Staff Report
April 25, 2018

TO:	Chairman Hogan and Planning Commission Members
FROM:	Robert King, Town Planner Britton Snipes, Public Works Director and Town Engineer Sean Rabé, Town Manager
DATE:	April 25, 2018
SUBJECT:	Village at Loomis

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Commission open the public hearing, receive Staff's presentation, receive a presentation from the applicant, receive public comment, then close the public hearing.

Once the public hearing is closed, Staff recommends the Commission approve the following motion:

Motion to adopt the attached Resolution Recommending Denial of the Village at Loomis (Project# 14-05) to the Loomis Town Council due to the following concerns:

1. Inconsistency with the Planning Commission's direction from the March 14, 2018 meeting regarding minimum lot sizes, setbacks and single-story homes along David Drive;
2. Inadequate active park space; and
3. Inadequate General Commercial zoning as part of the overall project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the 11th public hearing of the Village at Loomis (Project #14-05) that first began on September 12, 2017. The applicants "*The Village at Loomis, LLC*", in a letter dated April 5, 2018 have requested the Planning Commission approve the project at tonight's meeting, including the changes presented to the Planning Commission on January 10, 2018 and as described in the applicant's January 16, 2018 submittal titled "Proposed Project Modifications." These changes were memorialized in the Revised Preliminary Development Plan and Revised Specific Development Plan, which were submitted to the Commission at its February 27, 2018 meeting. The changes are further detailed in the Revised Village Tentative Subdivision Map (Sheets 1-10, dated March 6, 2018.) For purposes of this Staff report, the documents listed above are collectively called the "Revised Project."

BACKGROUND

The first of the public hearings were held at a joint Town Council/Planning Commission Workshop on September 12, 2017 with the most recent, before this evening, held on March 27, 2018. The 66.5-acre project as first heard, proposed 418 residential dwelling units (du's) on 48.3 acres, 6.2 acres of commercial, and 12 acres of open space.

Subsequently on January 10, 2018 the applicant presented to the Commission project revisions that resulted in a net change of 2 du's due to a decrease of 8 dwellings from the Village Residential, but an additional 6 du's due to .35 acre increase of Village Commercial Mixed Use. The revision also eliminated 1.5 acres of Village Office Commercial by replacing it with a "Civic Park." Sufficient off-street parking was provided so that on-street parking was no longer needed to fulfill the project's parking requirements. These changes were described in the applicant's January 16, 2018 submittal titled "Proposed Project Modifications." These changes were memorialized in the Revised Preliminary Development Plan and Revised Specific Development Plan, which were submitted to the Commission at its February 27, 2018 meeting.

See the following Table for a summary of the project revision, with the changes shown in red font.

	ACRES		DWELLINGS	
Proposed Land Use	**2017 Proposal**	**2018 Revision**	**2017 Proposal**	**2018 Revision**
Village Residential	14.9	14.55	143	135
Village Green Court	9.6	9.6	64	64
Village Traditional	16.8	16.8	87	87
Village High Density	4.6	4.6	117	117
Total Residential	**45.9**	**45.55**	**411**	**403**
Village Mixed Use	0.4	0.75	7	13
Village Office	1.3	0		
Village Commercial	4.9	4.9		
Total Commercial	**6.6**	**5.65**	**7**	**13**
Open Space	9.68	9.68		
Active Parks	3.07	4.37		
Passive Parks	1.25	1.25		
	0	0		
Total Public Spaces	**14**	**15.30**		
Totals	**66.5**	**66.5**	**418**	**416**

The revision also eliminated some of the dead-end alleys, by reorienting the alleys along the eastern side of the Village Residential, to run north-south rather than east-west. The following illustration shows this revision along with the additional Village Mixed Use, and replacing the Village Office with a civic park.

At the March 14, 2018 Public Hearing the Planning Commission directed staff to include the following in the proposed conditions of approval:

- Minimum lot sizes of 3,000 sf in both the Village Residential and Village Green Court, along with five-foot side yard setbacks in both areas.
- In the Village Traditional, lots backing up to David Avenue, Silver Ranch Avenue and Sun Knoll Drive north of Blue Anchor Drive to be restricted to one story with no "pop-ups," with a minimum rear yard setback of 20 ft. (or 15 feet for new homes in the Village Traditional section that did not back up to existing homes.) The Commission further requested that the side setbacks in this area be at least five feet, and that the front setbacks of these homes have 18-foot setbacks to the garage and 10-foot setbacks to the living area.

Other concerns of the Planning Commission included:

- Replacement of all the buildable General Commercial land use designation of the Loomis General Plan with Residential land use designations.
- The additional Village Mixed Use would be better situated along Laird Dr. rather than Webb St.
- Lack of private outdoor space.
- Lack of Improved design and benefits in exchange for allowance of Planned Development zoning.

On April 5, 2018 the Town Manager received a letter from the applicant stating that they would not be able to comply with the increased lot sizes or setbacks discussed by the Planning Commission on March 14, 2018 and requested their Revised Project be brought forward for a decision at the April 25, 2018 Planning Commission meeting.

ANALYSIS

Project Design and Development Standards

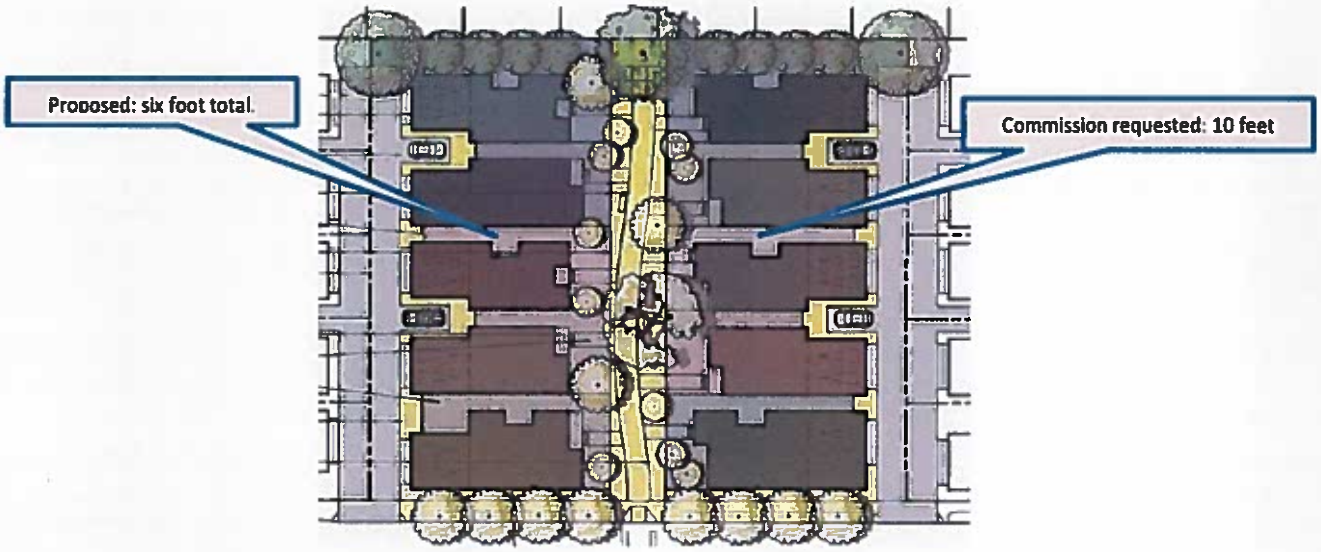
Since the project's application, concern has centered on the Village Residential and Village Green Court style of housing as contrary to the rural image of the town. These homes would have minimal private outdoor space with garages facing upon alleys to the rear, with shared commons in front or between the fronts of homes. Even though successfully used in many other Placer County communities such as Lincoln or Rocklin, such a design would be new here. The Village Traditional with its larger setbacks and typical garages, and off-street driveways, was not as controversial. However, concern was expressed about the two story or "Pop-Up" dwellings, and the rear yard setbacks along those lots north of Blue Anchor Drive. Even though the Village High Density (apartment complexes) was controversial, that portion of the project is consistent with the General Plan as a seven acre of high density zoning overlay was approved for this area when the Housing Element was approved in 2014.

While the applicant's Revised Project made incremental design improvements, the overall issues as to the size of the lots, setbacks, and lot coverage remained unchanged. No significant changes were made as to the number of dwelling units, with only a reduction from 418 du's to 416 du's occurring.

The Commission at the March 14, 2018 special meeting, discussed the proposed minimum lot sizes of 2,250 sf. in the Village Residential and 2,350 sf. in the Village Green Court areas. A consensus of the Commission indicated the lot sizes were too small. Currently, the minimum lot size for residential uses is 3,500 sf (in the RM-3.5 zone) when designated Medium/High Residential in the General Plan. The Commission directed staff to prepare a condition of approval for future consideration to require a minimum lot size of 3,000 sf in the Village Residential and the Village Garden Court areas. The Commission left the Village Traditional minimum lot size of 4,000 sf. unchanged.

Another concern of the Commission was the setbacks throughout the project. The Commission was concerned about the three-foot side yard setbacks in the Village Residential and the Village Green Court portions of the project. According to the applicants, these would be open without fences to provide a six-foot-wide area between each dwelling, with a Use Easement to allow "the owner of a lot to use the side yard of the neighboring lot as if it were her/his property. The neighboring owner who granted the easement retains the right to access the easement area to maintain her/his property."

The following diagram shows how the side yards would be designed:



The Planning Commission expressed concern as to how this would actually work out in practice, as a six-foot-wide area was considered to be unusable. As a result, the Commission directed staff to prepare a condition of approval for consideration that required five-foot side yard setbacks throughout the Project, which would create a minimum width of 10 foot between the dwellings. The front and rear yard setbacks in these areas remained unchanged by the Commission.

To address the concerns of residents along the south side of David Avenue, Silver Ranch Avenue and Sun Knoll Drive who would be adjacent to the Village Traditional lots north of Blue Anchor Drive, the Planning Commission's consensus was to limit dwellings that backed up to the existing homes along those streets to no more than one-story, which would disallow the "pop-up" style of housing requested by the applicant. The Commission also requested a minimum rear yard setback of 20 feet for the homes that backed up to David Avenue, Silver Ranch Avenue and Sun Knoll Drive, and a minimum rear yard setback of 15 feet for homes in the Village Traditional section that did not back up to existing homes. The Commission also requested modifications to the front setbacks of these homes, with 18-foot setbacks to the garage and 10-foot setbacks to the living area. As with the Village Residential and Village Green Court, the Planning Commission requested five-foot side yard setbacks throughout the Village Traditional Area.

The Village at Loomis, LLC letter of April 5, 2018

The Town Manager received a letter from the applicant on Thursday April 5, 2018 (attached). In it the applicant stated the project would not be financially viable if they made the changes as to lot size and setbacks discussed by the Planning Commission on March 14, 2018. These changes would result in the loss of approximately 35 residential lots, "resulting in significant revenue loss of approximately $3.5 million." The applicant concluded with a request, "that all information necessary to support a decision by the Planning Commission be submitted

to them and available to the public such that a recommendation of support by the Planning Commission can be achieved at their next regular meeting on April 25, 2018."

CONCLUSION

The Planning Commission direction of March 14, 2018 provided some of the recommendations the Commission would like to see made part of the Villages at Loomis Project. Additional concerns have yet to be discussed and addressed on several other issues, including other development and design standards, and the ability to make the required finding to approve the Planned Development rezoning.

Considering the recently-submitted letter from the applicant detailing the applicant's inability to incorporate the Commission's recommendations into the project, Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt the attached Resolution Recommending Denial of the Village at Loomis project to the Town Council. Should the Commission wish to move forward with an approval of the project, Staff recommends the Commission provide specific direction to Staff to bring back project approval documents.

ALTERNATIVES

The Commission could consider a recommendation to the Council for approval of the Revised Project. Staff does not recommend the Commission recommend the Revised Project for approval because the project does not meet the Commission's requested modifications.

CEQA REQUIREMENTS

Denial of projects are exempt from the California Environmental Act (CEQA) as Section 15270 of the CEQA Guidelines "Projects Which Are Disapproved."

ATTACHMENTS

New:

1. Resolution of Denial
2. Applicant's Letter dated April 5, 2018
3. Revised Village Tentative Subdivision Map (Sheets 1-10) (dated March 6, 2018)

Previous:

The following were distributed at previous Commission Meetings. Copies are available either on the Town's Website or at Town Hall during regular business hours.

1. Village at Loomis FEIR
2. Village at Loomis Revised Plans
    a. Revised Village Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) (submitted to Commission on February 27, 2018)
        i. Land Use Map
        ii. Village Development Standards
        iii. Village Design Guidelines
    b. Revised Village Specific Development Plan (SDP) for PD Areas 1, 2, and 3 (submitted to Commission on February 27, 2018)
3. Village Development Agreement
4. Previous Village Staff Reports