

CITY OF ASHLAND

Infill Strategies Project
Developer Roundtable
December 19, 2016

Guests:

Eric Bonetti
Mark DiRienzo
Randy Jones
Kelly Koziol
Mark Knox
Jerryck Murrey
Alan Noble
Jerome White

Staff/Consultants Present:

Bill Molnar, Community Development Director
Maria Harris, Planning Manager
Brandon Goldman, Senior Planner
John Fregonese, Fregonese Associates
Scott Fregonese, Fregonese Associates

Presentation

John Fregonese made a presentation about the Infill Strategy project including the analysis of development barriers and opportunities in the transit triangle and a sample building prototype developed using a return on investment model. The presentation slides are available at ashland.or.us/transit_triangle.

Comments

- As more stories/uses are added, the building footprint shrinks because more of site needed for parking spaces.
- Would like to see requirements similar to N. Mountain Neighborhood zoning that allows flexibility to build to a commercial standard but allow ground floor to be used for residential and converted to a commercial use later when there is demand. It is difficult for a storefront to compete with online.
- Asking for a parking variance to increase intensity/uses in building is not feasible. (Fregonese - used ratio of one parking space per unit.)
- Struggling with the concept of doing four stories, there would be pushback from the surrounding neighborhood.
- Suggest looking at the plaza space requirement and impacts on building intensity/uses. Being able to count plazas in landscape area ratio (e.g. in Pedestrian Places overlay) helps.
- Did look at doing away with required nonresidential uses on ground floor? (Fregonese – Affordability got better when modeled at all residential.)
- Does model include costs of street frontage and offsite improvements? (Fregonese – model does not include frontage and offsite improvement costs.)
- Would you develop new design standards for the transit triangle and layer on top of the standards that are already in place? (Fregonese – No, would recommend consolidate overlays that are in place and have one set of standards for study area. Recommend using a form based approach.)
- Suggest using this approach to other areas, for example the railroad property. There are other nodes that can accommodate more than three stories.
- Have questions about rates used in model. Not sure about residential rate (\$1.75 to \$1.90 per sq ft), currently highest listed on rental properties in town is \$1.70/sq ft. Offices are more in the \$15/sq ft range. Also construction costs seem low.
- Agree with that, we're seeing over \$150/sq ft for construction hard costs, not including permits.
- There is a demand for housing but no demand for commercial space.
- Landlords lose tenants if lose parking.

- What happens to commercial spaces if parking goes away?
- Nowhere to go with overflow parking between overpass and Walker.
- Got to have people who can pay rent – in examples, was there economic development that goes along with it?
- Debt service ratio that is used in model is close enough that bank may turn down.
- Parking lot improvements (i.e., to minimize adverse environmental/microclimatic impacts) raise costs by 5%. Plaza requirements, solar setback and excess landscaping all raise costs.
- Question feasibility of condos being built for \$250,000 to \$300,000 for one and two bedroom, costs more to build. (Fregonese clarified that they didn't evaluate ownership units in building prototype because prices were more affordable for rentals.)
- Commercial space drives up the price of residential rentals. Rents run around 1.92 per square foot but can't get that in this study area.
- Incentives, such as vertical housing tax credit, are going to be the key.
- The importance of timing is key with rentals because one doesn't want to get stuck with them.
- Property on map that is shown as developable isn't available, have contacted all of them and owners aren't motivated to sell.