

Monument Planning Commission, Feb. 9

Conexus Phases 2 and 3 Preliminary PUD Plan and annexation of Limbach Park approved

By Kate Pangelinan

The Monument Planning Commission (MPC) spent the bulk of its Feb. 9 meeting considering two public hearing points: a new Preliminary PUD Plan for Phases 2 and 3 of the Conexus development and a proposal for the annexation and zoning of Limbach Park. Both of these proposals were approved for recommendation to the Board of Trustees (BOT.)

Notably, near the end of the meeting, it was announced that this was Vice Chair Sean White's final MPC meeting. Cathy Green, Sean Zernickow, and Ray Egley will be appointed regular Planning Commission members in March, and Tony Peck will be appointed as an alternate commissioner. It must also be determined who will take on White's position as vice chair of the MPC. Currently, two commissioners—Martin Trujillo and Daniel Ours—have served long enough to be qualified. Someone will have to be chosen to represent the MPC on the Board of Adjustment as well, as that role has been filled by White.

White expressed that it was an "honor" to have served on the MPC; he was then thanked for his insight and service.

Conexus Phases 2 and 3 Preliminary PUD Plan

Some facts about the Conexus proposal according to presentations by Planning Director Meggan Herington and a gathering of representatives standing for the applicant, along with the meeting packet available online:

- The property involved is composed of 145 acres on the east side of Old Denver Road west of Highway I-25. It is expected to feature four development areas—Commercial/Civic/Office, Industrial, Medium Density Residential (six to 10 du/ac), and High Density Residential (12-21 du/ac)—along with open space and detention areas. "Du/ac" refers to dwelling units per acre. Maps are available in the meeting packet online and can be seen in the recorded presentations. It was stated that a goal of this project is to provide Monument with "accessible," "market-rate housing."
- A great deal of citizen input contributed to the current design of this project. Three meetings were held to discuss concerns, gathering 15-20 citizens from a community to then take information back to their neighbors. These meetings were held first after the submittal of a Final PD Site Plan for the project, and then after planning staff released a letter reviewing that proposal, and then before the PC's Feb. 9 public hearing. This new Preliminary PUD Plan was submitted in November 2021.
- Seeing that the original Final PD Site Plan was negatively received by the public, steps were taken to address specific citizen concerns—for example, understanding that citizens would prefer more residential land use

rather than non-residential land use on this property led to an increase in the expected number of residential homes (465 to 631) and a decrease in the amount of land set aside for non-residential use (1 million square feet to 830,000 square feet.) Also, upon hearing that the citizenry was interested in seeing more parks around the area, parks are now listed as an allowed use in every category.

- There has been controversy surrounding the project's planned redirection of Old Denver Road, as well as the approved crossings of the Santa Fe Trail. Plans for Old Denver Road were explained at the meeting. As stated in the meeting packet, "Old Denver Road will be realigned, shifting a section of the road east through the development and away from the existing neighborhood. Individual access driveways or streets connecting to the new Old Denver Road will serve the development.... The remaining portion of the existing Old Denver Road will eventually be renamed and reclassified as a local road serving only the residential area to the west. With reclassification, speed limits would be reduced on that section."
- Also, instead of the previously-agreed-upon three access points crossing the Santa Fe Regional Trail, there are expected to be two.
- The Town of Monument won't need to contribute any water to these projects: Triview Metropolitan District will provide water and sanitary sewer services along with maintaining Old Denver Road.
- Not all people representing the applicant presented at this meeting, but all were available to answer questions. As listed in the presentation, those in attendance were: Applicant/Owner: Conexus LLC, Steve Schuck, Brock Chapman, Mike DeGrant, Steve Everson, Land planner: Andrea Barlow of N.E.S. Inc., traffic consultant: Kirstin Ferrin of LSC Transportation Consultants, legal representatives: Carolynne White and Angela Hygh of Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck LLP.

Former MPC member Steve King spoke during the designated Public Comment period, stating that the MPC has a "good leader" in Chairman Chris Wilhelmi, and a good planning director in Meggan Herington. King identified himself as "one of the citizens who led the charge" against the previous proposed Conexus development and that "we've come a long way since then." He said he was "grateful" for this, and that he'd submitted a letter detailing why he is now supporting the amended Conexus development submission.

Before the MPC voted, Commissioner Ours noted that he was impressed by the planning work done with this proposal on the part of the planning director, applicant, and citizenry.

In the end, the Conexus Phases 2 and 3 Pre-

liminary PUD Site Plan was unanimously approved for recommendation to the BOT with the condition that "The final details of the New Santa Fe Regional Trail alignment and proposed crossings of Old Denver Road will be addressed with the final design of the Old Denver Road realignment and will be subject to approval by El Paso County Community Services Department."

Limbach Park annexation and zoning

Some facts about this proposal, according to a presentation by Planning Director Meggan Herington:

- This is being done because current town staff has been unable to find any evidence of Limbach Park ever being annexed.
- The 1.48 acres involved were deeded to the Town of Monument by the Union Pacific Railroad Co. in 2005.

The goal now is to zone this property "P" for "Public," and officially annex it into the Town of Monument. Commissioner Cathy Green spoke about how she was there to sign the papers when this property was deeded to the town, saying that everyone at the time thought this land was part of Monument already and there was therefore no attempt to see it annexed.

A vote to recommend this proposal was approved unanimously, 7-0.

Traffic signal discussion

Herington explained that the QuikTrip convenience store and fuel station proposal was recently approved by the BOT, and that its approval involved conversation about the traffic signal to be built at Terrazzo Drive. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) has decided that this signal will not become warranted upon the opening of the store—rather, it will be warranted when enough physical trips are generated. Representatives from CDOT are expected to speak to the BOT on March 7 and answer questions about this.

Information and relevant links

- The town's planning staff posts explanatory packets, agendas, and meeting minutes on this website: monumenttownco.documents-on-demand.com.
- Many PC meetings are available to watch in their entirety on the town's YouTube page at youtube.com/channel/UCdFLo8UcqZfFdkio-5jT6GDA. Citizens may find it easier to search for "Town of Monument" or "Monument Planning Commission" in YouTube's search bar.
- According to the town's website, planning staff can be contacted by calling 719-481-2954 or sending an email to planning@tomgov.org.

The next PC meeting is expected to be held on March 9 at 6 p.m. in the Monument Town Hall. There is also a Board of Adjustments meeting scheduled for March 14 at 6 p.m.

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Monument Board of Trustees, Feb. 22

Conexus development moves forward

By Allison Robenstein

The Monument Board of Trustees approved a planned development for Conexus and the service plan during its Feb. 22 meeting.

Conexus plan takes steps forward

Planned unit development plans for the 145-acre

Conexus development were approved by the board. The site, which will include light industrial, commercial, and residential uses was previously approved under the older Land Development Code. This request is simply following the new code to ensure the legality of the development plans.

An interesting note to these plans is the realignment of Old Denver Highway. It will shift to the east so that it travels through the new development and away from the Santa Fe trail, requiring only two trail crossings. According to the board packet, "The final details of the New Santa Fe Regional Trail alignment and proposed crossings of Old Denver Road will be addressed with the final design of the Old Denver Road realignment and will be subject to approval by El Paso County Community Services Department."

The request was approved.

Conexus metropolitan districts' service plan approved

The service plan for Conexus metropolitan districts 1 and 2 were approved. The residential and commercial districts are separate. According to the board packet, the service plan will "provide property tax-based public improvement financing and services for the Conexus project east of Old Denver Highway. The district area encompasses 164 acres; the commercial district being 137.5 acres and the residential district being 26.27 acres."

Despite two different districts, the proposed mill levy for commercial and residential property owners is 35 mills with 30 mills for debt service and 5 mills for ongoing maintenance. With all the other mills property owners will pay, this totals 98.545



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