

Commissioner
Favreau

Romeo

Norman B. Akesson

From: Romeo Favreau [rrfavreau@urcad.org]
Sent: Thursday, December 02, 2004 8:39 AM
To: nbakesson@ucdavis.edu
Subject: Thoughts on Covell Village

Hi Norm

This email is in response to your request for my thoughts on the Covell Village presentation which was given to the Senior Commission at it's November 2004 meeting. At that meeting it was suggested that we should address the question, "Is the amount and type and location of Senior Housing Appropriate."

With respect to this question I do not feel that I have enough information to make a reasonable or defendable recommendation. When I asked how the number of 185 for senior housing was developed, I was given a sheet of the Davis 2000 Census Data and a sheet of calculations. The calculation suggested that the demand could be represented by the number of population over 60 as a percentage of the population over 25. This percentage (17.5%) when applied to 1209 units suggested a senior housing need of 211 units. The proposed 185 was presented without comment as a reasonable estimate of something close to 211. On the same sheet we had the calculation that if we define seniors over 55 then the senior percentage should be 23.8% implying 287 units. It is apparent that the assumption of how we define the Senior demand for housing is very dependent on the assumption of, at what age does senior housing demand start. It is interesting to note that in 2000 when URC began operating the average age of people who invested in the URC project was 76 year. If we use 75 as the age at which we have demand for senior housing we get from the 2000 census data 1511/30,426 or 5 percent implying a senior housing demand of 60 units. All of the above give us estimates of 60 to 287 units for senior housing. In addition the base number of housing used in the calculation is 1209. This is reasonably different from the number of housing units, 1515, indicated in the staff summary.

I am concerned that the senior housing is being proposed for people 55 and up. Considering the housing demand for Davis housing I would be concerned that a large number of young (55 to 60) people would move into these units and leave very few units for Davis people reaching the age of 70 or 75 which is the age at which people need to downsize and look for senior housing.

With respect to Skilled nursing facilities the original presentation I heard at a Kiwanis lunch in the Spring, suggested a skilled nursing facility of 120 beds. At our presentation in November we were told that there would be no skilled nursing beds. The Staff summary suggested that a 130 bed facility was being proposed. I'm not sure what is being proposed or what is the need in the 2010 or 2020 period. I understand that the need for skilled nursing beds may decrease as the depression babies reach the age of 70 to 80.

With respect to Assisted Living It was suggested that this would be provided for in a " Master LODGE" along with food, recreation, and maintenance services for the people in the senior housing units. I do not remember if any numbers were presented to us in the November meeting but the only referenced I have is that URC has about 37 units for a Population of about 350 seniors.

Another concern that I have is the chicken and egg problem with the proposed Senior housing plan. Do the developers build the Lodge and Hope that that will attract the Senior Housing buyers, or do they wait until enough Senior Housing is sold and bought before building the lodge. I didn't get a good answer to my question of when would the Lodge be built. My impression is that a well thought plan has not yet been developed.

I don't have any information that would allow me to judge whether the

Hospice facility is in a good location. I don't think that a nice wetlands will be much of a factor for the patients since I don't see the patients in our skilled nursing facilities spending much time appreciation the outside environment. I also wonder how much different the facility they are considering is from a skilled nursing facility which has many state requirements and very expensive to operate. If so shouldn't be part of the Senior Housing and Service Facility?

Romeo

Commentary on Covell Village

*Elaine Roberts Musser
Davis Senior Citizens Commission*

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I. Location of Senior Core Facility/Senior Residential Housing

a. Locating the Senior Core Facility next to a school is unacceptable, because of high noise levels and the proximity of boisterous youngsters, which could result in a great deal of potential friction between children and the elderly.

1. Suggestion: Swap locations of the large park and the proposed school site, so that the park would act as a buffer between the school and the Senior Core Facility. This arrangement also has the advantage of giving seniors a nice view and large park within a short walkable distance. The downside would be that the large park is not quite as centrally located, which it would seem is a minimal consideration in light of the disadvantages of keeping the Senior Core Facility next to a school.

b. It is highly appropriate on the developers' part to have placed the Senior Core Facility and Senior Residential Housing as near to the Village Center as possible, since many seniors cannot walk a great distance. This placement minimizes the distance an elderly pedestrian would have to hike, in order to shop for a few simple items.

II. Affordability of Senior Core Facility/Senior Residential Housing

a. There should be a certain percentage (based on need, which is as yet unascertained) of affordable housing units available for low-income seniors in the Senior Core Facility.

b. There should be a certain percentage (based on need, which is as yet unascertained) of affordable houses available for low-income seniors in the Senior Residential Housing area. A statement made by a developer to the effect that Davis should subsidize the wealthy just as much as the poorer elements in city society misses the point of responsible government. The City of Davis should be providing a safety net and subsidizing only those people in real need; the wealthy are quite capable of taking care of themselves.

c. There needs to be a statistically appropriate method of determining if there is truly a market for 185 Senior Residential Housing units, in the range of \$300,000 to \$500,000, for relatively wealthy seniors who require or desire comprehensive maintenance services. Conducting focus groups, or relying on a realtor to make such a determination is not sufficient.

1. Is there truly a suitable market for individual senior homes priced at half a million dollars, accompanied with additional monthly comprehensive maintenance fees comparable in amount to paying rent?

2. If there is some sort of market for such expensive homes, are 185 of them necessary, or should it be scaled back to half that number or even less, as suggested by the city manager? How about a mixed use senior neighborhood, containing some groupings of expensive homes, interspersed with small enclaves of less expensive cottages?

3. Is there a plan in place, should the market for these 185 homes (or whatever number of them is ultimately available) decrease at a future date, as to what to do with the land in such an eventuality?

4. Is it desirable to place wealthy seniors in an exclusive enclave, isolated from children, younger adults, and the less prosperous elements of society, segregating wealthy seniors from concourse with the general community?

5. On the other hand Senior Residential Housing needs to be located in an enclave near the Senior Core Facility, to facilitate obtaining comprehensive maintenance, for those who need such services due to their infirmities, or desire them as a personal preference.

III. Amenities desirable in a Senior Core Facility/Senior Residential Housing

a. Heating/air conditioning units must be configured in such a way as to provide sufficient heating/cooling to reach every room within the apartment unit or house. Too often, in the zeal to be energy efficient, not enough attention is paid to ensure all rooms within an apartment or house are maintained comfortably. Seniors are particularly sensitive to excessive heat and cold, even if only by a drop or rise of a few degrees.

1. West facing windows should be shielded from summer's afternoon sun, either with appropriate window screens, black film, tinted windows, outside awnings, interior sun-reflecting drapes, supplemental air conditioning units, and the like, to avoid uncomfortable warmth on hot summer days. Putting the heating/air conditioning unit in

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the living area, while hoping the warmth/coolness will reach around to the bedroom, is an unsatisfactory configuration that does not get the job done.

2. In this day and age of high crime rates and vandalism, it is not practical to ask a senior to open their windows at night to cool their residence, in a misplaced attempt to ask our most vulnerable in the population to save energy.

3. Comparing Covell Village to the community of Village Homes is not very helpful. Village Homes has deteriorated, looking seedy and unkempt. While it may have been a model of energy efficiency and neighborhood congeniality at one time, it is now riddled with yards that are a mess, some neighbors keeping chickens and other undesirable livestock, one home buried under dirt as an experiment in energy efficiency few would care to copy, and the like.

b. All new construction should be handicapped-accessible. Always make sure to install shower stalls, rather than bathtubs only. Many seniors find it difficult to negotiate the sides of a bathtub, unable to get their legs over a tub, e.g. when arthritic or heavysset.

c. More storage cabinets are always helpful, with lots of lower shelves within easy reach.

d. Balconies or small patios/decks are desirable, allowing for an infirm senior to get out in the fresh air on a daily basis.

e. Seniors need to be provided with sufficient parking, so that even if they themselves don't drive a car, they have been provided enough parking for those motoring visitors who come to see them.

IV. Traffic increase and the additional air pollution it causes

a. With the addition of Covell Village in its entirety, there will be an increase in traffic, which brings with it air pollution. Seniors are particularly vulnerable to air pollution.

b. There have been steps taken to mitigate the increase in traffic, but these ameliorations are minimal by comparison with the problems an increase in traffic will perpetuate.

1. There is an area set aside in the plan for Covell Village, for those who live and work within the same residence, but it will house only a few such persons in that particular type of situation, e.g. physician, realtor, independent contractor. Those persons who work outside Covell Village, those located farther away from the Village Center, those who are going to purchase more than one or two items, those who want to shop in downtown Davis, those who want to shop outside Davis, etc. will all use their own cars. It is unrealistic (and mostly wishful thinking) to expect that people in Covell Village will walk or take public transportation, rather than drive their own automobiles. An increase in traffic is inevitable, if Covell Village is built.

2. Covell Blvd. has been nicely reconfigured to mitigate traffic problems and dangers to bicyclists and pedestrians, but it is still unclear how this reconfiguration will tie into Covell Blvd. on either side of Covell Village. There will still be a greater number of new automobiles added to the mix, at the intersection of Pole Line Rd. and Covell Blvd. for one, which needs to be addressed in terms of how such traffic increase effects all of Davis.

3. There are lots of park spaces, etc., to increase the number of oxygen-producing plants and trees grown within the entire complex of Covell Village. These same plants and trees add to the character of Covell Village, making it an attractive development.

Traffic within the VA area upper NW?

V. Infrastructure will be needed to support the new influx of people from Covell Village.

a. Davis High School is already burgeoning at the seams. If no plan is in place for the overflow, it will make the overcrowding of our schools that much worse.

b. City services, such as police, parks maintenance, etc. will now have to be provided to many more persons, namely the newcomers within Covell Village. Will local taxes have to be raised for everyone in Davis, to support the new community and the increase in local population? Many seniors are currently having difficulty paying the local taxes as they are now, and cannot afford a new round of tax increases.

c. Inevitably there will be additional costs to the City of Davis, if Covell Village is built, in a time of fiscal austerity and crisis for the City. Will these costs be offset by the increase in tax revenue from Covell Village, or other

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Elaine Roberts Musser

Davis Senior Citizens Commission

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items received by the City in exchange for permission to build, or will Davis have to pare back services? Will this impact services to seniors?

NORMAN

IN MY OPINION, THIS PLAN IS TOO FREE RANGING FOR THE CITY TO RUSH INTO APPROVING IT. FOR THE PLAN FOR SENIOR HOUSING THERE ARE MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS.

THE TERMS AMENITIES AND FACILITIES ARE USED LOOSELY-----WHAT AMENITIES AND FACILITIES?

IN REGARD TO THE LOCATION OF THE HOSPICE FACILITY, IT IS TOO FAR AWAY FROM THE SENIOR HOUSING. HERE AT URC INDEPENDENT RESIDENTS ARE IN THE HEALTH CARE FACILITY EVERY DAY. VISITING OR ASSISTING. WHAT KIND OF CHARGES WILL THERE BE--WILL THERE BE FREE DAYS FOR THE RESIDENTS, A MEDICARE APPROVAL OF THE CENTER? IN WORKING WITH TRANSPORTATION HERE AT URC, WE HAVE FOUND THAT NOT MANY SENIORS USE THE FREE UNITRANS PASSES. AND OUR TWO BUSES ARE ALWAYS ON THE MOVE.

OTHER UNKNOWN TERMS ARE ASSESSMENTS AND DO THEY PLAN ON RAISING FEES ANNUALLY WITH THE COST OF LIVING OR WHAT?

WHY ARE YOU PLANNING SUCH LARGE SENIOR HOMES----4,500 SF? IF THERE IS NO ZONING WHO WILL WRITE THE COVENANTS ON THE AREA. WOULD THINK THE FRONT YARD LANDSCAPING WOULD GO WITH THE COST OF THE HOME TO CREATE SOME CONTINUITY.

SHIRLEY GOLD

Answers to 4 questions

1. yes. make affordable,
2. yes. as good as any
3. yes

Commissioner
Baldwin

4. We are all different, ~~having~~ different things. For some it is open space

For others it may be a bench by a well tended garden, this about who created it.

Others might like to see firemen organizing and setting up to save an endangered persons life,

For some others it might be a well built house or building, thinking about the architect who designed it and the clever builders who built it.

Therefore, my decision is that with the addition of affordable housing it should be built.

There are many who live in Daves who can afford to live in ^{the} Eskaton portions of it. Especially since it's ~~available~~.

1. Is the amount, location and type of senior housing appropriate?

Amount: The identified number of senior-designated single family units is reasonable. Of the total number of single-family units proposed by the project (1,108), 185 (or 16.6%) are designated to be senior housing, requiring a resident 55 years of age or older.

Considering that in Census 2000 statistics, members of the Davis population 55 years of age and over made up 14.5% of the population over 18, those that we would consider in the “homeowner” bracket. This allows for the eminent increase in median age of our society in the near future.

Location: The southern portion of the development is the most accessible to shopping (at the proposed Village Center and at Oak Tree Center) and conveniently located near multi-family affordable units (which seem to be lacking any percentage for senior designation – see comment below).

Type: I am concerned by the statement that the senior houses would average approximately 4,500 square feet. This size home is difficult to maintain and exceeds the needs of most senior residents who would not be raising families. The expense of homes of this square footage also is beyond the means of many residents on retirement incomes looking to live more simply, efficiently and inexpensively. I am also concerned by a lack of notice in the staff findings of senior-designated multi-unit housing that could present a more affordable alternative to the large single-family units.

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

I am not convinced of a need for the hospice facility, based on the report of occupancy rates and forecasts from the existing SNFs in Davis. I also believe that expansion in the number of SNFs would be more appropriately planned near existing medical and medical support facilities in West Davis near Sutter Hospital. Emergency vehicle traffic along Covell would be increased by the project as planned, and the impact of that traffic should be addressed.

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

There is a need in this project for a transportation hub for public transportation (Yolobus and Unitrans, at present) similar to the hub downtown, but with greater access for personal vehicle pick up/drop off and parking (including electric cart parking).

4. Other comments or recommendations

I recommend inclusion of a pedestrian bridge across Covell to the Oak Tree Center. This street is far too busy at all daytime hours for a conventional crossing strategy.

Ruth Eisele

Commissioner
Eisele

Concerns about the Covell Village Proposal

While I am neither for or against the Covell Village Proposal I do have these concerns as regards the senior citizens expected to live in the project.

1. The location of a school in the midst of a housing project seems a planning mistake. Most schools in Davis are located along a major arteries which promotes easy and direct access for students, teachers and parents. To locate this senior high school next to senior housing not only increases traffic on a daily basis but does provide an assured source of noise and site of congregation. Students do not bike to school these days..they ride in cars thus adding more pollution and congestion to already narrow streets. This is not a healthful atmosphere for seniors who are among the most vulnerable in our population.

2. Staffing levels have yet to be determined for the proposed hospice and , Eskaton housing development. These facilities will have medical staff, office staff service workers and maintenance staff. In addition there will be daily visitors to these sites. Staffing considerations for the proposed school site will also be an item. All will increase traffic and air pollution and congestion

3. The proposed narrow streets are a hazard to fire trucks and ambulances that will be required on an almost daily basis to any senior housing complex. Are these emergency services supposed to use the alleys or the streets and what about guest parking, where is that supposed to be located? Do these proposed narrow streets allow for any parking?

4. The idea of a walking path to the natural habitat area is wonderful. The proposal shows an estimate of about one mile from the senior housing area to the habitat area. How many seniors walk two miles per day? How real is that? How many seniors would actually walk to shopping and be able to navigate sub-ground tunnels to Nugget shopping with the required changes in elevation?

5. The affordable housing component is geared to young working people, not senior citizens. How many local senior Davis people would be ready to plunk down \$400,000 for a home. These homes do not have services, these are not affordable and clearly are not something seniors would want to in the later stages of life.

6. My questions are can seniors afford it, accessibility issues , acceptability, and is it conducive to the well being of seniors.

COMMENTS ON COVELL VILLAGE

There appears to be many important points of concern about the Covell village project that have not been completely presented, or clearly defined, in the material we have in hand. While we have been instructed to direct our attention to the senior housing, core (care ?) and hospice for seniors, other factors of the project affect the senior facilities and need to be included in our evaluation. Some of the outstanding points of concern to me are the following:

1. lots/houses size of the Sr. homes is a bit strange. Do Srs. really want 5700 sqft lots or for that matter 4500 sqft homes ? Surely there must be a slip up here, at 50 X 114 ft lots ?
2. Do Srs really want/need allys ? This introduction of an old concept was a part of the Village Homes project, and has been used elsewhere. We really need more information on this plan and its suitability to this project.
3. General location of elderly facilities. Location of large school adjacent to the elderly housing (on two sides) insures conflict in the future. This needs to be addressed.
4. Sr. Core (Care ?) Facilities ? It is not very clear as to just what this area is to be. It is stated one place that this is Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living facility, while other references limit this to AI. The Eskaton group seem to be looking to operate this facility, there needs to be more specific details on this.
5. There are many more questions particularly in reference to Eskaton management of the entire Sr. Facility, housing, and including the hospice ? I can only presume that Eskaton will provide more details as they are able to do so and after agreement with the Covell Village management.

Overall the need and desirability of this project are very high and the project should be encouraged. It appears that there are many elements that have not been worked out and one wonders when and what these details will be. As to our response, it appears we can only give a tentative response at this time in light of the many missing elements of the final project.

It is a "given" that the vacant areas (now agricultural) around Davis will be increasingly pressured for development. Davis slow growth and affordable housing plans are aimed in the right direction, but should be carefully re-examined in respect to the Sr. developments. Questions such as: can the community support another full service retirement community, or will this competition spell trouble for all ? From where I see this project and just how we as the Sr. Commission can and should respond, I quite frankly feel I do not have sufficient information, or sufficient time to digest all of the finer points of the project and would suggest that we as a commission can only provide a tentative, or preliminary response to the City of Davis Council at this time.

Norman B. Akesson