From:	Jim Nugent
To:	Dept. Mayors Office; Dept. MRA; Grp. City Council and City Web Site; Eran Pehan; Mary McCrea; Jeremy Keene; Brian Hensel; Kevin Slovarp; Troy Monroe; Logan McInnis
Cc:	Dept. Attorney; Dept. City Clerk
Subject:	FW: Regarding development on 1923 River Road
Date:	Tuesday, June 21, 2022 8:40:15 AM

From: Kim Walterskirchen <kimdeus@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 20, 2022 3:24 PM
To: Aaron Wilson <wilsona@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Amber Sherrill <SherrillA@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Ben Weiss <WeissB@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Grp. City Council and City Web Site <Council@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Daniel Carlino <CarlinoD@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Eran Pehan <PehanE@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Gwen Jones <JonesG@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Heather Harp <director@habitatmsla.org>; Heidi West <WestH@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Jennifer Savage (she/her) <SavageJ@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Jeremy Keene <KeeneJ@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Jim Nugent <NugentJ@ci.missoula.mt.us>; John P. Contos <ContosJ@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Mayor Staff <StaffM@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Jordan Hess <HessJ@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Staci Shepard <ShepardS@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Kristen Jordan <JordanK@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Mike Nugent <NugentM@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Mirtha Becerra <BecerraM@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Sandra Vasecka <VaseckaS@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Stacie Anderson <andersons@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Neighborhood Council - River Road <RiverRoad@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Nick Shontz <nickshontz@gmail.com>; Jesse Neidigh <jesse.neidigh@gmail.com>; Charlie Byrne <lookbuster@gmail.com>; Ellen Buchanan <buchanane@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Bill Watson <billwatson58@yahoo.com>
Subject: Fwd: Regarding development on 1923 River Road

Hello Everybody, dear Council members

My name is Kim Walterskirchen, I'm a member of the River Road leadership team and this is about the **River View subdivision** and the **infrastructure of the River Road Neighborhood**.

I start with this introduction because I added all council members and other city officials to our Leadership team thread. This may be unconventional and it's too late for the hearing, but this way we can be sure that our viewpoints are on record and also **I will propose a solution to fix three of the most important infrastructure deficiencies of the River Road neighborhood and I will ask the city council members for their support.**

Attachments A1 to A6 which I will refer to can be found under this link: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1dyyJlQZ_2Eo09-VvUJK2P-6FAWo5Z9_D?usp=sharing

Nick, first of all, thank you for your comment! I totally agree with you that Missoula is in desperate need of housing opportunities of all kinds.

Part 1. **River View Subdivision**

I, Kim Walterskirchen, herewith support the River View subdivision and rezone proposal because Missoula faces a very dramatic housing and affordability crisis and the only way to get to a healthier market in which housing becomes attainable for more people of a wider income spectrum, be it as owners or as renters, is to create more supply and to build at higher densities.

The River view parcel is ideal for infill in many different ways. Developing it will undoubtedly change the feel for the neighbors who live directly adjacent to the site, yet of all the concerns that were raised, the only one I can wholeheartedly agree with is the **dangerous lack of sidewalks on River Road.**

The same is true for our Curtis St.

Since the lack of sidewalks and through streets are well known issues in our neighborhood, **I would like to ask all city council members to help us build out the most important missing infrastructure pieces by supporting my request.**

Part 2: Request

I herewith request the expansion of the Urban Renewal District 2 (URD 2) to include

1. **All of River Road**
2. **All of Curtis St**
3. **Johnson St from Third St to Trail St**

as shown on the attached Maps (A1, A2)**,** so the Missoula Redevelopment Agency (MRA) can help us build our infrastructure and make our much needed housing more affordable.

I focus my petition on these three infrastructure projects because they would lead to the greatest gain in housing units and the most safety for our neighbors. They represent three of the most insufficient or missing infrastructure pieces of our neighborhood and should qualify for TIF funding for the following reasons:

1. Several properties in this area are blighted.
2. They represent three main reasons why our area is underserved by infrastructure.
3. These three projects don't lie directly within, but in close proximity to URD 2 similar to the Southgate Mall area where MRA built St Mary Avenue for $6 Million and which also didn't lie directly within URD 3.
4. Such expansions/amendments of an URD are not uncommon and happened

several times in the lifetime of URD 2 according to MRA board member Karl Englund.

5. Very recently the City Council voted to extend/amend the Northside URD. This expansion will benefit a private business (Diversified Plastics) and the public will eventually benefit from the increased tax revenue. The same is true for the Johnson Str connection. **In addition** the Johnson St connection will:

    1. Create a high number of much needed housing units

    2. Create a second outlet for the longest dead end road of our neighborhood

    3. Create a connection which has been already documented as a needed improvement in the River Road infrastructure plan which was passed by City Council in 2003!

1. **These improvements would furthermore meet the goals H, I, PI and T of the MRAs 9 year strategic exit plan** (A6). In short: support of variety of housing types, of infrastructure, of private development, of quality of life, of projects that are unlikely to occur without the use of TIF funding etc

A development around this part of Johnson St would also **fulfill the goals of the Missoula Growth policy as well as the focus inward philosophy** to build near the city center where sufficient infrastructure is already in place.

Sidewalks

River Road and Curtis St need sidewalks!

Housing and Connectivity

If Johnson St would be built from Third St to Trail St it would:

1. **Create an additional outlet for the longest dead end road of our neighborhood** along 2nd, Garfield St and Trail St and provide the residents of the 55 units at the end of Trail St a short and direct access to Third St, so they wouldn't have to zig zag through the entire neighborhood in order to get in and out.

2. **Unlock the development opportunities of the biggest underused property of our neighborhood with the greatest potential to create much needed services and housing in a perfect location for urban growth right on Third St.**

A masterplan for this property around a new Johnson St has been made and was endorsed by the River Road Leadership team in 2018. Daniel Gundlach, a former city planner, chose this property for a project during his studies at the university. He reached out to the leadership team and incorporated all the elements we told him we would like to see. Please see the attached masterplan and description

for the **"Quiet Beauty Property"** by Daniel Gundlach (A3, A4).

His **Masterplan** shows what a beautiful development could happen on either side of a new Johnson St. Starting with Mixed use buildings on Third street which could contain much needed services like a neighborhood cafe on the ground level and **82 condos** above (**40 of which he planned to be affordable**) and which are arranged around courtyards. Further inwards the plan shows **62 Townhouses** grouped around green spaces and orchards and a Community Garden on either side of a Johnson st, which would be lined by trees and boulevards and which would be built as a "sharrow", a low traffic street that is shared by bikes and cars in order to reduce the impact on the existing and future neighbors.

As I understand any owner of that property who wants to develop it will have to build Johnson St. This could be a deterrence and prevent the creation of much needed housing and services, but if the developer could count on MRA to build the street plus infrastructure, just as they did in the sawmill district where **MRA built Wyoming street for $1,608.547.00 (A5, page 2),** then a development on this property could become feasible and could be nicer than without such a subsidy. That is how MRA members **Ellen Buchanan** and **Ruth Reineking** explained the effect of MRA subsidies at the citizens academy in 2020.

Again, the masterplan is just an inspiring study and a real development on that site might be very different and not contain all the elements we would like to see and the units could also be market rate, but it's highly unlikely that the townhouses, for example, would cost anywhere near the $1.0 Million to $1.3 Million like the ones that are offered along Wyoming St right now.
https://www.realtor.com/realestateandhomes-detail/1170-Wyoming-St_Missoula_MT_59801_M90513-40379

The potential funding of this Johnson St connection by MRA could be an incentive for the owner to develop this property, but if it remains undeveloped until, let's say, 2028, then no TIF funds would be spent on Johnson St. and could still be used on other worthy projects in URD 2 until the district sunsets in 2031.

While building a **pedestrian path on the trestle** near Wyoming St over the Clark Fork River **for $3.5 Million** is an exciting project, as many MRA funded or subsidized projects are, it's close proximity to the already existing Orange street bridge makes it somewhat of **a luxury item**, in my view, especially **in light of the dramatic housing crisis** our community is facing right now. At a fraction of that cost MRA could build the relatively short Johnsons St connection, **help create much needed housing and services and make Curtis St and River Road finally safe for our neighbors.**

That would be a wonderful and much appreciated farewell gift from MRA to the River Road neighborhood.

I created a petition on change.org where everybody can sign, who is in support of these goals and who cares to do so.
https://chng.it/n8FxVn4R9W

Thank you very much for your attention!

Sincerely,

Kim Walterskirchen
RRLT

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Charles Byrne** <lookbuster@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Mar 16, 2022 at 11:49 AM
Subject: Re: Regarding development on 1923 River Road
To: Nick Shontz <nickshontz@gmail.com>
Cc: Jesse N <jesse.neidigh@gmail.com>, Neighborhood Council - River Road <RiverRoad@ci.missoula.mt.us>

I agree with both of you; adding houses to our area has to go hand in hand with improving infrastructure, and I think the city would agree. It seems to me that all these new houses will be generating more city taxes and it only makes sense that some of that money be reinvested in our neighborhood. I look forward to our Neighborhood Leadership Council meeting where we can flesh these ideas out some more. Sincerely, Charlie Byrne

On Wed, Mar 16, 2022 at 11:22 AM Nick Shontz <nickshontz@gmail.com> wrote:

> Thanks.
>
> And I totally agree we must advocate for infrastructure improvements. I wonder if we can come up with some strategies to bring this issue up (and get results) with the city.
>
> What are the specific outcomes that would help?
>
> A light at Catlin and 3rd?
> Better enforcement of street parking on Wyoming and elsewhere?
> Changes to on street parking?
> Sidewalks on heavily trafficked through streets?
> Can we gather data about emergency calls for service in our neighborhood?
>
> I'm sure there are more and perhaps we can can use this, and other density projects (what's happening at river and reserve?) to make the case that we need specific infrastructure upgrades now, for the safety and livability of our neighborhood.
>
> Perhaps we can brainstorm a list and then invite the right folks from the city to help us make a plan?
>
> Then we can be the squeaky wheel with specific issues and solutions on hand.

Thanks,
Nick

On Wed, Mar 16, 2022 at 11:12 AM Jesse N <jesse.neidigh@gmail.com> wrote:

> Well said, Nick.
> I agree, we have a dire situation with Missoula lacking affordable housing and adequate pay.
> I wish we could get the infrastructure in place first, but you may be right that in-filling first to force the issues might be the more expedient approach.
> I know there have been a few times in the last year on our street that emergency vehicles have been backed up or inhibited getting to homes where residents needed help. Our street isn't even a true dead end, and or neighborhood has a lot that are. I don't like the idea of putting more people into situations where emergency services may not be able to reach them, but if that's what it takes to have infrastructure addressed I hope noone is hurt while the need is proven to decision makers.
> I haven't had time to review how the meeting went on Monday, but I did want to respond to your well thought out message.
> Jess
>
> On Thu, Mar 10, 2022, 10:27 PM Nick Shontz <nickshontz@gmail.com> wrote:
>
> > Hello-
> >
> > I am in support of the zoning request. Housing in Missoula is in a dire state. The need for more reasonably priced housing far outweighs the infrastructure issues. I would also wager that no infrastructure will be added/improved until the density of the neighborhood increases. This may be a chicken and egg situation, but I don't think so. It seems more likely that infrastructure will be only be improved after the need is demonstrated (and championed) and not before.
> >
> > Reading through the responses on the engagemissoula.com site, one of the complaints was along the lines of "This proposal will severely devalue my house." Frankly, this is offensive. Home prices in Missoula have increased by over 37% in the last year. Today, the average home value on Carter Ct is $400K which means that a year ago, the average Carter Ct home price was around $250K meaning that in the last year, the value of their house increased by $150,000. They are now $150,000 richer than they were a year ago, but young Missoulians cannot find anywhere in Missoula to live, no place to start their family.
> >
> > Another complaint was about the "greed of the developers" or when a "developer's need outweigh the current residents" I know nothing about the developer in this case, and I have no idea of their motives. But let's not forget that many, over half, of these residents, are currently renting in Missoula, many of them dream of buying a home and achieving housing stability in Missoula. Townhouses are a great way to build smaller homes that are more affordable simply by the nature of their size and design.

I fully appreciate not wanting increased traffic in our neighborhood without meaningful improvements. I understand the other concerns about not wanting neighbors parking near your house. But Missoula is in desperate need of housing opportunities. We need more affordable housing. We need more housing of all kinds. We need it in every neighborhood.

Thanks,
Nick

On Tue, Mar 8, 2022 at 5:59 PM Jesse N <jesse.neidigh@gmail.com> wrote:

> Hey team,
> Typically, I would wait for our meeting to discuss, but as the vote is before we have a meeting scheduled I'm sending this message.
>
> How do you all feel about this zoning request?
>
> I would be supportive of a letter from the leadership team supporting maintenance of current zoning.
> We are aware of infrastructure issues in our neighborhood, including those mentioned by Kate, and also lacking through streets, parking, green spaces, and access to medical and other services. I am concerned that continued in-growth without adequate planning and incorporation for infrastructure will further exaggerate issues we already know are unaddressed concerns for our neighbors.
>
> That said, I am only one voice and as always, I appreciate your thoughts and perspectives.
>
> Jess
>
> ---------- Forwarded message ---------
> From: **kfizell** <kfizell98@yahoo.com>
> Date: Tue, Mar 8, 2022, 5:20 PM
> Subject: Re: Regarding development on 1923 River Road
> To: Nick Shontz <nickshontz@gmail.com>
> Cc: Melissa Neidigh <uleecat@gmail.com>, Charlie Byrne <lookbuster@gmail.com>, Jesse Neidigh <jesse.neidigh@gmail.com>, Kim Walterskirchen <kimdeus@gmail.com>, Bill Watson <billwatson58@yahoo.com>, Neighborhood Council - River Road <RiverRoad@ci.missoula.mt.us>
>
> Thank you River Road Team for giving me an opportunity to respond.
>
> We've had two zoom opportunities to present our reasoning to keep the zoning as it is- RT10. which would be 11 houses. They are requesting approval to rezone to RT5.4 which would mean 19 houses. There have been enough petitions against this

rezoning that the Planning Board only needs eight (8) to approve this rezone to RT5.4 instead of 12. In addition to the petitions, a number of neighbors have written letters to the Planning Board.

The next Planning Board meeting is next Wednesday March 14, and we believe that will produce the final vote of Approval or Disapproval of this rezoning effort.

I understand that our Neighborhood Council is volunteers and it is not my intent for any of you to go another extra mile which I know you already do!

Our main concern is the quality of this new rezoning effort to RT5.4. If approved, it includes 19 houses, no green space (they plan to give cash in-lieu of and use LaFray,) they are estimating 152 car trips per day added to River Road. For transportation, they mention the bus lines on Russell, which is .7 miles away, and means walking on River Road where there are minimal sidewalks. And one of our top concerns is children walking to bus stops, and the added road traffic. Even without snow, River Road is becoming more and more heavily traveled, due to the Russell St. bridge.

Their proposal has covenants but they teeter on having an HOA. While they will have sidewalks in the development, we are not certain they will have sidewalks in front of their development on River Road. I could go on.

So my ask:

I noticed in the meeting notes of November 19, 2019 that the top two priorities of our River Road community is Sidewalks and Pedestrian/bike connectivity.

If you all feel stongly about keeping the current zoning to RT10, then we would love your support with a letter from this Team. Second best, if you could write a letter stating the priorities of this neighborhood noted in the November meeting that would be important and most helpful.

If, as an individual, you would like to write a letter to keep the Zoning at RT10, that would be appreciated also. I would be more than happy to pick up any letter(s) and hand deliver to the Planning Board before this next meeting on March 14th.

Thank you all for your time, and please let me know if any questions.

Most sincerely,
Kate Fizell

406-214-0254

Sent from my iPad

On Mar 7, 2022, at 1:06 PM, Nick Shontz <nickshontz@gmail.com> wrote:

Hello-

Are you asking the Neighborhood leadership team to take a position on the rezoning effort and to write a letter to that effect? perhaps we could put this on the agenda for our upcoming meeting?

I've also copied the river road leadership team email on this thread so it can be a part of the public record.

Thanks,
Nick

On Sun, Mar 6, 2022 at 5:46 PM kfizell <kfizell98@yahoo.com> wrote:

> Hello from Kate Fizell!
>
> I hope everyone is dong well. Not sure if you have noticed but at 1923 River Road the current owner is going to put in a housing development on the 2.38 acres that they have there. (It's across from the River Acres trailer park.).
> They are requesting a number of variances to fit in 19 single family houses in that space. (Currently it is zoned as RT10, and that would allow 11 houses.)
> While not thrilled about developing we understand that it is inevitable. Our biggest concerns are the added traffic on River Road and the congestion of the homes being so close together. They are going to use La Fray park as their green space.
>
> > So is this something that the Neighborhood Team should know about or be interested in? We've had two meetings with the Planning Board, and they listen but not much movement. We have Christine Jordon and Sandra V(?) on board because we asked them to be involved. Obviously there is much more, but I wanted to ask.
>
> Their proposal is at. engagemissoula.com. and in the search box put 1923 River View.
>
> I would appreciate it if you would let me know your thoughts.
>
> Many Thanks!! Kate Fizell.
>
> Sent from my iPad

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