

5/8/20

To: Ashland Planning department
Planning Action: PA-T3-2019-0001

My Name is LeAnn Ahlbrecht, DVM. I own Animal Medical Hospital located at 1525 Hwy 99 N. I am writing in response to the apartment complex that is being proposed. I have significant concerns related to this project.

My first and main concern is the amount of traffic flow this new complex is going to create. If I am understanding correctly, there will be a sidewalk brought down all the way from town to connect to the existing sidewalk in front of the car dealerships. This means there will be curb cuts and all that traffic will now funnel through a single space. The new complex at a minimum will add over 800 trips per day in addition to As You Store It traffic and my business traffic. It is already quite difficult to exit the parking lot at peak times of the day. I have many elderly clients, clients who accidentally let their dogs off leash and children in my parking lot at any given time. Most likely 60% of the residents of the new complex will be working in Medford, which means they will cut across my parking lot.

Secondly, it is a blind corner coming down hwy99 from Ashland to Talent. People are often driving past the speed limit. We have seen many accidents over the years. I myself was hit on my motorcycle by someone making a left hand turn across the traffic in 2018. Looking at their diagram of where they are planning to exit and enter the complex, it is going to be of great concern. With the increase in traffic flow, there will be accidents due to the blind corner.

Lastly, the proposed amount of parking doesn't appear adequate for the most likely number of renters. This means that I will most likely get overflow parking in my lot. We already have issues with the number of spaces available for my own clientele. Getting delivery trucks in and out, having enough staff parking and ebb and flow of client vehicles will greatly be impacted by this development.

I strongly urge you to reassess the safety of the proposed ingress and egress. I have worked here for over 30 years. I have seen too many accidents. I know they will be greatly increased with the numbers of vehicles that will be using the same space.

Sincerely,
LeAnn Ahlbrecht
Animal Medical Hospital
541-482-2786



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May 8, 2020

planning@ashland.or.us

City of Ashland

Attn: Planning Dept.

RE: Written Objections and Comments

Grand Terrace Development PA-T3-2019-00001

Dear Commissioners:

I am the owner of Knox veterinary Properties LLC, 1525 Hwy 99 N. and Knox Storage LLC 1515 Hwy 99N. located adjacent to the subject property. I owned and operated Animal Medical Hospital at this location from 1988 until just recently and retained ownership of the veterinary Hospital building. I lease the hospital building to Dr.Ahlbrecht who now operates the practice and employs over 10 people. I also lease space to Land of Paws, a pet grooming business. In addition, I operate As U Stor It, a mini storage facility on my property. All three of these businesses are long standing, successful, growing enterprises.

I am not opposed to development in my area whether it be housing, homes or other businesses. I do however, believe development must be smart, well thought out and not cause an undue burden on surrounding businesses especially as it relates to their clients and patrons ability to safely and conveniently access these businesses.

I was not involved or consulted with the design of this project, nor was I initially notified of this proposed development. I have significant concerns with the ability of current and future clientele to safely access my properties, as well as those businesses who lease from me, my neighboring businesses and the potential apartment residents

I know that most or all of you visited the site a few months ago. I would encourage you to visit again with focus on how current business traffic of approximately 250 trips per day plus the proposed 1400 to 1800 trips (depending upon number of units built) can safely ingress and egress from Hwy 99N. Current traffic already slows down two to three times per day due to queuing at Maple St intersection and other issues. I understand that I, my clients, or the employees are not traffic engineers bur we all have experienced daily difficulties getting safely onto or off the highway in a safe and timely manner. This is of course without the additional 700 plus trips that will likely come through my business property. In addition, all three of these business experience much of their traffic during peak hours.

I understand that the entrance and egress through my property is represented to be a secondary access point but since the TIA indicates 60% of the traffic going north towards Medford, it is likely that a large percentage of the traffic in and out of the projects will prefer and use this North access. The apartment residents will of course use the access they choose no matter what the initial planning suggested. Due to this, I have personally suggested to the developer and planning staff that the entrance on my end be strictly used as an emergency access only.

There have been numerous serious accidents on Hwy 99 in front of my properties as clients have tried to ingress or egress. These have usually been rear ending type accidents with extensive auto damage and injuries. I personally was hit from behind attempting to turn into the veterinary clinic. I sustained injuries and my truck

was totaled. These accidents in front of the veterinary clinic are not indicated in the TIA as apparently only intersection accidents are noted. With the level of projected development and traffic from this housing project, there will be extensive queuing in the turn lanes out in front of my property as well as my neighboring businesses to the south as clients attempt to turn off the highway. This will lead to more of the same type of accidents as the turn lane backs up and autos are coming downhill entering that lane.

With the queuing in the turn lanes on the highway, clients of the Animal Medical Hospital, Land of Paws, As U Stor It, and the apartment residents attempting to egress onto Hwy99 will que up on the business properties, jamming the Animal Medical Hospital Parking area and blocking access to AS U STor It and Land of Paws entrance. These factors will cause significant difficulties for patrons. This will no doubt result in loss of future business as clients do not feel safe or wish to wait in lines on an uncontrolled highway or in the chaos of a jammed parking or entrance area. This was not addressed in the TIA as this was not a part of the scope of their study. Those of us who work there and live with these challenges on a daily basis understand what this will mean as a daily burden and the impact on traffic safety and consequently loss of business.

Unfortunately, the recently submitted rendering of proposed sidewalks is very incomplete and does not reflect the reality of existing curb cuts there. The only curb cut shown is the entrance to the development. No other entrances and curb cuts are noted. The Animal Medical entrance, Paradise Supply, and Anderson Auto Body entrances are not indicated. This grossly oversimplifies the problems for vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic. I understand that ODOT has indicated there is not enough pedestrian traffic to warrant a flashing crosswalk or signal. Having also lived on North Main Street for 20 plus years and attempted to cross the highway anywhere from TC Chevrolet into town on foot is quite a daunting and dangerous endeavor. Again, I understand that I am not a traffic engineer, but from years of experience in that area of Hwy 99, I have little to no doubt there will be significant serious pedestrian involved accidents without some type of controlled or lit crosswalk. I believe painted crosswalk lines on the pavement will not suffice for pedestrian safety.

The applicant has noted on several occasions that traffic will naturally calm with development. While this may be usually true, I do not believe it will happen in this area without significant intervention such as a traffic light. As autos travel north under the railroad bridge on Hwy 99 they will still have the impression they are leaving town due to expanse of hills and the farmland to the northeast and the topography of the highway with high berms to the south. The development will not be visible from the northbound traffic on highway 99 until vehicles are approaching Anderson Auto Body and the North entrance to the development. At this time with the nature of the steep downhill and the rural feel, speeds will naturally increase as they do now. As speeds naturally increase some vehicles will be slowing quickly to access the turn lanes that are frequently queuing up. Rear end type accident that could push the struck auto out into the southbound traffic are very likely to happen. This type of accident has happened in front of the Animal Medical Hospital previously and is quite violent. I understand, am not a traffic engineer but I have travelled this road daily or more for over 34 years and have experienced the current level of difficulty. Add 1400 to 1800 more trips daily plus additional pedestrians and cyclists and there inevitably will be serious accidents and injuries.

In conclusion, I am not opposed to development, but believe it must be well thought out, be safe and not cause undue burden on the existing businesses. I believe that common sense should prevail and decisions should not be made solely based on studies or models. The development as proposed, will cause a significant and undue burden on the existing business, nor does it provide for safe, sensible and adequate traffic, bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Therefore, I request that you not recommend the annexation and zone change.

Respectfully,

Scott G. Knox D.V.M.



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May 11, 2020

SENT VIA E-MAIL

City of Ashland
Attn: Planning Department
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**RE: SUPPLEMENTAL WRITTEN OBJECTIONS AND COMMENTS
GRAND TERRACE DEVELOPMENT PA-T3-2019-00001**

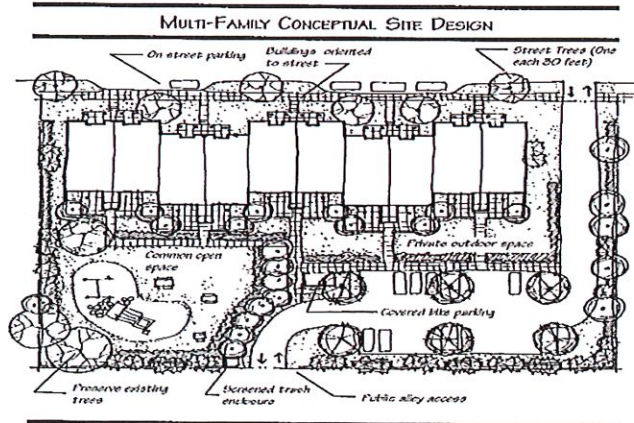
Dear Commissioners:

Our office represents Knox Veterinary Properties, LLC, and Knox Storage, LLC, the owners of properties located at 1515 and 1525 Highway 99N, adjacent to the subject property. My clients' properties are home to the following long-standing Ashland businesses: As-U-Stor-It Mini Storage; Animal Medical Hospital; and Land of Paws. The purpose of this letter is to provide supplemental written testimony for the Commission's consideration at its May 12 meeting.

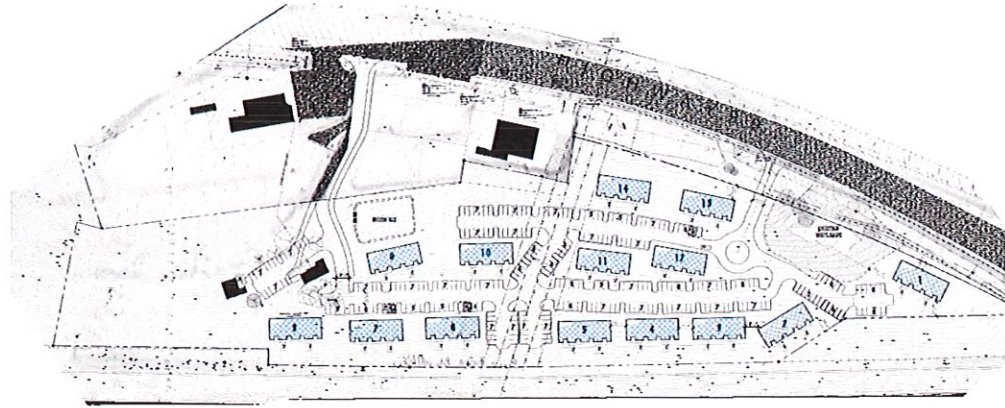
1. Access.

With respect to access, both staff and the applicant find that public streets are not required to access the subject property; a private 20-foot driveway is sufficient. As argued below, a 20-foot driveway is not the appropriate standard for the north access.

ALUO 18.4.3.080.C.3.d. provides that multi-family developments which generate greater than "250 vehicle trips per day shall provide **at least two driveway access points**" (emphasis added). An example of such access is depicted in Figure 18.4.2.030 Multi-Family Conceptual Site Design. As depicted, those "driveways" serve a project which abuts a public street or alley.



In contrast, the subject property does not abut a public street at its northern terminus; it takes access from the highway through intervening properties.



There are multiple factors which necessitate that the northerly access meet street standards. First, the code provides that a multi-family project should provide “at least two” driveway approaches for a project which will generate more than 250 trips. In this case, the application presents only two driveways for a project that will generate between 1448 – 1857 trips, well above the minimum standard of 250 trips. This project faces additional challenges in that the northerly access is lengthy (more than 165 feet), bisects existing commercial developments, is steep, and directs traffic to uncontrolled accesses onto a state highway through a busy commercial parking lot. Based on the nature and location of this project, a narrow private driveway is not consistent with the intent of the City’s access standards which is “to provide safe and effective access and circulation for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.” ALUO 18.4.3.010.

Similarly, ALUO 18.4.3.D.3 provides that access to parking areas of “**seven parking spaces**” shall be 20 feet in width and constructed to “facilitate the flow of traffic on or off the site, with due regard to pedestrian and vehicle safety...”. These are minimum standards for projects with as few as 7 parking spaces. The subject application will serve up to 1857 vehicle trips per day and provides parking for at least 196 units. It is difficult to understand how such a long narrow driveway, along steep terrain, through an existing busy parking lot for commercial businesses can adequately facilitate the flow of traffic “with due regard to pedestrian and vehicle safety.”

Lastly, allowing a northerly “driveway” is inconsistent with the City’s street standards and leads to an absurd result in that it allows a project generating up to 1857 trips to provide less adequate access than projects that generate far fewer trips. For example, a private drive, which is also 20-foot in width and has a maximum slope of 15%, can serve no more than 100 average daily trips, or 3 units

(Table 18.4.6.040.F fn4) but the north “driveway” can have up to 20% slopes, and can serve up between 196 - 251 units.

Allowing a north driveway is also inconsistent with standards for streets otherwise required in multi-family zones which, for example, would require a street with parking on both sides, and right-of-way width between 50-57 feet, with curb to curb paving width between 25-28 feet. ALUO 18.4.6.040.G.4. But here, the application proposes access along a 20-foot driveway, without requirements for parking or sidewalks. Such an interpretation is not consistent with the City’s access requirements, nor designed to ensure safe access for vehicles and pedestrians.

Reviewing these provisions in the context of the Figure 18.4.2.030 Multi-Family Conceptual Site Design above, a driveway approach was not likely contemplated in circumstances such as these where the project does not abut the public street at the northerly access. Allowing a “driveway” at the north access creates an absurd result in which smaller projects with better access to a street must comply with more stringent city street standards, but a large development with no northerly street frontage, can accommodate up to 1857 trips via a narrow private driveway. (See Johnson v. Star Machinery Co., 270 Or 694, 705 (1974) (“When, however, a literal application of the language [of a statute] produces an absurd or unreasonable result, it is the duty of the court to construe the act, if possible, so that it is a reasonable and workable law and not inconsistent with the general policy of the legislature.”))

Based on the foregoing the Planning Commission should find that given the topography, location and size of this project, a driveway would not provide adequate transportation to/from the subject property at the north access.

2. Easement.

For the record, the applicant argues that the intent of the grantor of the easement is irrelevant in part because the easement was granted in 1989, at which time the subject property was within the City of Ashland UGB as a future area for Low-Density, Multi-Family Residential land. In fact, the easement was originally granted in 1966, and recorded in the official records of Jackson County on January 1, 1966 as Document No. 66-01495.

Sincerely,

JARVIS, DREYER, GLATTE & LARSEN, LLP

s/ Sydnee B. Dreyer
SYDNEE B. DREYER

SBD:jas