

Monument Planning Commission, Sept. 14

Senior living center’s final plat and final PD site plan approved

By Kate Pangelinan

The Sept. 14 Monument Planning Commission (MPC) meeting was once again led by Commissioner Kathy Spence, as Chairman Ed Delaney was not present. Alternate Commissioner Daniel Rathke was also absent. The meeting’s discussion focused primarily on plans for the new Jackson Creek Senior Living center to be built at the northeast corner of Jackson Creek Parkway, by what will someday be Harness Road. The final plat and final planned development site plans for this facility were approved by the MPC and will now move on to consideration by the Board of Trustees. The motion to approve the plans passed 3-2, with Commissioners David Gwisdalla and Spence voting against.

About the care facility

According to designs presented to the MPC, the senior living facility will feature 131 units across the course of 6.5 acres. The building would be painted in a natural palette, in keeping with Monument’s other fixtures. Many large glass windows would let in clear, natural light along the side of the building. Native grasses would be cultivated between this project and the nearby road. A special wing for memory care patients would be built, too, utilizing bracelets to alert staff if the memory care patients wander too far from their rooms and enclosed patio. Care would be taken to assure that no dazed patients ever make it all the way to the busy road, or fall into the pond on the other side of the intersection.

Also, scheduled transportation to plac-

es like King Soopers or hospitals would be provided to patients for free. A separate personal transportation service for other, non-scheduled journeys could also be utilized by residents, although it would come at a fee if the patient wanted to travel more than three to five miles. The facility would own two vehicles for this purpose, and no residents would be allowed to travel in an employee’s personal car. 122 parking spots would be provided for the whole facility. Commissioner Michelle Glover was not sure this would provide adequate parking for staff as well as residents and visitors, though the applicants assured her that many residents would likely utilize provided transportation and therefore need no cars of their own. Town code would require 92 parking spaces be built, and this care facility is pointedly providing more than the requirement. Glover then wondered if this might be a “hole in our code,” something to look into for the future—should there be different rules for staffed residential buildings?

Other concerns about the new care facility plans included, but were not limited to, Glover wondering if the 30-foot trail behind this facility would be maintained, as plans for it weren’t made clear on the map. As it turns out, this trail will “jog” along Harness Road, eventually turning into an “L” shape and bringing visitors to a crossing.

Also, questions were asked about future plans for the facility. No further expansions have been formally submit-

ted, though the applicant did mention the possibility of someday extending the facility, possibly to include such things as residential cottages. Also, Gwisdalla expressed frustration that road projects can be partially built and then left in limbo, effectively producing “roads to nowhere” until future developments are completed. He requested that a condition to approving the care facility’s plans be that areas that might otherwise have been partially built be completely landscaped until they are ready to be worked on in earnest.

Reports and communications

Glover and Commissioner Jim Fitzpatrick reported that the town advisory committee meetings have been going well, revealing genuine community interest in Monu-

ment’s affairs and providing valuable feedback. A quiz on the town’s Facebook page generated 950 responses, which Glover was particularly pleased with, as it proved civilian readiness to respond and communicate. Gwisdalla wondered if citizen responses could truly generate change in Monument, and Glover was optimistic that they could, indeed, help direct the town.

Staff report

The planning commissioners all will get tablets, in correspondence with the direction of the town—all things are intended to become more electronic. The hope is that MPC members will be able to zoom in on provided maps and pictures, allowing easier engagement with packets.

Glover and Planning Director Larry

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LPSD

Upcoming Events

October 5:

Monument Hill Kiwanis Empty Bowls Dinner and Silent Auction

October 7:

K-6 Grades – No Classes

LPHS Homecoming Football Game

October 8:

LPHS Homecoming Dance

October 10:

School Board/Community Coffee 6:00 p.m.

October 12:

PLC Day – Delayed Start Wednesday

October 13:

PRHS Parent Teacher Conferences

October 14:

PRHS Homecoming Football Game

October 15:

PRHS Homecoming Dance

October 17:

LPHS Parent Teacher Conferences

October 19:

pK-12 Grades Parent Teacher Conferences

October 20:

pK-8 Grades – No Classes

pK-8 Parent Teacher Conferences

Board of Education Meeting 6:00 p.m.

October 21:

pK-12 – No Classes

pK-8 Grades Parent Teacher Conferences

Teacher Spotlight: Kristen Sciacca

Kristen Sciacca is in her second year of teaching first grade at Monument Academy (MA). She loves teaching first grade because she sees real progress as the year goes on – students staying in line, holding up their hands, and most importantly, learning to read. She has a blast showing her students the wrong way to do something and having them help her figure out the right way, with lots of laughter along the way.

Kristen was born and raised in Monument, attended MA from kindergarten through fifth grade, then Creekside Middle School, and finally, Lewis-Palmer High School. She attended Fresno State on a volleyball scholarship then transferred to UCCS for her senior year. She still plays in adult volleyball leagues and coaches the MA fifth grade volleyball team.

After earning a Leadership Communications degree, she earned her masters in Elementary Education. Teaching was all Kristen ever wanted to do. She student taught at MA and at Prairie Winds Elementary.

In her spare time, Kristen is training for her first marathon (the Boston Marathon is in her sites). She has competed in half marathons and is nearly ready to make the jump to 26.2 miles. Her first race last year was in over a foot of snow up a mountain.

According to Kristen, the best part of living in Monument, besides her family, is seeing some of her former teachers and running into her students as she trains on the treadmill at the YMCA. She is amazed by the growth of her hometown and still remembers the thrill of Walmart opening here.



Technology in the Classroom

Classrooms today merge traditional and innovative methodologies providing students with 21st century skills. Teachers today utilize white boards instead of chalk boards, SmartBoards instead of overheads, and computers instead of, or in addition to, paper notebooks. Practices evolve in order to adequately prepare students for the future. Carrie Hendrix, a technology teacher at Lewis-Palmer High School, believes “that teaching methods must change over time to keep up with student needs. With Google Classroom, students have everything they need in one place to complete and ‘turn in’ their assignments.” A Prairie Winds Elementary (PWES) sixth grader supports this belief saying, “GAPE makes it easier to have teachers assign work. There’s no way to lose your work.” Palmer Lake Elementary (PLES) fifth grade teacher Lindsey Burris shares that “learning about digital tools improves my students’ engagement and excitement about learning.” Two of her students did extra research after one assignment and created a Google slide show to share additional information they discovered. Online documents enrich the classroom/home connection. One PLES fifth grader “invites” his mom to access his Google documents so they can look at them together while he’s doing his homework. A PLES second grader reports that technology is one of her favorite classes and that the math games help her with her math studies. “It’s fun to do things on a computer with all the great graphics,” relates a PWES fourth grader. The future is upon us. Students and teachers continue investigating new classroom tools, gaining increased proficiency, confidence, and knowledge – with some fun mixed in too.