

Taos Ski Valley 'Parcel G' Redevelopment

Conditional Use Permit and Certificate of Compatibility Application Narrative

February 27, 2014

Introduction

This document is the narrative section of the application to the Village of Taos Ski Valley (VTSV) for a Conditional Use Permit and Certificate of Compatibility Permit for the redevelopment of Parcel G within the 'Core Village Zone' of the VTSV, currently referred to informally as the 'Pagoda Building'. The application is being submitted on February 14, 2014 for review with the VTSV Planning Commission scheduled for March 3, 2014.

The applicant, Taos Ski Valley, Inc. (TSVI) is represented by Peter Talty, Gordon Briner and Bob Daniel, assisted by a team consisting of the following professional organizations:

- Zehren and Associates, Inc.: Architecture, Planning, Landscape Architecture, Interiors
- Russell Planning & Engineering: Civil Engineering
- Red Tail Surveying: Professional Land Surveying
- Jaynes Corporation: General Contracting

TSVI Goals

As a result of a new ownership structure of the ski resort, significant improvements are being planned for Taos Ski Valley for 2014 and into the future. The approach of TSVI is to make improvements over time with the following three overarching goals:

- 1. Create new on-mountain improvements to elevate the ski experience.**
- 2. Improve skier services at the base of the ski area to enhance the guest experience.**
- 3. Increase the quantity and quality of accommodations in the core to add value, energy and activity to the Village and resort.**

With the announcement of the new Kachina Peak lift on the mountain and the redevelopment of Parcel G in the core village zone, TSVI is making a very strong and meaningful gesture toward achieving these three goals. Cumulatively these improvements will announce a new era for Taos Ski Valley and set the tone for future redevelopment. Ultimately, the synergy between the improvements will invigorate TSVI as a year round destination, generate renewed interest, and reinforce the unique and very special brand and 'mystique' of Taos Ski Valley.

Overview of Parcel G Redevelopment

This application proposes the redevelopment of Parcel G within the Core Village Zone of the Village of Taos Ski Valley. The redevelopment will entail the demolition of the existing building and the development of a new mixed-use building within the boundaries of Parcel G. The new building will consist of one level of underground parking, two intermediate partially 'at grade' levels with a mix of uses including skier services, retail, residential uses, and three levels of residential uses above, for a total of six levels.

The location of Parcel G at the center of the 'core village zone' of the Village, and the special context adjacent to both the ski slopes and the stream corridor at the center of the resort have been major driving forces in shaping the redevelopment proposal. The project seeks to accomplish and fulfill the overarching goals and objectives of the VTSV Master Plans (2010 and 2012), and meet the requirements of the VTSV zoning ordinance, development, design standards and regulations.

The redevelopment of Parcel G also includes major infrastructure upgrades within the core village zone to help the delivery of vital utilities throughout the Village into the future. TSVI is working with the VTSV to meet the requirements of the Certificate of Compatibility. The success of the effort will require a collaborative team effort between TSVI and VTSV, already initiated with the VTSV staff and affected stakeholders in preparing this submittal.

Major Project Statistics

The following are the major development and dimensional statistics associated with the proposal:

Development Summary:

- Total Gross Floor Area: 128,100 sf
- Commercial Area: 7,450 sf (ski retail and performance rental shop)
- Skier Services Area: 8,900 sf (lift ticket office, ski school sales, rentals)
- Skier Support Area: 3,100 sf (back of house, storage, service areas)
- Residential Area: 66,150 sf in (40) new residential condominiums units
- Residential Product Mix: (10) 1 bedroom units; (10) 2 bedrooms; (18) 3 bedrooms; (2) 4 bedrooms; (58) keys total (18 lock-off units)
- Parking: (59) underground parking spaces / 25,254 sf

Dimensional Summary:

- Total number of floors: 6 (1 fully subterranean, 2 partially at grade, 3 elevated)
- Total Building Coverage: 25,175 sf
- Average Building Height: 55' above grade plane (measured from the garage plane to typical eave height).

Public Spaces and Amenities Summary:

- Public Plaza at Ski Beach: approximately 4,700 sf area
- Public Plaza at Stream Bridge: approximately 3,800 sf area
- Pedestrian Walkway: approximately 4,100 sf area
- Stream Bridge: approximately 66' lf span 16' wide bridge (rated for light maintenance vehicle traffic)
- Stream Corridor Path (at ground level): approximately 450 lf of 6' wide semi-pervious path
- Elevated Walkway (at level +21): approximately 135 lf of 11' wide pedestrian walkway
- Stream Restoration: approximately 430 lf of stream bank restoration / landscaping
- Arrival and Drop-off: approximately 2,100 sf of dedicated area
- New Streetscape: enhanced surface paving and streetscape elements including lights, bollards, fences, within new public spaces directly associated with Parcel G.
- New Furnishings: new exterior site furnishings including benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, landscape planters and pots.
- New Way finding and Directional Signage: new signage to guide and orient pedestrian circulation through the village to key destinations, businesses, and services.

Master Plan Conformance

The Parcel G project has been developed with the VTSV 2010 and 2012 Master Plans as guiding documents. The team recognizes the time and energy that was put forth in the creation of these documents, and the importance of conforming to both documents to fulfill the expectations and needs expressed during the long range planning process. In particular, the Parcel G project seeks to implement and facilitate fundamental 'big picture' recommendations and requirements of the master plans significantly. Major points of emphasis relative to conformance with the 2010 and 2012 Master Plan include:

- 1) The Parcel G building is proposed to reinforce the character of place of Taos Ski Valley, by creating unique spaces, engaging the ski-beach with a new plaza, engaging the Lake Fork stream corridor with a pedestrian path, and creating interesting pedestrian routes throughout the Village.
- 2) The Parcel G building intends to help clarify the guest arrival experience and provide more efficient skier circulation by facilitating access through the Village, along the Lake Fork stream corridor, retail uses, and in the vicinity of the 'ski-beach'.
- 3) The proposed development of Parcel G takes advantage of sloping site gradients to create at-grade access into the building at various levels and positive relationships to exterior spaces on all (4) facades. The building program generally follows the street level land use plan in the 2010 Master Plan with a mix of residential and retail.
- 4) The Parcel G building will create a significant increase in for-sale and leasable residential real estate offerings within the core village zone of the VTSV, in close proximity and short walking distance to the main ski base. The project seeks to maximize the value of the location of the parcel within the context of the Village.
- 5) Public spaces and gathering points within the Parcel G site plan have been strategically located to take advantage of prime sun and respect adjoining public spaces.
- 6) The design of parcel G respects primary view corridors and capitalizes on desirable views with building orientation and layout of public spaces including the ski-beach plaza and the stream corridor path.
- 7) The redevelopment of Parcel G is intended to serve as the catalyst to redevelop the main village core of Taos Ski Valley. The redevelopment will hopefully create a new sense of energy and enthusiasm in Taos Ski Valley and encourage more skier visits and year round tourism.
- 8) The redevelopment of Parcel G improves the skier guest experience by replacing and creating new space for ski lift ticket sales, ski merchandise sales, rentals, and other related services.

Zoning Ordinance Conformance

The site plan and architectural design of Parcel G are proposed to meet the standards and regulations in the VTSV Ordinance NO. 13-30. Following is a summary of the Parcel G conformance with the major regulations of the zoning ordinance:

Core Village Zone

Parcel G is located in the Core Village Zone of Taos Ski Valley, described in the Zoning Ordinance as 'a focal point of the community'. The development of Parcel G responds directly to the intent of the zone district by maximizing development opportunities, by creating a mix of desirable uses, and by fostering vibrant pedestrian activity zones to create an overall positive effect upon the Village experience. Parcel G intends to set the example for future redevelopment in the Core Village Zone, and stages the future redevelopment of other projects by bearing significant infrastructure upgrades to the Core Village Zone.

Site Design

The site design for Parcel G has evolved in direct response to the topography and physical constraints of the site, as well as the context and orientation to the ski mountain, the Lake Fork stream corridor, and existing development surrounding the site, including the Resort Center, Snakedance Condominiums, the Edleweiss Condominiums, and future development on Parcel D. The design of the site and the new building respects existing grades, and fits into the Core Village Zone with the least amount of disturbance and impact to surrounding properties. The site design leverages relationships to adjacent properties, and invigorates the core area with interesting public spaces, new pedestrian routes and greater connectivity within the village.

Stream Corridor and Riparian Setback

The enhancement of the Lake Fork stream is one of the most significant aspects of the Parcel G redevelopment project. The Lake Fork stream is the major drainage flowing through the Core Village Zone and over time has become degraded. The redevelopment of Parcel G respects the 20' riparian setback as required by the zoning ordinance and avoids building encroachments into the setback. Furthermore, the redevelopment calls for the restoration of the southern stream bank and the construction of a 6' wide pedestrian path running the length of Parcel G connecting from Ernie Blake Road to the east to Sutton Place Road to the west. Riparian landscaping is proposed to help stabilize the stream bank, and opportunities for viewing and interacting with the stream corridor are being investigated as part of the proposal.

Cumulatively these improvements are intended to create a drastic positive change and improvement with the Core Village Zone, by replacing the service road corridor informally known as 'Siberia' and creating a very special opportunity for direct contact and experience with nature within the context of the Village.

Architectural Design

The architectural design of the new Parcel G building takes great care to respond to its context, and draws subtle references from surrounding architectural precedents in the Village derived from historic precedents from alpine environments in Europe. At the same time, the building seeks to be timeless without referencing a particular style, and aims to fit into the core of the village in a complementary manner without being overstated. To this end, the approach for the architectural design has been to create a suitable form, bulk, and massing that is appropriate for the site and helps establish the desired public spaces at the ground level while respecting the surrounding existing development.

Wood and stucco are proposed as the primary exterior construction materials, since they are traditionally used in alpine environments for their durability, aesthetics, and interplay with the existing surrounding environment. Stone may be used as a complementary material where the base of the building is closely tied to the natural site.

Height Analysis

The proposed Parcel G building meets the VTSV code height requirement across the entire building mass per zoning ordinance 13-30. The building steps back gradually from the overall footprint at the street level, in order to minimize the impact of overall height and help manage pedestrian circulation, snow management, and building articulation. *Please reference the building sections and height analysis drawings submitted with this narrative.*

Three of the four primary facades of the Parcel G building meet the Core Village Zone 48' height requirement, as currently represented in the application. This includes the south, west, and east façades. Along the north façade of the building, the design is able to take advantage of a 10' slope change profile across the lot and utilize a building height of 53' to the bottom of the roof eave. The 53' height is proposed specifically to create high-quality residential units on the upper most floor of the building without unduly constraining the residential ceiling heights. Taller ceiling heights will better accommodate the top level units into the overall mass of the building and maximize value of views and site location in the core. The height details of the north facade of the building have been discussed with the VTSV as a result of the unique location of the Parcel G site and the confinement relative to other buildings and natural features.

Roof Design

The roof design will be carefully considered to control snow and ice, protect pedestrians, and shed away from entries and public spaces. A lower "podium" roof has been designed over the commercial level to accommodate falling snow and ice from the higher roof above, and to dampen any impact snow and ice shed may have on the public spaces below. Other snow management strategies, such as snow fences and snow clips, may also be used in conjunction with the overall roof design.

Exterior Building Elements

The building at Parcel G will feature significant expanses of glass and interesting retail signage at the pedestrian and commercial level, to help animate the public spaces and reinforce the inviting and open nature of the building at the ground level. Above the ground level the exterior building elements will become more “quiet,” with stucco and simple wood detailing to help enliven the façade and provide interest to the building mass. Windows and balconies will animate the building mass as well, and vertical stacks of balconies will reduce the apparent bulk by providing organization and hierarchy to the building elevations. These features help to segment the elevations so that the entire building is not perceived as a single mass.

Service and Delivery

The delivery and location of services for Parcel G has been carefully coordinated with the Resort Center since both buildings are intricately connected operationally and physically underground. The approach is a consolidated service and delivery for both buildings on the north side of the project in the approximate location of the existing loading dock for the Resort Center. The goal is to conceal service and delivery so it is out of the view and minimizes impact upon the overall village and guest experience. A service corridor and supporting storage space is being proposed in the new Parcel G building, connecting to the Resort Center.

Bridge, Plazas, and Streetscape Design

The Parcel G redevelopment proposal addresses the street level with a high degree of detail in order to create comfortable and engaging pedestrian spaces and clear circulation routes. A major element associated with the project is a new bridge over the Lake Fork stream, connecting Parcel G and the ski yard with future development on Parcel D, and the future new skier arrival route along Thunderbird Road.

Consistent with the 2010 Master Plan, the proposed bridge leads to a plaza space on the south side of the creek at the interface with the ski yard / beach, in between the new Parcel G building, the Resort Center, and Snakedance building. The bridge and plaza are intended to simplify the skier and pedestrian access to the base on the mountain, and to create a special sense of place befitting of the core of the resort and village. Special paving, furnishings, signage, and decorative elements are being proposed as part of the place-making to create an interesting and vibrant pedestrian environment. These improvements are intended to set the tone for the new feel, look, and identity for the ski resort and village and will need to be considered carefully during the design development stages of the effort.

Certificate of Compatibility

The Parcel G application requires for TSVI to meet the requirements of the VTSV Certificate of Compatibility as deemed appropriate by the VTSV prior to issuance of a building permit. The intent of the Certificate of Compatibility is to ensure structures have the appropriate land planning, architecture, and aesthetics to fit within zoned properties in the Village.

At the time of this submittal on February 14, 2014 a majority of the items required for the Certificate of Compatibility have been initiated and are being submitted as in-progress documents to allow a preliminary review and feedback from VTSV staff and it's Planning Commission. As a reference, the attached Certificate of Compatibility Checklist indicates the items that are currently included with the application.

There has been a deliberate focus on initiating the infrastructure plans in order to understand the logistics and coordination with VTSV systems. The following plans developed by Russell Engineering are currently included in the application. A brief description of each plan as well as how it relates to the corresponding infrastructure development plan or master plan is included below.

1. Sheet SP – Site Plan Parcel G

This is an overall view of the infrastructure improvements and how they relate to Parcel G.

2. Sheet SS-1, SS-2 - Sewer Plan and Profile

Long-standing issues with the sanitary sewer lines are addressed by replacing the lines through "Siberia" and Sutton Place with steeper, larger pipes, all according to the VTSV Sanitary Sewer Development Plan.

3. Sheet W – Water Plan

Long-standing water distribution needs are addressed with the abandonment of the water line under the "Pagoda" building, looping of the water line south of the St. Bernard buildings, and connection of the loop along Sutton Place, all according to the VTSV Water Master Plan.

4. Sheet DO – Skier Drop Off

Implementation of phase one of the overall skier drop off area as approved in the Master Plan is shown. Skier Shuttle and Pedestrian traffic patterns are established with this plan which now ties the new skier drop-off with the intersection of Thunderbird Rd while balancing cut and fill for phase one construction. This is a significant offsite improvement associated with the overall effort.

5. Sheet DP – Drainage Plan

Implementation of storm water-quality ponds developed in the Village Master Plan is shown along with the corresponding conveyance systems serving Parcel G and the Skier Drop Off areas. Untreated storm water originating in these areas will now be treated prior to release to the Rio Hondo.

6. Sheet SW – Snow Storage Plan – Snow storage and snow melt zones are shown, along with corresponding calculations complying with VTSV snow storage requirements. Close coordination on the locations of snow storage areas with water quality systems allow us to treat snowmelt before the ultimate release into the Rio Hondo.

The understanding is that the project team will continue to supplement the information required in the Certificate of Compatibility as the VTSV determines the needs associated with the project and as the design evolves in greater detail. Ultimately the Certificate of Compatibility requirements must meet the approval of the VTSV before building permit application can be made.

Conclusion

The planning and design of the project are being handled with the utmost care and consideration for the long term future and well-being of the Village of Taos Ski Valley and the Taos Ski Valley. The team looks forward to a continued coordination with the VTSV so the resulting outcome of the project is of mutual benefit to the ski resort operation, the Village, its residents and guests.

-End of Narrative-

