

**DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
710 E Mullan Avenue, City Hall Conference Room #6  
Thursday March 27, 2025  
12:00 pm**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Michael Pereira, Vice Chair  
Skip Priest  
Denise Lundy  
Jon Ingalls  
Kevin Jester

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Tami Stroud, Associate Planner  
Traci Clark, Administrative Assistant

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

Tom Messina, Chairman  
Jef Lemmon

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Michael Pereira at 12:00 pm.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Commissioner Priest, seconded by Commissioner Ingalls, to approve the minutes of the Design Review Commission meeting on October 30, 2024. Motion Carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

**STAFF COMMENTS:**

Ms. Stroud commented there might be another Design Review Commission meeting on May 22, 2025. Ms. Clark will confirm the date and time with the commission.

**COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Ingalls stated he would like to welcome the two new members of the commission, Kevin Jester and Denise Lundy. Mr. Jester is a long time architect. It will be great to have his expertise on this commission. Ms. Lundy is a realtor, broker and owner; she will bring a lot of expertise to the commission as well.

**PUBLIC HEARING: \*\*\*ITEMs BELOW ARE CONSIDERED TO BE ACTION ITEMS.**

1.     Applicant:     Blue Fern Management LLC  
       Location:    1202, 1210, and 1212 W Lacrosse Ave  
       Request:     Request for the first meeting with the Design Review Commission for a proposed  
                      57-unit townhome project known as the Lacrosse Ave Townhomes in the  
                      Commercial Zoning District C-17 (DR-1-25)

**Presented by Tami Stroud, Associated Planner**

Ms. Stroud provided the following statements:

The decision point today is, should the Design Review Commission (DRC) approve the design for a proposed 57-unit townhome project with 14 buildings with or without conditions, or direct modifications to the project's design and require a second meeting?

The project would include 57 townhomes within fourteen (14) buildings on five (5) parcels. The townhomes will be 3-story structures with some having habitable attic spaces and a proposed height of +/- 40-42' tall. The units all range in size from +/- 1,050-2,350 SF and all of the units have in-unit garages. There will be a 124 total parking stalls (111 in garages and 13 surface parking spaces). Three of the townhome structures (Buildings 12, 13 and 14) are designed to front the Lacrosse Avenue and, two of the buildings will front an internal driveway (Buildings 10 and 11). Vehicular access for nine of the buildings will be off of the access drive aisle, which is an internal two-way drive aisle (Buildings 1-9). The combined size of the five parcels associated with this request is 174,981 SF or 4.03 acres.

A Project Review Meeting with staff was held on **August 27, 2024**. During the meeting, staff discussed the proposed project with the project development team and provided code requirements pertaining to the Commercial Design Guidelines within the commercial (C-17) zoning district and items that needed to be addressed.

On **January 14, 2025** staff met with Anna Drumheller, consultant with Blue Fern Management LLC, for the Initial Meeting with staff to review the DRC application submittal. Staff discussed the below items in order to schedule the First meeting with the Design Review Commission.

Commissioner Ingalls asked who owns the parcel across from the strip of property?

Ms. Stroud replied BLM (Bureau of Land Management) and she thinks it part of the Four Corners Masters Plan.

Commissioner Ingalls asked are we hopeful that will be a park.

Ms. Stroud replied it will be in the future, but she does not believe there is funding for it now.

### Applicable C-17/C-17L Commercial Design Guidelines

- Sidewalks Along Street Frontages
- Curb Cuts
- Street Trees
- ~~Grand Scale Trees~~
- Walkways
- Residential/Parking Lot Screening
- Parking Lot Landscaping
- Lighting
- Screening of Service and Trash Areas
- Screening of Rooftop Equipment
- Entrance Visible from Street
- Windows Facing Street
- Treatment of Blank Walls
- Roof Edge
- Width and Spacing of Curb Cuts
- Massing: Base/middle/top
- ~~Accessory Buildings~~
- ~~Setbacks Adjacent to Single Family~~

Ms. Stroud said the applicant has requested a **Design Departure for Windows Facing the Street**. Section II- Building Design, subsection C.1- Windows Facing the Street, of the Commercial Design Guidelines for the City of Coeur d'Alene, states: *"At least 20% of any ground level façade of a commercial building that faces a street shall be windows with clear, "vision" glass. On the façade, the required window area shall be located between 2 feet above grade and 10 feet above grade."*

This proposal only seeks a departure allowing for glazing within the entry doors to be partially frosted or decorative, as is typical of a residential style door, rather than a commercial storefront door.

The only landscaping will be the front and side.

Commissioner Ingalls commented about the staff report talking about the frontage on Davidson and there are two options. Profile 1 reads: *There is a 10 foot sidewalk within an amenity zone*. Profile 2 is a five foot sidewalk. It sounds like they are going to do the 10 with street trees. The street trees do not have to be incorporated in the 10-foot sidewalk, is that correct?

Ms. Stroud replied yes, the street trees will be put in and meet the requirements with the City's Urban Forester.

Commissioner Ingalls stated the sidewalk is brand-new on Lacrosse. The question is are we are going to keep what we have, but it does have curb cuts? When the engineer did the street, they make a guess at where the connections are going to be. What are we going to get now that the sidewalk is already there?

Ms. Stoud replied that the applicant will answer that. When you go through the Findings of Facts, the access, approaches, and sidewalk are in there. Staff does require a project review meeting and they flush that all out during that meeting. We do have codes they have to abide by.

## **DECISION POINT**

The DRC should grant the application in Item DR-1-25, a request by Blue Fern Management LLC for design review approval for a proposed 57-unit townhome project within 14 buildings described as 1202, 1210, 1212 W. Lacrosse Avenue, Tax # 17333 located on the south side of Lacrosse Avenue and west of Northwest Boulevard, and Tax #26053, a three-acre strip of property running in a northwesterly and southwesterly direction that includes the abandoned right-of-way of the Spokane International Railroad in the South Lacrosse Addition, approval with or without conditions, or determine that the project would benefit from an additional DRC Meeting to review project changes in response to the first DRC Meeting if it is deemed necessary based on all the circumstances.

### **Proposed conditions (if approved):**

#### **Planning:**

1. The proposed design shall be substantially similar the DRC approval of item DR-1-25.
2. Required parking for the townhome units providing only one garage parking space shall provide signage to designate parking for the required second parking stall located in a surface parking area on the property.

Commissioner Lundy asked as part of the findings if all of the design guidelines are met. Under lighting she noted that in the staff report that the lighting is shown in the elevations. She cannot find the down lighting and the height of the lighting.

Ms. Stroud replied the applicant can show that in his presentation.

Ms. Stroud concluded with her presentation.

Vice Chair Pereira opened the public hearing and swore in the applicants and the public all at once.

#### **Public testimony opened:**

Applicant Alex Clohesey introduced himself and said he is a representative of Blue Fern and stated this project will combine these parcels, into a multi-family residential use. These are vacant parcels. North of the project site and across from West Lacrosse Avenue in the C-17 zoning district is a mix of existing single-family residential, small commercial uses, as well as an RV Park that was mentioned. The maximum allowed density for the project is based on a 2,500 square foot per unit ratio for multi-family, which is about 70 units allowed. Parking is required at one stall per bedroom not to exceed a maximum of two stalls per unit. Parking amount of 111 stalls total. We are proposing in-unit garage parking for all of the units. Units 42, 43, and 44 will have two-car garages. There will be 6 parking stalls at the site entry for guest parking, including the one accessible parking stall and then four additional guest parking stalls at the south end of the site at the fire turnaround.

Commissioner Ingalls asked about parking on sheet A7. It is labeled driveway/maneuver. Is there parking on the main drive aisle?

Mr. Clohesey replied no, this is a 26-foot main drive aisle, and two-way drive aisle, and a five-foot walkway adjacent to it. This is just access to the front doors of the units. There is no parking to the units on the main drive aisle.

Commissioner Ingalls replied this has been mislabeled on the drawing for parking.

Mr. Clohesey continued with his presentation stating that the pedestrian walkway and crossing to the front doors of the units. The plan for the trash was going to be individual totes but City staff noted that would

not work. They have changed to have two community dumpster sites instead. Landscape plans will have street trees required on Lacrosse Avenue. Surface parking area in view, will have ground covering and foundation planting in the right-of-way around the grounds of the buildings as well. Existing utilities will be pulled in from Lacrosse Avenue to the site. We will be working the natural topography on the site and have a small retaining wall that will be proposed on Buildings 1 and 2. There will be a small grade for the stormwater. Storm drainage will be handled by a storm ditch that is already on the site. There is an existing bioswale on the site and will be repaired. The design approach was created by the feel of the neighborhood. It will have gable roof forms, low roof, residential window patterns, and every unit entry will have a low roof making it a human scale. There are two main buildings, the alley loaded products off of Lacrosse Avenue and the front-loaded Buildings 10 and 11. Those are rear loaded garages off of the drive aisle with the unit entries facing the right-of-way or the green space. The other building type is the front loaded buildings. These are units 1-9 that run along the main strip. These buildings have front doors to each unit. These will have large decks on the rear side to take advantage of the views. The materials will be two different wood tone textures. The colors will reflect a natural tone. There will be sidewalks installed along all street frontages.

Commissioner Ingalls commented that looking down the interior that it will look like a long continuous wall. Landscaping might soften that a lot. If this is a "street" and the garbage truck is going down, the UPS truck, the Door dash, etc., it feels like a street. He gets that is really a drive aisle. It looks like you will be adding some trees along there with some landscaping, but the view is begging him to ask for some additional landscaping.

Mr. Clohesey replied he agrees with Commission Ingalls and this was discussed with his team early. The landscaping needs to be dealt with and there is a lot of utilities going to be put in. Hopefully there will be some more opportunities for some more plantings to be put in, with small scale trees. Lighting fixtures will have all down lighting. The proposed lighting locations will have three locations at the three guest stalls to give them safety at night time. The light at the individual unit will have an architecture look. The trash area will have screening with a gate; this will minimize the visibility for fire. Any other mechanical equipment that will be screened. There will be no rooftop equipment. All heating equipment to the units will be tucked away from any right away.

Commissioner Jester thanked Mr. Clohesey for tucking any of the mechanical units away from view.

Mr. Clohesey continued and stated that the units along W. Lacrosse Avenue are visible from the street. The remaining unit entries front the internal site sidewalks and are covered by low roofs above the porches. Windows facing the street. The proposed use is not commercial in nature but windows appropriate of a residential use are provided at street facing elevations. We are seeking a Design Departure from the standard Windows Facing the Street, of the Commercial Design Guidelines that requires "at least 20% of any ground level façade of a commercial building that faces a street shall be windows with clear, "vision" glass. On the façade, the required window area shall be located between 2 feet above grade and 10 feet above grade."

For the Design Guideline treatment of blank walls, there are no blank walls facing streets. The proposed front facades are articulated with windows. Front porches are recessed with overhanging roof at the porch and pedestrian-scale lighting at unit entries.

Mr. Clohesey concluded with his presentation.

Commissioner Jester commented that Mr. Clohesey has maximized the footprint. There are the setbacks and the footprint of the building. There is little room to do any kind of articulation of the building to break up a long line of three story buildings going down. Regarding the cascading roofs, he would like to suggest shedding the roofs so they step down at the end of the building. That way it would soften the end of the building.

Mr. Clohesey agreed, and replied that is a good recommendation.

Karen Hansen introduced herself and was sworn in. She stated that her concern is the density and the street width and design. The public is concerned with the constant concessions that are granted for the street widths and the density of the property. In the presentation she did not see where the snow will go. She does not understand where a narrow street is going to be capable of having garbage trucks, mail, delivery trucks, etc. Where are they going to park? There is no parking along that street. The turnaround for the Fire Department that is supposed to be a designated space only for them. It is not supposed to be for guest parking or garbage collection or snow in the winter time. This piece of property is an old rail road line. There used to be a ditch and it used to be much lower because of the tunnel that ran under the highway 95. This was recently filled in with dirt. She did not see any kind of compaction on it. She watched this on a daily basis. She would also like to know if the city was going to ask the applicant to put funds towards the BLM/Four Corners open space project.

Commissioner Ingalls replied these questions are not applicable to this meeting. This Commission looks at the Design Guidelines.

Ms. Hansen asked again where is the snow supposed to go? She would like an answer. There is also a safety factor for the children. They will be in the middle of the street. There is nothing there to protect them.

Vice Chair Pereira replied that other City departments have addressed their concerns internally and Ms. Stroud has provided them in her staff report. The questions you have are not applicable to the Design Guidelines this commission oversees in this meeting today.

Ms. Stroud commented that Ms. Hansen needs to speak with the Fire Department directly if she has any questions.

Commissioner Priest asked if there will be a traffic study done for this project.

Ms. Stroud replied there had been traffic studies done on previous projects such as the Thomas George but, on this project, she does not believe a traffic study would have been required by the City Engineer.

#### **Applicant Rebuttal:**

Mr. Clohesey replied regarding the snow removal, there is a drainage ditch that runs to the North East side of the main drive aisle. He feels the snow can be moved to this area.

#### **Public testimony closed.**

#### **Commission Discussion:**

Commissioner Ingalls stated this is some really good stuff here. This housing is quasi-attainable in a great spot. He would like some further study on some landscaping but feels they have overachieved in terms of the presentation. The details are great and will be a rich looking project.

Commissioner Lundy commented the commission is looking at the design departure. She likes the look and the safety for the occupants and what they have provided for the design is more appropriate for the residential use. She does not see any problems with the departure.

Commissioner Jester stated the upper right hand of the shed dormers, when you look at it straight on, the windows are in alignment and the dormer is off, but looking at the plans it looks like it might look have the opportunity to become in alignment to balance it all out. This is not a requirement, just a comment. It's a good use of the site.

Commissioner Ingalls stated he feels there is not a need for a second meeting just to show us what the trash enclosure will look like. He would like to add a Condition 3. The applicant shall provide details to staff specifying the location and screening for the proposed trash enclosure to be located on-site.

**Motion by Commissioner Ingalls, seconded by Commissioner Lundy, to approve Item DR-1-25 with an additional condition. Motion carried.**

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Lundy	Voted Aye
Commissioner Jester	Voted Aye
Commissioner Priest	Voted Aye
Commissioner Pereira	Voted Aye
Commissioner Ingalls	Voted Aye

Motion was approved by a 5 to 0 vote.

Commissioner Lemmon and Chairman Messina where absent.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Commissioner Ingalls, seconded by Commissioner Jester, to adjourn the meeting.  
Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:31 p.m.

Prepared by Traci Clark, Administrative Assistant