

## Staff Report

November 9, 2004

**TO:** Senior Citizen Commission  
**FROM:** Katherine Hess, Community Development Administrator  
**SUBJECT:** Covell Village Application Review

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### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends the Senior Citizens Commission take any public comment and make recommendations to the City Council on the following aspects of the Covell Village project applications:

1. Is the amount, location, and type of senior housing appropriate?
2. Is the identified location a good site for the hospice facility?
3. Are there sufficient services and amenities to meet the needs of senior residents throughout the development?
4. Are there other comments or recommendations the Commission wishes to forward to the Planning Commission and City Council as they make decisions on the Covell Village applications?

### **Background**

The city is processing applications for the “Covell Village” development proposal, at the northwest corner of Covell Boulevard and Pole Line Road. The project includes 1,515 residential units and 210,000 square feet of non-residential uses, plus parks and open space, a school site, and a fire station site. The total site is 413 acres, including the habitat and hospice areas at the north edge. More detailed information on all components of the project is at [www.cityofdavis.org/covell](http://www.cityofdavis.org/covell).

The project site is currently outside the City limits and designated for “Agriculture” on the City of Davis General Plan map. The property owner has submitted application for General Plan Amendment, Rezoning, Development Agreement, Annexation, and Affordable Housing Plan. The project would require affirmative decisions by both the City Council and the voters to be approved.

The applications are being considered through three processing tracks:

- **CEQA** – An Environmental Impact Report is underway, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. The environmental consultant should have the Draft EIR available for public review within the next month.

- **Policy** – Extensive public outreach is proposed for the policy review. The project applications are scheduled for review by several city commissions, including this one.
- **Technical** – City staff are evaluating issues such as street width, accommodations for waste removal, street lighting, and zoning standards. This track also includes an analysis of the likely impacts the project would have on the City of Davis capital and operating budgets.

The applications are anticipated to be scheduled for formal public hearing in spring 2005.

Public comment on this project has been extensive, including written and electronic correspondence as well as testimony at two Planning Commission/City Council meetings. Attached is a summary of comments that have been “assigned” to the Senior Citizen Commission. Staff is requesting that the Commission review those comments and determine whether they will be adequately addressed during this review process.

### **Senior Citizens Background**

Attached are a site plan and an applicant narrative on senior citizen components of the project proposal. The application includes:

- 1,515 total residential units, including 1,108 single-family and 407 multifamily units.
- Within that total, 185 single-family units restricted to seniors aged 55 and over.
- A 130-bed Senior Congregate Care Facility on 5.3 acres adjacent to the senior houses.
- 43.4 acres of parkland and greenbelt dedicated to the City of Davis.
- 62.5 acres of drainage/habitat dedicated to the City of Davis.
- Pedestrian/bicycle undercrossings of Pole Line Road and F Street/railroad tracks at approximately the midpoint of the development, to connect to the Northstar pond/greenbelt and the greenbelt south of Nugget Fields.
- A 16-acre “Village Center” with a mix of retail, office, community, and residential uses. Non-city recreation facilities include a 30,000 square foot health club and an 11,250 square foot community building.

### **Senior Citizen Issues Analysis**

Staff from the Parks and Community Services and Community Development Departments have identified the following questions with the project proposal.

1. Is the amount, location, and type of senior housing appropriate?
2. Is the identified location a good site for the hospice facility?
3. Are there sufficient services and amenities to meet the needs of senior residents throughout the development?

Each question will be addressed in sequence below.

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| <b>1. Is the amount, location, and type of senior housing appropriate?</b> |
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The application includes:

- 1,515 total residential units, including 1,108 single-family and 407 multifamily units.

- Within that total, 185 single-family units restricted to seniors aged 55 and over.
- A 130-bed Senior Core Facility on 5.3 acres adjacent to the senior houses.

Staff notes

The senior-restricted housing is clustered at the southern portion of the Covell Village site, just north of the “Village Center.” To the west of the senior cluster is the senior core facility and a parcel for the school district. North of the senior homes would be a mixed-density subdivision, and to the east would be a multifamily affordable housing site to be dedicated to the City of Davis.

The senior core facility is proposed to be owned and operated by Eskaton. The facility would include 130 beds, plus dining and common facilities to serve the core facility and the senior residences. Homeowners in the senior cluster would pay assessments to cover participation in some core facility services, plus landscaping services for their homes. The city has not received information on particulars of the anticipated assessment,

The applicant is proposing that the senior houses would average approximately 4,500 square feet. Most would have rear alleys providing access to the parking. Although the applicant expects that the majority of the units would be built as single-story structures, no specific zoning restrictions are proposed at this time. As proposed, occupancy would be limited to households with a member aged 55 or older. Under State law, senior citizen housing developments must provide access to all common areas and housing units without use of stairs, either by means of an elevator or sloped walking ramps. The seniors-only provisions would likely be enforced through covenants on the property, and not through zoning.

As the Commission may be aware, prices for homes in Covell Village has been a concern for members of the public and other Commissions. There are currently projected to be 537 lots smaller than 5,700 square feet (fifty percent of the single-family lots). Of those, 185 would be reserved for seniors. At the Planning Commission meeting last week, planning staff raised the question of whether the senior housing is a disproportionate share of the total project (12 percent) or of the smaller lots (35 percent).

**2. Is the identified location a good site for the hospice facility?**

Staff notes

As the project has evolved, the applicants have added a 5.3-acre acre site for a hospice in the north of the project site, adjacent to the wildlife habitat. The hospice would have 20,000 square feet for care and services of 16 residents, and 10,000 square feet of second-story office space for hospice administration. Access would be provided from one of the secondary residential streets.

During public comment on the project, the question was raised over whether the hospice would be more appropriately located near Sutter-Davis Hospital, rather than in this location.

**3. Are there sufficient services and amenities to meet the needs of senior residents throughout the development?**

Staff notes

In addition to the Senior Core Facility, the Village Center is proposed to contain a church, an athletic club, a community/meeting room, and various neighborhood-serving retail uses. The proposed redesign of Covell Boulevard would include pedestrian/bicycle undercrossings to connect the "Village Center" with Oak Tree Plaza.

The homes at the farthest edge of the subdivision would be approximately a mile from the Village Center, as the crow flies. The senior-only units would be immediately to the north of the Center. The applicant is proposing an arrangement with Unitrans to provide free bus passes to residents of Covell Village, for a period of seven years. The service would be provided through assessments on each of the properties. The applicant is hoping that there would be sufficient ridership to continue bus service through the subdivision beyond the seven-year period.

The City and the applicant are considering zoning for the project that would allow a greater range of home businesses than are permitted in most residential zones. There may also be zoning provisions to encourage second units or "granny flats" in the single-family areas. Details will be forthcoming as the applications move through public review and hearings.

**4. Are there other comments or recommendations the Commission wishes to forward to the Planning Commission and City Council as they make decisions on the Covell Village applications?**

**Attachments**

- 1.Site plan and applicant narrative
- 2.List of public comments assigned to Senior Citizen Commission