

## INNOVATIVE HOUSING STAFF REPORT

**To:** Innovative Housing Review Panel

**Staff Contacts:** Sarah Stiteler, Senior Planner, 556-2469  
Jeff Churchill, Assistant Planner, 556-2492

**Date:** April 23, 2007

**Project Name:** Sycamore Park

**Recommended Action:**

- Authorize land-use entitlement application consistent with the findings and conclusions of this report and its exhibits

**Principal Rationale for Recommendation:**

- The proposal increases the variety of home types and sizes in Redmond, particularly in the North Redmond neighborhood
- The proposal would provide for no less than two homes affordable to those earning 80% of the median household income in King County
- The applicant demonstrates clear intent to provide high-quality construction and to meet the intent of neighborhood design standards
- The proposed architectural and site design concepts are compatible with existing and anticipated development in North Redmond.

### I. APPLICANT PROPOSAL

#### A. APPLICANT AND CONSULTING PROFESSIONALS

Applicant: Leo Suver, Steve Burnstead Construction Company  
Architect: Hackworth Group

#### B. PROJECT LOCATION

16814 NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Street, in the North Redmond neighborhood

**C. PROJECT SUMMARY**

Site size: 1.6 acres  
 Underlying zoning: R-4  
 Unit count: 12 units  
 Unit types: 6 single-family detached, 6 single-family attached  
 Unit sizes: 1,400 – 2,240 sq. ft.

**D. DEVIATIONS FROM STANDARD SITE REQUIREMENTS**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Proposed in Project</b>
Density:	4 units/gross acre	7.5 units/gross acre
Average lot size:	7,000 sq. ft.	3,600 sq. ft. (2,700-5,500 range)
Minimum lot width circle:	40'	35'
Minimum lot frontage:	20'	35'
Setbacks (front, side/interior, side street, rear):	15', 5'/10', 15', 10'	Some zero lot line; front setbacks reduced to 8'; other setbacks depend on exact placement of lot lines; <i>exterior</i> setbacks (S/N/W/E,E): 25'/30'/10'/10', 25'
Minimum building separation:	15' except 10' for small structures including cottages, size limited, and accessory dwellings and where these adjoin larger dwellings	10' between homes 2 and 3.
Maximum lot coverage:	35%	55%
Maximum impervious surface area:	60%	70%
Minimum open space:	20%	20%
Maximum height:	35'	35'
Minimum required parking:	2 off-street per unit	3.58 off-street per unit (plus 4 on-street)
Minimum road width:	28'	18'

**E. SURROUNDING LAND USES**

Single-family residential dwellings exist or are planned on all properties adjacent to the subject site. To the north is a single-family home on 0.8 acres (unincorporated King County). To the east lie two single-family homes: one on 0.8 acres (unincorporated King County) and the other on 1.08 acres. To the west is a proposed

16-lot subdivision called Wexford Glen, on 3.68 acres. Across NE 122<sup>nd</sup> Street to the south is a proposed 70-lot subdivision on 15.99 acres called Prescott Glen.

In general, North Redmond is rapidly developing from an area dominated by semi-rural estates to an area with a mix of suburban and urban densities. Lot sizes range from 4,000 square feet to several acres, with lots between one-quarter and one-sixth of an acre common in new subdivisions.

## II. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

### A. CONSISTENCY WITH PROGRAM GOALS

#### 1. *Increase housing supply and the choice of housing styles in the community*

Staff concludes that the proposal is consistent with this goal. As summarized above, North Redmond is characterized by detached single-family homes on lots ranging greatly in size. The proposal before the Panel includes six single-family detached homes (four with space included for accessory dwellings), and six single-family detached homes.

The proposal includes two housing types that are not common in North Redmond – single-family attached homes and accessory dwellings – as well as detached home sizes that are smaller than the average home size in the area. The integration of this increased choice into the project is addressed under goal #3 below.

#### 2. *Promote housing affordability and greater choice by encouraging smaller and more diverse home sizes and mixes of income levels*

##### Size

The proposal includes twelve primary dwellings that range from 1,400 to 2,240 square feet in size. By comparison, the average single-family home permitted in Redmond in 2006 measured 3,095 square feet. Only two Redmond subdivisions with homes permitted in 2006 included homes less than 2,240 square feet: Sequoia and Conover Commons Phase 2, with 24 homes less than 2,240 combined. Staff concludes that the proposal will significantly increase choice in single-family home sizes by providing by itself half the supply of single-family homes in the relevant size range permitted in 2006. Staff recommends limiting future home expansions by covenant in order to preserve the intent of the proposed development.

##### Affordability

The applicant proposes to make two of the homes affordable to households earning 80% of King County Median Income; in 2006, 80% was \$62,300 for a family of four. Subdivisions of ten or more lots in North Redmond are required to set-aside 10% of new homes as affordable. The applicant proposes to exceed that

requirement by a factor of two, thereby directly promoting housing affordability. While the applicant states that the other homes would be “targeted to be priced below other proposed housing for this area,” staff recognizes that many factors influence market prices – including location, neighborhood environment, interior finishes, size, and others – and so is reluctant to speculate on the relative market value of the proposed homes *except* to note that *all else being equal*, a 2,240 sq. ft. home should command a lower price than a 3,095 sq. ft. home.

Other Features

Choice in housing is not limited to ranges in size and affordability. To that end, the applicant proposes homes with main-floor suites, which are attractive especially to those with limited mobility, and otherwise uncommon in area floor plans. The proposal also includes four accessory dwellings that could be used for family (elderly parents, college students, young working adults) or rented to others. Again, this type of single-family housing opportunity is relatively uncommon in North Redmond, although it is permitted city wide.

3. *Promote high-quality design that is compatible with surrounding single-family development*

Homes in North Redmond range widely from those built decades ago on large lots to those under construction in new subdivisions. Many newer homes in the area have developed to Redmond’s Planned Residential Development (PRD) standards (20C.30.105), which include more stringent design requirements in return for flexibility on other site requirements such as setbacks. Newer still are the North Redmond neighborhood regulations adopted in November 2006 in part for the purpose of promoting compatibility with the neighborhood character. No homes have yet been constructed under those standards.

Many of the new subdivisions in North Redmond developed to the PRD standards are characterized by detached single-family homes with front porches, subdued garages, generous trim and other architectural details. Homes average about 3,000 square feet, and building separation is sometimes reduced in order to achieve another goal such as to protect an environmentally critical area. Some subdivisions include features like pocket parks and walking trails.

The Innovative Housing Ordinance requires proposed projects to meet residential design standards and demonstrate compatibility with surrounding single-family development, allowing flexibility in design standards where needed to meet the intent of the Innovative Housing program. The table below evaluates Sycamore Park vis-à-vis the North Redmond neighborhood design standards.

<b>Provision</b>	<b>Proposed in Project</b>
Variety and visual interest	Six substantially different building footprints, three visible from NE 122 <sup>nd</sup> Street; porches, articulated massing, cascaded roofs, recessed

	garages proposed; conceptual drawings show dormers, trim, and awnings.
Living spaces near street	Three homes front on NE 122 <sup>nd</sup> Street with drives in back or on side; others open to common courtyard or local road.
Home proportional to lot size	Lot size at this time is unknown; what is known is that lots will be smaller than the typical North Redmond lot. Home sizes are proposed at 45%-79% of the average permitted in 2006.
Landscaping as transition space and environmental asset	Landscaping around perimeter or proposed development provides adequate transition space; landscaping within proposal provides community space.
Preserve semi-rural character by preserving trees, providing trails	Several large trees preserved; walking paths provided around about half the site, with potential trail connections to neighboring properties.
Promote LID techniques	Pervious pavement and reduced road width to increase infiltration, reduce run-off.
Encourage public safety through design	Woonerf to slow traffic, emphasize pedestrian orientation.

Staff believes that the applicant’s submission demonstrates clear knowledge of prevailing design standards for Redmond’s residential areas, and the intent to provide homes designed to those standards. As proposed, the applicant would not meet requirements for building separation (for homes labeled 2 and 3 on the site plan) or maximum lot coverage. Staff recommends relieving the applicant of those neighborhood requirements, recognizing that the Innovative Housing program is designed to promote flexibility while not undermining the intent of neighborhood design regulations. Staff recommends applying the balance of the applicable neighborhood regulations to the proposal, consistent with Innovative Housing program regulations, and consistent with the requirement that proposals show compatibility with surrounding single-family development.

The applicant has proposed to employ the *woonerf* concept. *Woonerf* is a Dutch word meaning “living space” or “living yard,” clearly denoting a space that is more than a road – it is a place for play, and even gathering. In the Netherlands, *woonerven* are afforded special legal protections that treat the motorist as “guest” and that have succeeded in limiting speeds to about ten miles per hour.

Successful *woonerven* are local streets, designed for low speed (narrow, curvilinear, etc.), identifiable by their construction or by signage, have at least one intersection with a major road, do not have raised sidewalks but rather use bollards and trees (for example) to denote separation, and have marked parking.

Staff concludes that the subject site is an appropriate location to experiment with a *woonerf*, and recommends that the applicant attempt to add curvilinear features as an additional way to slow vehicle traffic, provided that the *woonerf* can be designed to the satisfaction of the Fire Department.

4. *Allow flexibility in site and design standards while promoting projects that are compatible with existing single-family developments*

The site requirements table in section I.D. indicates that the applicant requests flexibility in: density, average lot size, minimum lot width circle, internal setbacks, maximum lot coverage, maximum impervious surface, and road width.

Increasing density (and by extension reducing average lot size and minimum lot width circle) allows for the provision of smaller homes and single-family attached homes. Without that increase, staff does not believe that the applicant would be able to meet the program goals of providing a range of housing styles and sizes at a range of price points.

Zero lot line homes are allowed under the North Redmond neighborhood regulations, and the applicant proposes to develop with zero lot lines for six of the twelve homes. As noted, the applicant requests relief from building separation and maximum lot coverage standards. Flexibility in the building separation standard between homes two and three enables the applicant to achieve increased density, which as noted is an important factor in enabling the provision of two affordable homes. Requesting relief from maximum lot coverage standards will better enable the applicant to provide for common open space and the community forum that it is anticipated to provide.

5. *Help identify a work plan and any zoning code amendments that are necessary to support the development of innovative housing choices within single-family neighborhoods in Redmond*

The proposal implements the multiplex provision of the North Redmond neighborhood regulations, experiments with pervious pavement, reduced road width, and increased density. If the Review Panel authorizes the proposal and it is eventually constructed, staff and the community will be able to evaluate how the development performs relative to the expectations of the Innovative Housing Ordinance, and may then be able to recommend for or against changes to the zoning code.

## **B. PROCESS TO EVALUATE INNOVATIVE HOUSING DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS**

RCDG 20C.30.62 sets forth the process for reviewing applications submitted under the Innovative Housing Demonstration Program. Under this process, the applicant hosts an open house and the Innovative Housing Review Panel considers the proposal

according to the criteria set-out in RCDG 20C.30.62. The Innovative Housing Review Panel is the decision-making body for this process.

### **III. PUBLIC REVIEW REQUIREMENTS**

#### **A. Neighborhood Meeting**

The applicant held a neighborhood meeting on January 22, 2007. Notice was mailed to property owners within 500 feet of the proposed project on April 16, 2007. Notice was also provided on the web and on RCTV.

#### **B. Appeals**

Decisions by the Review Panel may be appealed to the City Council pursuant to the requirements of RCDG 20C.30.62.

### **IV. EXHIBITS**

Exhibit A: Criteria Matrix

Exhibit B: Applicant Submittal Package

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Robert G. Odle, Director of Planning and Community Development

Date

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