



Planning Commission Staff Report

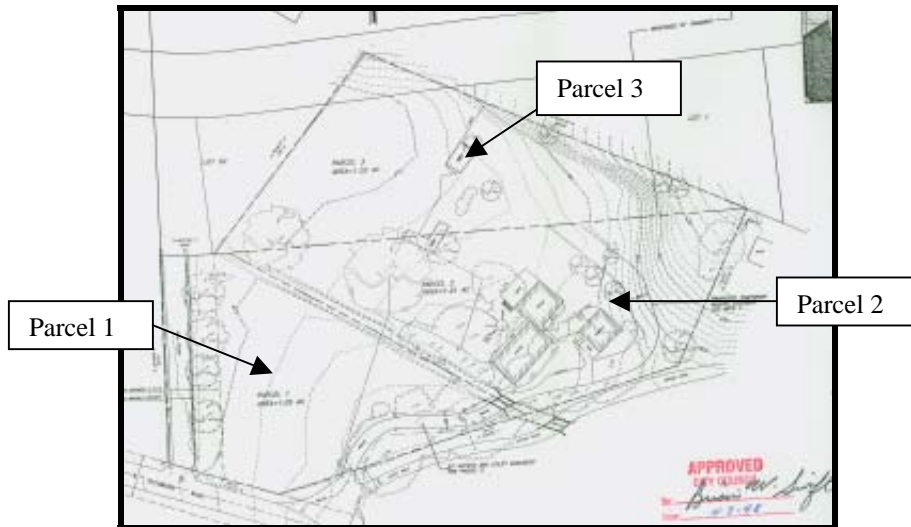
March 12, 2008
Item 6.c.

- SUBJECT:** PUD-53
- APPLICANT/
PROPERTY OWNER:** Bringhurst, LLC
- PURPOSE:** Work session to review and receive comments on a proposal to subdivide an existing 3.28-acre parcel located at 990 Sycamore Road into five lots whereas the North Sycamore Specific Plan has allocated three lots for the subject site.
- GENERAL PLAN:** Low Density Residential-One dwelling unit per two gross acres.
- SPECIFIC PLAN:** North Sycamore Specific Plan: Agricultural
- ZONING:** Rezone from the existing PUD-A (Planned Unit Development-Agricultural) to PUD-LDR/A (Planned Unit Development-Low Density Residential/Agricultural) District
- LOCATION:** 990 Sycamore Road
- ATTACHMENTS:**
1. Location Map
 2. Exhibit A – Conceptual Site Plan dated “Received February 26, 2008”
 3. Exhibit B – Discussion Points
 4. Exhibit C – Public Comments

BACKGROUND

The subject site is located within the North Sycamore Specific Plan (NSSP) area. In September of 1992, the NSSP area was developed and designated lands throughout the plan area. It also pre-zoned lots that were not going to develop at that time and did not provide a development plan including this site as well. The zoning designation for this site was Agricultural (PUD-A) District which requires a minimum of one-acre lot sizes.

In December of 1997, the previous owners processed PUD application (PUD-97-21) to subdivide the site into three parcels, meeting the one-acre site requirement of the PUD-A district. This proposal as shown below was approved.



PUD-97-21 Layout

Parcel 1 and Parcel 2 (where the existing house is located) would take access from Sycamore Road, and Parcel 3 would take access from the now Sycamore Creek Road, which at the time of the PUD approval, did not exist. The proposed development was too small in scale to complete the required road and infrastructure for Sycamore Creek Road and therefore had conditions imposed such that development and/or a final map would not be allowed until City services could be provided. Greenbriar Homes had developed a proposal for an adjacent 111-lot development process. The City Council thus granted the approval conditioning the project as follows:

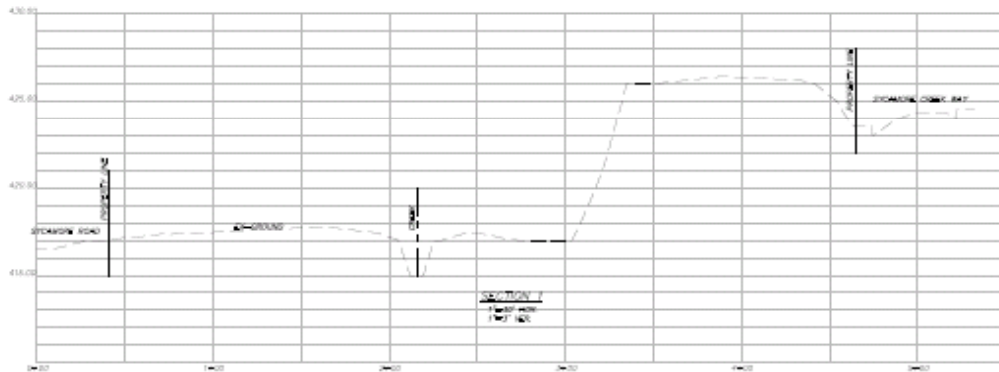
2. *A final map creating parcels “1”, “2”, and “3” of this PUD development plan shall not be recorded until such time that City sewer and water service is available for use by the new homes in this development. It shall be the determination of the Planning Director and City Engineer as to when these services are deemed available.*
3. *The final map creating Parcel “3” of this PUD development plan shall not be recorded until such time that the access to the parcel can be provided by the new East-West Collector road identified in the North Sycamore Specific Plan. The temporary access easement to Parcel 3 shown on the PUD development plan is not approved and shall not be established or constructed. It shall be the determination of the Planning Director and City Engineer as to when the access to this parcel from the new street is available for use.*

The approval for the three lots expired because no final map for the project was filed.

In February 1998, the City Council approved the Greenbriar PUD development for Bridle Creek which had 111 single-family homes on a combined adjacent 56.2-acre site. This project was required to construct all of the infrastructure that would eventually benefit the site now owned by the Bringhursts. By 2003, all of the Bridle Creek homes were constructed, and City utilities were installed.

In October of 1999, the City Council approved PUD-97-12 (Sycamore Heights/Summerhill) for the construction of 48 homes on a combined 34.65-acre site also adjacent to the subject site. The Sycamore Heights development is located to the immediately north of the subject site.

At the time of the construction of the building pads for the Sycamore Heights project, grading was allowed on the subject site that mirrored the approved terraced building pads for Sycamore Heights. Additionally, all City services were stubbed to the three parcels that were created with a remainder of the original site approximately eight to ten feet lower in elevation than the remaining portion of the site. There are notations from the City approving this construction; the newly constructed pads were inspected along with the Sycamore Heights project. There was some discussion and interest at the time whether or not Summerhill would be interested in processing a modification to the PUD to allow the three homesites to be developed as a part of the Sycamore Heights development but it was not picked up during the completion of that subdivision.



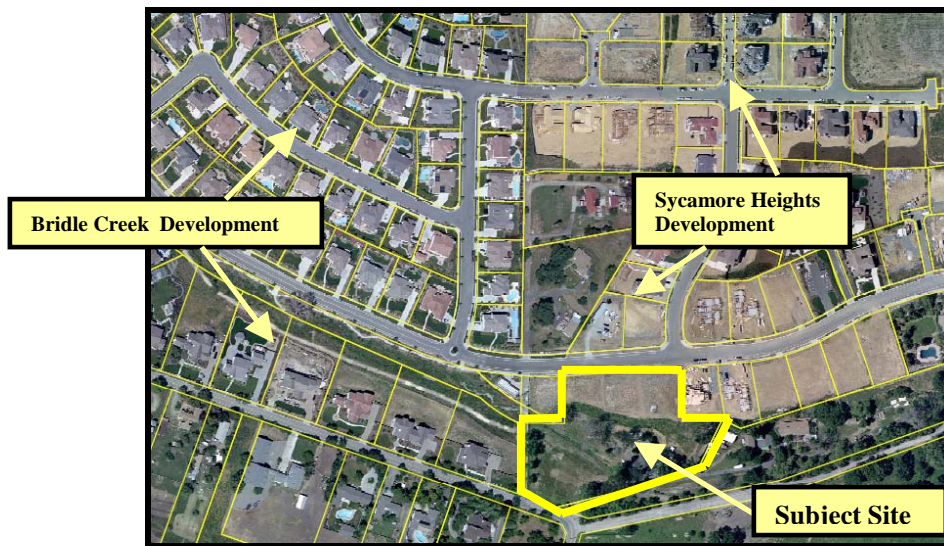
Site Cross-Section

Staff is bringing this project to the Planning Commission to consider and affirm the decisions made at that time which allowed the construction of these pads that have been roughly graded and therefore determine the support for a modification to the North Sycamore Specific Plan and a modification to the PUD to allow two additional lots.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is currently zoned Planned Unit Development – Agricultural (PUD –A) District, and the uses for the property generally correspond with the Agricultural District designation of the City’s Municipal Code (Chapter 18.28). This designation allows one single-family residences per one-acre parcel. As noted above, the previous approval expired; therefore, no development plan is in force or approved for the property.

The subject site abuts both Sycamore Road (front) and Sycamore Creek Way (rear). It is irregular in shape and is measured approximately 3.29-acre in area. A seasonal creek, Sycamore Creek, bisects the existing parcel in an east-west direction. The site presently includes a single-family home (built in two phases, an older cement block carriage home portion and a newer more contemporary addition). The property also has a detached garage and two shed-type outbuildings. Access to the existing home is provided by a 15-foot wide driveway accessed from Sycamore Road. The driveway crosses a bridge over the ephemeral creek. As noted above, this creek divides the lower portion of the site naturally into two distinct parcels. The driveway east of the bridge is paved entirely with asphalt; the western portion is gravel. Existing landscaping includes eucalyptus, acacia and other exotic species, as well as several native trees such as valley oak, sycamores, and California black walnut trees generally located in the area of the creek closest to the residence. Other shrubs, grasses, and groundcover surround the existing home.



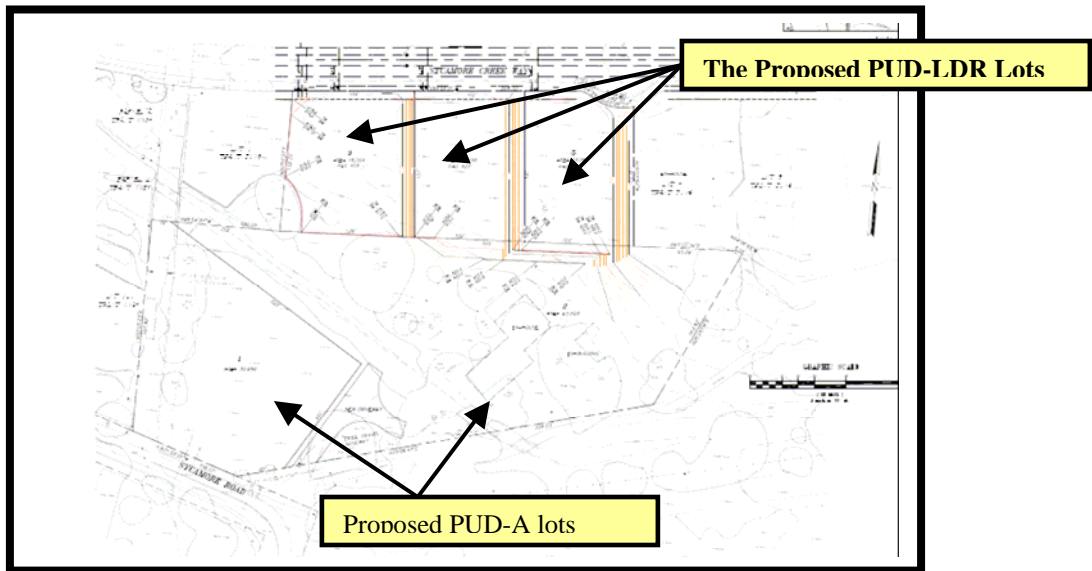
The surrounding homes are generally newer homes; the site is bordered on the west by Greenbriar’s Bridle Creek development, to the north by Summer Hills’ Sycamore Height development, and east and south by existing older single-family residences.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to rezone the subject site from PUD-A (Planned Unit Development – Agriculture) District, one home per acre, to PUD-A and PUD – LDR (Planned Unit Development – Low Density Residential) District, two homes per acre, to increase the density from three lots to five lots. The following table shows the proposed land use designation and lot sizes.

Lot Number	PUD-97-21		PUD-53		
	Land Use	Lot Size	Lot Number	Land Use	Lot Size
No. 1	PUD-A	1.05 acres (45,738 sq.ft)	No. 1	PUD-A	30,898 sq. ft
No. 2	PUD –A	1.21 acres (52,708 sq.ft.)	No. 2	PUD-A	67,603 sq. ft.
No. 3	PUD –A	1.03 acres (44,867 sq.ft.)	No. 3	PUD-LDR	16,049 sq. ft.
			No. 4	PUD-LDR	14,198 sq. ft.
			No. 5	PUD-LDR	14,098 sq. ft.

Access from Lot 1 would be from Sycamore Road. Lot 2 has an existing residence and it would continue to use Sycamore Road for egress and ingress. Lots 3-5 would be from Sycamore Creek Way.



Proposed PUD-53 Layout

DISCUSSION

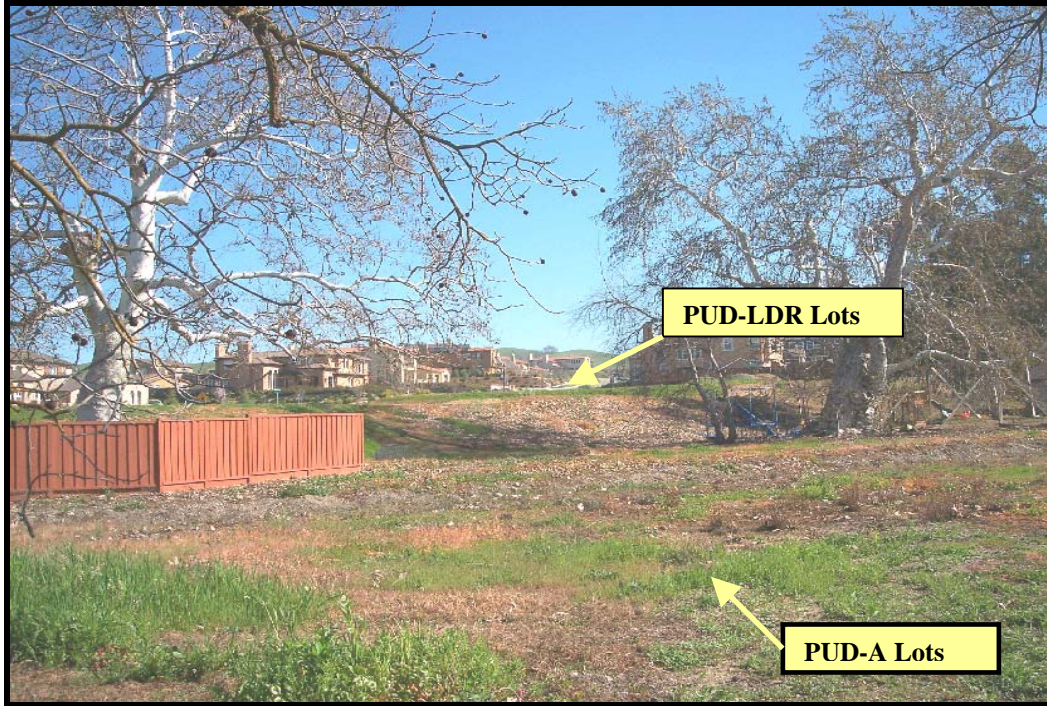
Specific Plan Amendment

Discussion Point No. 1 – Should the proposed Specific Plan Amendment be approved to allow for a density increase?

The NSSP allows for an ultimate 246 homes within the Specific Plan area, which includes 220 new homes. The area of the current Sycamore Heights development, north of the subject site, is zoned PUD-LDR District, which allows for a density of two homes per one acre. As such, 69 homes were allocated for the combined 34.65-acre site by the Specific Plan; however, 48 homes were approved and constructed; 11 homes less than the anticipated density. As such, the proposed increase of the proposed two additional lots would not impact the overall density within the NSSP.



View of the Subject Site from Sycamore Heights Development



**View of the Site from Sycamore Road
with Sycamore Height Development in the Background**

Staff comments: With no impact to the overall number of housing units as identified in the NSSP, staff thought it would make sense to allow a change of this portion of the site from the current PUD-A to PUD-LDR so that the development of this site could be made as an integral part of the Sycamore Heights Development, in terms of lot sizes and home styles. If it is left as a PUD-A lot, it could conceivably have a home that is not in character (i.e. size, architectural style, etc.) with the development surrounding it.

Discussion Point No. 2 – Assuming that it is supportable to have this portion of the lot be changed from PUD-A district to PUD-LDR district, would the proposed lot size be suitable?

The lots in the Sycamore Height development abut Sycamore Creek Way and range from 12,975 square feet to 20,313 square feet. The NSSP allowed PUD-LDR lots to be 12,000 square feet and 15,000 square feet; however, in this particular location, the NSSP specifies the minimum lot size to be 15,000 square feet. The proposed lot sizes are 16,094 square feet, 14,198 square feet, and 14,089 square feet.

Staff Comments: A review of the proposed PUD plan, the lot configurations are driven by the topography of the site, i.e. the lot lines of the three proposed PUD-LDR lots are located at the top of the slope. It is possible to relocate the rear lot line of all three lots toward the south (Lot 2) to gain additional square footage in order to satisfy the required 15,000 square foot minimum lot size. This approach may not be wise from planning perspective. Since the NSSP

allows PUD-LDR lots to be either 12, 000 square feet or 15,000 square feet, staff believes that flexibility exists to adjust the lot sizes in exchange for a better development.

Discussion Point No. 3 – Would the layout for the proposed PUD-A lots be acceptable?

As previously mentioned, a seasonal creek bisects the site from an east to west direction. The previous PUD-97-21 proposal showed that the proposed lot line between Parcel 1 and Parcel 2 was located in the middle of the creek; thus, both parcel owners would have equal responsibility for the creek maintenance. This proposed shows that the lot line between Lo1 and Lot 3 is on the top of the creek bank; as such, the seasonal creek would be within in Lot 2 for its entity. This proposal would result in Lot 1 not meeting the minimum lot size of one acre as specified in the NSSP.

Staff Comments: Again, from planning perspective, this proposal of having the seasonal creek be located on one parcel rather than two is a better solution for creek maintenance. This proposal would also avoid any possibility of having a fence constructed within any portion of the creek delineating the property line and/or define the areas of responsibility. Staff again believes that the NSSP offers flexibility in determining lot sizes.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of this workshop was sent to all property owners and occupants within 1,000 feet of the subject property.

Bob Mound, 806 Sycamore Creek Way, and Phyllis Ho, 750 Sycamore Creek Way, object to the proposed modifications.

Vince Barletta requested for a copy of the proposal and commented that it may not be a noticeable change if the proposed includes three lots on Sycamore Creek and two along Sycamore Creek Way.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission review the items identified by staff for discussion and provide direction concerning desired changes to the proposal.

Staff Planner: Jenny Soo, Associate Planner, 925.931.5615, email: jsoo@ci.pleasanton.ca.us