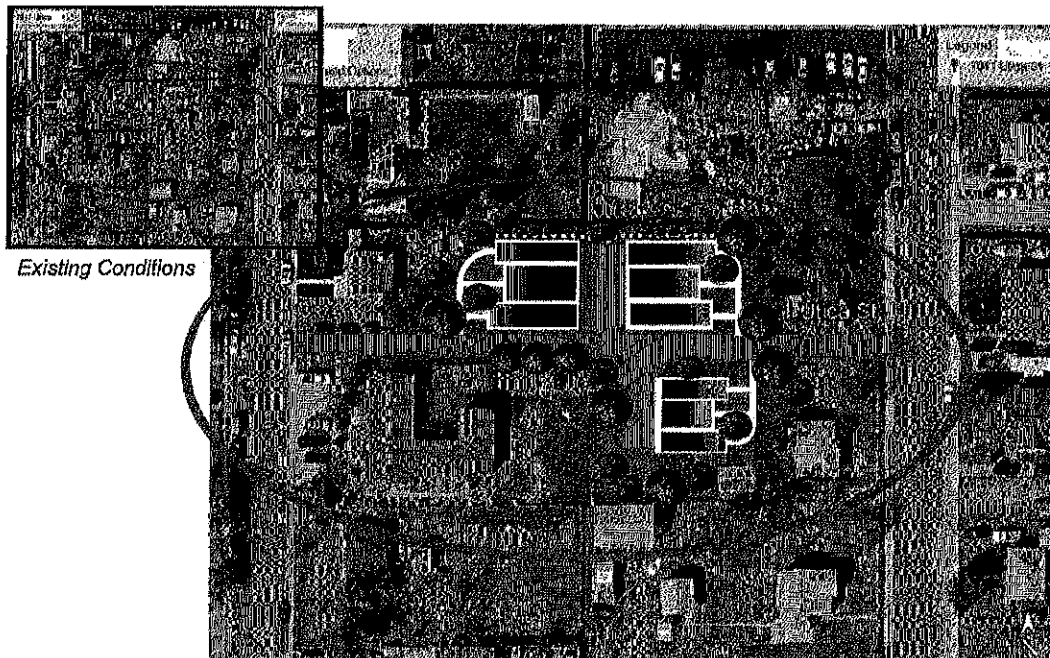


Example F

3 Attached Homes per Large Lot with Agreement from Adjacent Property Owners for a Total of 6 New Homes

This example shows 3 net-zero energy (solar roofs, geothermal, etc.) and attached townhomes - per over-sized lot - with "through street" access onto the main streets and with the original homes and mature trees kept intact. 12' minimum back and side yard setbacks in place. Landscaping includes existing trees, xeric plantings and some lawn areas irrigated with recycled water mechanisms, as well as other plantings irrigated with storm water drainage from "at grade" streets with drainage swales and NO curb and gutter, etc. Buffer plantings separate these homes and their lots from existing homes. These homes have one car garages & back yards with large solar rooftop overhangs and will have separate "for-sale" deeds.

Example G: This example shows up to 3 net-zero energy (solar roofs, geothermal, etc.) townhomes for each over-sized lot, with alley access to 2-car garages to and from the main streets. Because the vehicle parking is from the back alleys, this means there are no backyards for this layout. As well, interior ground floor living space is also limited. But original landscaping, mature trees and improved yard spaces are kept intact, as well as original architecture and homes along the main frontage streets. Again, a maximum of 3 Attached Dwelling Units will be allowed for each large lot with agreement from all 3 Adjacent Property Owners for a Total of 9 New Homes and a total of 12 homes altogether. A 12' minimum side yard setback is in place for new homes, while driveways and roads must keep at least 7' from neighbor's property lines, unless the existing driveways are already closer. Landscaping includes existing trees, new trees, xeric plantings and some lawn with storm water drainage irrigation for many new landscape plantings. New road/driveways are NOT to incorporate curb and gutter.

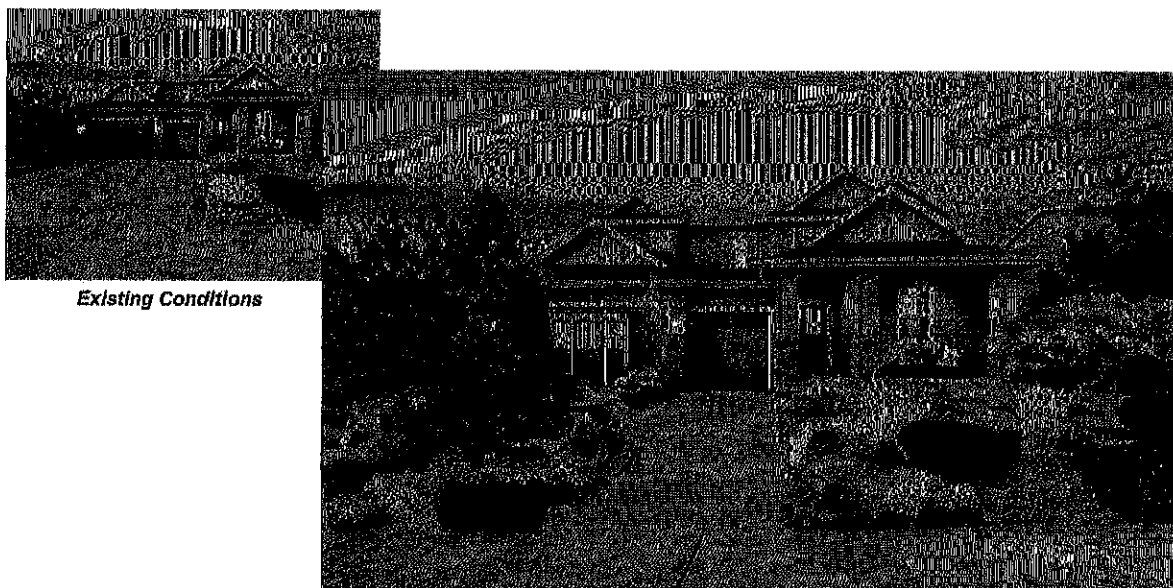


Example G

3 Attached Dwelling Units allowed for Each Large Lot with Agreement from Adjacent Property Owners for a Total of 9 New Homes

This example shows 3 net-zero energy (solar roofs, geothermal, etc.) townhomes for each over-sized lot, with alley access to 2-car garages to and from the main streets. Because the vehicle parking is from the back alleys, this means there are no backyards for this layout. As well, interior ground floor living space is also limited. But original landscaping, mature trees and improved yard spaces are kept intact, as well as original architecture and homes along the main frontage streets. A 12' minimum side yard setback is in place for new homes, while driveways and roads must keep at least 7' from neighbor's property lines. Landscaping includes existing trees, new trees, xeric plantings and some lawn with storm water drainage irrigation for many new landscape plantings. New roadways are NOT to incorporate curb and gutter.

Example H: This example shows how an existing home with a large carbon/structural footprint can be re-designed and re-purposed to accommodate the two homes of a duplex. By allowing premium first-story space to be used for living, rather than for car and garage storage, we can encourage the wise use of space for human comfort and also meet at least one of the new criteria for Accessory Dwelling Units. That is, the ADU's must have a separate entrance. But these homes will be larger than the allowed use for ADU's ... more than 800+ sf per residence. Other designs that allow for 2 separate living spaces within a large home can also be accommodated with the expertise of a licensed architect. These duplexes will have backyard space and can be rented out or have separate "for-sale" deeds. This strategy will make it possible for homeowners to continue to live in their home while downsizing at the same time.



Existing Conditions

Example H

Converting One Existing Home with a Large Carbon/Structural Footprint into Attached Duplex Units

This example shows how an existing large home & site can be re-designed & re-purposed to accommodate two homes instead of just one large dwelling unit. By allowing premium first-story space to be used for living, rather than for car and garage storage, we can encourage the wise use of space for human comfort and also meet at least one of the new criteria for Accessory Dwelling Units. That is, the ADU's must have a separate entrance. But these homes will be larger than the allowed use for ADU's ... more than 800+ sf per residence. Other designs that allow for 2 separate living spaces within a large home can also be accommodated with the expertise of a licensed architect. These duplexes will have backyard space and can be rented out or have separate "for-sale" deeds. This strategy will make it possible for homeowners to continue to live in their home while downsizing at the same time.

Also, even though it was not part of this year's legislative process in Colorado, there could be provisions for churches that want to do the "right thing" by their congregation and the community. That is, we should allow churches, with the will to do so, to provide affordable "ADU's" in under-utilized parking lots, etc. owned by the churches. For churches with a mission to help members of their community that might also be experiencing a dwindling population of churchgoers and tithe givers, this alternative has the economic advantage for both people needing housing as well as providing a modest income for the churches. This is happening in many other parts of the U.S.

Some of these examples & concepts take into account the proximity to Westminster's light rail station in Westminster and relate to the newly passed HB24-1313 (Housing in Transit-Oriented Communities). Unfortunately, in Westminster, the existing light rail line serves to bring people to Downtown Denver, rather than to many places that Westminster residents actually need to be. In this light, it would be much better to include new electric bus/shuttle services within the city that aim to connect people from the light rail (and beyond) to places other than Union Station in Denver. Also, it would be wise to allow residents within 1/2 mile - or so - from the Light Rail Station, the opportunity to "densify" with beauty

and sustainability as part of their own choice, rather than inflicting the Uplands development onto members of the community s the only way to meet this new law and requirement. This is especially important, considering that the Uplands development is over 2 miles from the Westminster Light rail Station, or the more central "Transit Center" between 88th Avenue and 92nd along Highway #36, rather than the required 1/2 mile (or so) and does not really meet the law's requirements or intentions anyway.

Keeping these new laws in mind, we must also be aware that placing ALL new housing in the southern part of the city is unfair, especially when we concentrate "affordable housing" here and nowhere else. This practice, in effect, is "red-lining" - not in terms of racial inequities, - but in terms of income-based inequities.

I hope that the Long-Range Planning Staff and Westminster City Council will incorporate these ideas and examples into the next rendition of the 2040 Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

Sincerely,

Karen Kalavity

(see attachments, below)

Fitch, Abby

From: Karen Kalavity <integradesign1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, July 8, 2024 8:25 AM
To: McNally, Nancy; DeMott, David; Nurmela, Sarah; Ireland, Kristine; Ezeadi, Obi; Hott, Amber; Carmelia, Claire; Public Comment; Freitag, Mark; City of Westminster
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Dog Park Solution

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Proposed Solution to the “Dog Park Situation”:

I would like to propose a solution to the Dog Park situation...

Considering that the off-leash dog park presents such a compelling sense of well-being for many Westminster residents and their companions ... their dogs, it seems reasonable to respect the continued use of this space for the mental and physical health for both the humans and their dogs.

But because there is also wear and tear on the environment, as well as wear and tear on surrounding residents, there should be compromises, and I would suggest these following compromises as a way of mitigating concerns at the off-Leash Dog Park:

My solution involves understanding that this is an important space within Westminster which is probably being over-used and is probably being damaged through its over-use. Just as the National Park Service limits the number of visitors that may visit Yellowstone National Park in any given year, and just as visits to Colorado’s Rocky Mountain National Park are also limited, we should also be limiting visitation to the Open Space that serves as the Off-Leash Dog Park in Westminster. But that does not mean cutting it off from use, it simply means limiting its use.

I would suggest that people driving in with license plates that end in even numbers, be allowed to use the off-leash park on Tuesday, Thursdays and Saturdays, while people with license plates ending in odd numbers, be allowed to visit the park on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. Monday should be a day off for the park where no visitors can come in. This would cut the number of people using the park, on any given day, in half ... which would probably be sustainable.

Also, residents in the area should be given the responsibility (and be paid for the responsibility) of giving out tickets to people who do not abide by this agreement. The money generated from the tickets should be evenly divided so that half of the money goes to residents affected by the dog park traffic, while the other half would go towards needed improvements within the dog park. Also, there should be some composting bins available for dog waste, rather than simply dumping poop into trash cans.

A compensating acreage for Open Space should also be encouraged within Westminster by identifying and then purchasing & re-zoning another tract (or tracts) of land suitable for Open Space.

I believe this solution addresses many of the concerns regarding the Westminster Off-Leash Dog Park.

Sincerely,

Karen Kalavity