

trict recently gathered, comprising mostly parents and retired teachers, to review area population growth data. After developing potential scenarios and ranking them in terms of effectiveness and value to the community, the committee concluded that the school district should request that two new elementary schools be built on either side of I-25.

The committee recommended that the existing Bear Creek Elementary School be changed back into (Creskide) middle school again because it is less expensive per pupil to build elementary schools than middle schools. Zoning changes in Monument have allowed more houses to be built than the district originally planned for, the school district representatives said, and there is no more room for new classrooms in the existing elementary and middle schools.

LPSD is currently having similar conversations with the El Paso County government, but it looks like the next two elementary schools should be built in Monument, Wageman said.

Other topics discussed included the question of whether to put sixth-graders in elementary or middle school, and how high school education is changing as students are provided with different options to

modify their education. See related LPSD article on page 7.

Monument Ridge plan approved

Planner Jennifer Jones said Challenger Homes has proposed amendments to the sketch plan for a 9.88-acre vacant lot in the Monument Ridge development across Baptist Road from the King Soopers, east of Fairfield Inn. The proposal was to designate the density of the proposed multifamily housing development to allow 20 to 24 dwelling units per acre. There will be four access points to the development, and it would likely be comparable in height to the nearby Fairfield Inn, but this would come before the board for approval first. According to a recent traffic study, the amount of traffic generated in this area by multifamily housing units will be less than what a commercial development would have generated in the same spot.

Jones said Triview Metropolitan district had agreed to provide a water will-serve letter when the applicant pays water in-lieu-of fees, which will be used to purchase more water from Triview because the land does not have enough



water rights on its own.

During the public hearing, resident Debra Grandia noted concerns about high density, traffic, and storm drainage damage problems.

Commissioner Michelle Glover also discussed how the recent community study showed that most Monument residents polled were opposed to building apartment complexes. Commissioner Melanie Strop registered the opinion that such increased population density goes against the

town comprehensive plan, which designates this site as commercial. (The comprehensive plan does not have a category for high-density multifamily residential.)

This proposed sketch plan amendment passed 3-2 at the Monument Planning Commission, with commissioners voting to recommend approval to the board of trustees. Strop and Glover voted against the plan.

If the proposal moves forward at the board of trustees level, the applicant will propose a final Planned Development site plan with more specific details.

Les Schwab Tire Center plan denied

Jones said the proposed Les Schwab Tire Center would be located north of the existing Qdoba, across Jackson Creek Parkway from Staples. The potential site plan amendment raised before the Planning Commission on Sept. 14 would increase the tire center's size, changing it from one store in a multi-tenant building to the sole institution in the 10,000-square-foot structure. The discussion at this meeting was related only to architecture, as the development of the Les Schwab Tire Center by Jackson Creek Parkway was approved in 2015. Les Schwab will no longer be building the shop that had been approved on Baptist Road due to a drainage issue. (See <http://www.ocn.me/v15n9.htm#mpc0812>, www.ocn.me/v15n12.htm#mpc-1112)

The goal of this Les Schwab



Tire Center will be to function as a tire store only, intended just for shopping and not auto repair. A showroom lined with glass windows would face Jackson Creek Parkway. The nearest comparable store to the north is in Castle Rock. The planning staff recommended conditions for approval of the modified site plan, including the request that Les Schwab Tire Center move the tire storage area inside the building instead of situating it by the dumpsters.

During the public hearing, citizens Dee Rademacher and Kathryn Johnson noted concerns about the trajectory of development in Monument. Rademacher wondered whether there could be a stricter selection process for businesses so that the area's potential could be more fully realized. She suggested that Monument might become known for car shops, changing the reputation and appearance of the town in a way she's seen happen to other communities. Johnson, too, was disappointed that the "small-town feel" a lot of people pay a

good deal of money for might be impeded by the direction of business development.

Principal Planner Larry Manning said that if a retail business is listed as a permitted use in the zoning, "Then we cannot differentiate between one retail business and another."

In the end, Commissioner John Dick motioned to approve the application with conditions, but the motion failed due to lack of a second. Strop then moved to deny the application, and this motion passed 3-2, with Dick and Fitzpatrick voting against. The proposed amendment will still move on to the board of trustees, with the understanding that the planning commission denied the site plan amendment application.

Landscape ordinance revised

The highlights of the planning department's landscape ordinance revisions include adding a section where staff can approve projects that prove they're more closely aligned to the new ordinances on an administrative level, as well as the condition that applicants must have eight plants, including shrubs and trees, per 100 square feet that is maintainable and aesthetically pleasing.

Many similar-sized communities require only four plants per 100 square feet. One tree is now required per 1,200 square feet as well. If a business maintains more trees than what's required, they can be compensated by not needing to have as many other plants. Manning said he believes the combination of plants matters more than the number when creating landscaping designs that look nice and last well.

Glover expressed interest in hearing what the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District has to say about whether the landscape ordinances are appropriately "fire safe."

On the subject of penalties, the new goal is that if an institution doesn't conduct promised landscaping maintenance the town will have the work done and then bill them.

The planning commission was encouraged to feed comments to Manning, going forward, as this goes before the board.

The next Monument Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Oct. 11 at 645 Beacon Lite Road. Meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of the month. For information and to check the October meeting agenda, call 884-8017 or check <https://monumenttownco.documents-on-demand.com/>.

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Editors Note: Two of these decisions were not upheld at the Oct. 2 Monument Board of Trustees meeting. See related article on page 21.



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