

Attachment 11

Public comments

*Talking Points provided to Planning Commission on
February 3rd 2010 (Black) with responses from PC (see Red)
and comments from MAPOA to the PC Responses*

In reviewing the materials for Old Mammoth Place (OMP) provided, we note that story pole requirements have been reviewed by Town governance and have been renamed “Building Height and Mass Evaluation Policy” (BHMEP). We believe that consideration should also be given for the OMP project for the following points:

1. Existing photo and computer aided design modeling on the town website of OMP is incredibly poor. They are grainy, black and white with poor contrast so it is difficult to see the context of the area that they will be part of.

PC Response: Staff will be uploading new information regarding the Old Mammoth Place project on our website in the next couple days. We will send you an e-mail when the information is on the website.

2. The actual model that we viewed at the Sierra Nevada Inn is of good quality but is isolated and not in context with the surrounding neighborhood. Our first impression was that it looked like a prison with cellblocks surrounding a courtyard for the inmates to exercise in. We want a project on this site, so we recommend improving the model to get away from this perception. We also believe the architecture is not consistent with the Mammoth existing Architectural Design Handbook and does not conform to our Mountain environment nor to the Town’s vision of “village in the trees”.

PC Response: The ADP has reviewed this project on several occasions and has generated comments regarding the design and changes that need to be made to the design. Staff is suggesting a condition of approval that will require this project to return to the ADP for final design review and approval.

Office 2004 Test Drive 2/9/10 1:47 PM
Comment: Thank you in advance for forwarding the information. The intent of this comment is not only for OMP, but rather all visuals the town puts on its website. These need to be improved.

Office 2004 Test Drive 2/9/10 2:22 PM
Comment: The intent of our comment was to have the developer improve the model by adding the timber and glass so people seeing it will not conclude it is like a prison. Having a model that is mostly white and not highlight the timber and mountain type of design makes the project look very poor, which it is not.

3. Who is accountable to make sure the developer-created computer aided design depictions are accurate from a modeling perspective? Who is accountable for verifying that reasonable reference points were used in the model, for example natural grade, top of garage, etc.?

PC Response: Staff has contracted a third party (RBF Consulting) to review the CAD drawings to ensure that they accurately reflect the proposed project. The reference points used during the CAD review are the same as those used as a part of the environmental analysis.

4. The reason given by the Planning Commission for not requiring story poles is understandable but flawed. We believe that having scaffolds of 35 feet at the corners of the building fronting Old Mammoth Road would be very valuable. If necessary, structure could be added to the scaffold to reach the proper height. The inner 55-foot structures would not need story poles – a reasonable compromise.

PC Response: The Planning Commission determined that the CAD drawings reviewed by a third party would be the best way to demonstrate the proposed height and massing of this project. The CAD drawings include the site context and the buildings surrounding the site which allow the viewer to see the entire project in context rather than just a point in space that would be shown with a story pole.

5. A major concern of ours is that Mammoth residents and business owners need to be properly informed.

Unfortunately, many just live their lives and do not pay attention to building permit processes; they depend on Town Governance and existing zoning, and are often shocked by what's planned for their neighborhood. They need the visual indication to trigger their interest.

PC Response: As stated above, staff will include the CAD

Office 2004 Test Drive 2/9/10 1:30 PM
Comment: We were pleased that the developer brought out many inconsistencies in the way the reference point was used which we were also concerned about. We hope the town will help the developer clearly define the reference points for all the different locations with different natural grades, garage tops, podiums, etc that were discussed. Yet to be discussed is how the town will validate proper interpretation of the many heights involved AND hold the contractor/developer accountable especially since the planned garage is NOT underground, but rather an understructure. (see also items 7 and 10 below).

Office 2004 Test Drive 2/9/10 1:33 PM
Comment: We agree that accurate CAD drawings within the site context are an excellent tool for depicting the project. We realize that the inner 55 foot buildings will not block views from street level which were the only views provided. That may not be the case from private views (Sierra Manor, Sierra Park Villas, businesses along Old Mammoth Road, etc. A significant benefit of story poles is that they will trigger residents and business owners to realize that there is a project coming and they could then seek additional information, such as CAD and actual models. Story Poles and flags will minimize any potential misunderstandings.

drawings on the website as well as the "drive-by" movies and the view analysis drawings. We will send an e-mail out to our Old Mammoth Place interested parties to inform them that these items are on our website.

The following points pertain to the BHMEP. We are concerned that OMP is setting precedents for how this process is implemented.

6. Attachments D1 –D4 are documented as “Examples of Story Poles”. Mammoth Crossing, Snowcreek VIII, Eagle Lodge, and Holiday Haus are used as the examples. The common theme from all of these is the extremely poor quality of images captured on the Town website. This quality must be improved. In many cases viewers cannot even discern the balloons from the background.

PC Response: Staff would be happy to provide you with color copies of Attachment D of the January 13th staff report. We agree that it is difficult to see the balloons in the photos which is another reason why the Planning Commission determined that on-site height demonstration methods, including balloons, should not be used at this site.

7. The developer-created computer aided design depictions must be validated for accuracy from a modeling perspective by town governance or an independent party. Accountability for verifying that correct reference points were used, for example natural grade, top of garage, etc. needs to be established.

PC Response: As outlined in #3 above, RBF is conducting third party analysis of the applicant's CAD model.

8. BHMEP should consider story poles or their equivalents even earlier in the permitting process than currently required. This would benefit not only town residents but also the developer and town governance, as much wasted effort could be

Office 2004 Test Drive 2/9/10 2:05 PM
Comment: E-mails and high quality website depictions are good information BUT story poles are even better to inform the public as already described in our item 4 comment.

Office 2004 Test Drive 2/9/10 1:56 PM
Comment: When the public is referred to the town website, they expect to see information that is clear. Our issue is not only the Dec 16th and Jan 13th photos and CAD depictions but all pictures and computer aided design photos that capture design character, including balloons and project background, of any potential project. They must be of high quality.

Office 2004 Test Drive 2/9/10 2:01 PM
Comment: Who is accountable? What process will be used for validation? During construction, will there be inspections to assure, for example, that the height at Old Mammoth Road does not exceed 35 ft. and if it does, what is the next step?
A suggestion would be to establish a baseline height for the project that is clearly identifiable. All project heights need to be referenced relative to that height. For example, if a plaza is located BELOW the height of the baseline, its height could be called out as a "negative 5 ft." or "5 ft. below grade" or whatever is clear and unambiguous.

avoided.

PC Response: Several projects in the past have included an on-site height demonstration method during zoning reviews which is prior to the requirement of the BHMEP policy which requires height analysis during the use permit/tentative tract map phase of the project.

9. The recent balloon demonstration at Mammoth Crossing was dramatic but certainly not something that could replace your BHMEP. Many people commented, "Wow! – This is something that we must watch carefully when story poles are erected". Also, the story poles need to be up for many days, not just a few hours on a holiday weekend as was the case for Mammoth Crossing.

PC Response: The Mammoth Crossing height demonstration was not required by the town so we did not have any influence as to the location of the cranes or the duration that they were on site.

10. Although not directly related to BHMEP, parking drives many factors, including height, mass and density. We believe that considering underground parking as a community benefit is flawed thinking; it should be a requirement for all new hotel/condo hotel construction.

PC Response: CBIZ Policy B.2.a. states that underground parking isn't the exclusive consideration in granting additional density. The Town code does not require underground parking so it is to be considered with the rest of the benefits in order to determine if additional density should be provided for the project.

11. Bottom line – We strongly support the town's vision of a "Village in the Trees". We are pro-development so long as that vision is not compromised.

PC Comment: The Town is committed to being a "village in the trees" as well. The Planning Commission staff report for the public hearing on this project will contain an analysis of how this project meets the Town's General Plan and Vision.

Office 2004 Test Drive 2/9/10 2:02 PM

Comment: This should be encouraged. It would be even better if it was required by town governance and standards established.

Office 2004 Test Drive 2/7/10 2:39 PM

Comment: This will be a major issue for Mammoth Crossing so the more you require earlier, the better it will be for you and the developer. If the town did "not have any influence", why are you using them as "Examples of Story Poles"?

Office 2004 Test Drive 2/9/10 2:22 PM

Comment: We respectfully disagree with your interpretation of the CBIZ policy, especially for OMP as described at the February 3rd workshop. We are especially concerned that this not be used as a precedent. Although the Clearwater/OMP Specific Plan does indicate UNDERGROUND parking to be a community benefit, the parking facility now proposed is UNDERSTRUCTURE with a resulting rise in the ultimate building height. We believe this is not consistent with the intent of a "community benefit".

Office 2004 Test Drive 2/9/10 2:02 PM

Comment: Sounds like MAPOA and town governance is in total agreement with the vision. Let us not allow "the devil in the details" to distract us. So long as buildings do not extend above the existing tree canopy and/or enough trees are either present or planned to screen them, we will not have a problem.

Old Mammoth Place Update

February 4, Planning Commission Workshop

This workshop was strictly on the design of the project, architecture and building materials.

As indicated by our letter, we had major concerns regarding the design of the project as presented in the computer enhanced photos and the model.

However, it is clear that the applicant has made very significant improvements in terms of both design and building materials to present a project with much more of a mountain character. In terms of building materials there now heavy timber elements throughout, wood appearance shake on the exterior, and rock around the base. There are more stepbacks on the stories and in and out design along Old Mammoth Rd. The Planning Commission and Architectural and Design Review both encouraged the changes as we recommended.

The orientation of the nearest building to Sierra Nevada is perpendicular to Sierra Park Villas so there is no massive structure facing those condos. The tallest part of the hotel parallel to Sierra Nevada is more to the east of the project. There is no longer any parking lot access point along Sierra Nevada Rd. and considerable landscaping along with some remaining trees on Sierra Nevada Rd.

The actual site plan and use permit hearing will be on February 24 & 25. At that point there will be more detailed analysis of design, landscaping, parking, internal traffic operation, and most importantly the consideration of a density bonus for amenities. Of course, I will be participating in those hearings, and you will receive my written report prior to the hearing.

Naturally, there is now a new complication with the project which I will attempt to explain in as concise a manner as possible. The developer and his representative are asking the Town to redefine the way the building heights are measured for this project. Rather than measuring the building heights from natural grade as the Clearwater Specific Plan requires, the applicant wants the height to be measured from the "top of the podium" at the garage ceiling not to exceed 8 feet above natural grade. This request is really related to the ultimate type of parking facility that is provided, and the unique slope and rise of the property, and obviously developer costs involved. If the developer creates a truly underground parking structure a great deal more dirt removal will be involved in the lower south and western sections of the property resulting in more retaining walls, and greater costs. This could also affect the elevation of buildings relative to adjacent properties.

So the site plan really presents an understructure parking facility with balanced grading (in terms of fill and removal) which is good for neighbors. However, in creating a flat floor for the structure and a 9'6" high parking area, the eventual heights of the hotel will

exceed 55 ft in some areas of the project. So that's why the developer is asking for a redefinition. This "omission" will require an amendment or "tweaking" as some call it to the Clearwater Specific Plan (zoning) which means the entire project including the site plan will go to the Town Council after the Planning Commission action.

This brings up other related issues:

1. If the parking facility is not underground but in reality just an understructure parking facility should the applicant receive the same credit for this amenity as an underground facility? How many units less?
2. How much higher is each hotel building under the applicant's proposed site plan?
3. What is the actual elevation of the floor of the proposed parking structure relative to existing natural grade?
4. An alternative would be for the Planning Commission and Town Council to not approve the change in height definition, award a reduced number of units for density bonus for an understructure parking facility and keep the building height at 55 ft based on the original basis for measurement which would require an actual height refinement in their proposed site plan and approve the parking facility as an understructure facility. Although the developer would lose units, he would save considerable development costs and the 55ft height that the Council agreed on would be respected. Or if the Council considered something lower (45 or 50 feet) this would be even better.
5. Obviously to change the height definition would appear very manipulative and would set an ugly precedent. This is not a "tweaking"
6. To give full credit for understructure parking as opposed to an actual underground structure would also set a bad precedent.

This seems to be a never-ending saga, but if there is an end it will be much more positive than it was a year ago in terms of the quality of this project. With the end in sight we need to keep up the pressure for this project to be a good neighbor.

Tom

February 3, 2010

TO: Town of Mammoth Lakes Planning Commission and Community Development

FROM: Tom Moody, (Sierra Park Villas Homeowners' Association)

RE: Old Mammoth Place Height and Mass Evaluation

After reviewing the computer enhanced photos and the photos of the model, we have the following concerns and questions:

1. The view of the project along Old Mammoth Rd. presents a long linear projection with not enough horizontal features to make it more appealing.
2. The Interior buildings appear too monotonous and the design doesn't have a mountain character to it. Small windows do not provide maximum view opportunities.
3. What are the exterior building materials? The project is required to be constructed consistent with the Town's "Design Guidelines" which include text and visuals. The text and visuals clearly indicate a mountain design including wood and rock materials. This doesn't appear to be evident in the photos and model.

Compare what is presented here with what Heavenly has recently created in their new hotel and shop complex with heavy use of lumber and the quaintness of Park City. Would Telluride approve of something like this? We know the architects who presented this design are very well respected, but we would sincerely encourage the applicant to offer a redesign that is much more consistent with our Town's Design Guidelines.

We look forward to your response.

Tom Moody