October 15, 2013

TO: ACHD Commissioners

FROM: Christy Little, Planning Review Supervisor

SUBJECT: Reflection Ridge – Modification to Final Plat Conditions

Staff Report for October 23, 2013 Commission Meeting

Executive Summary
The applicant has submitted a final plat for review and approval for Phase 2 of Reflection Ridge Subdivision, with 12 residential lots and 2 common lots. During the final plat review it was determined that previous ACHD action on the preliminary plat for Reflection Ridge did not implicitly require a road trust for a future bridge for a stub street at the Ridenbaugh Canal which is included in Phase 2. Staff is seeking Commission direction on whether or not to require the stub street.

Facts & Findings
1. ACHD approved the preliminary plat for Reflection Ridge Subdivision on December 6, 2005. The plat included 255 residential lots. ACHD required a stub street to the Ridenbaugh Canal, and required a road trust for one half the cost of the bridge. The full cost of the bridge was estimated at $330,000 at that time.

2. The Reflection Ridge property was sold and the preliminary plat expired. ACHD approved a new preliminary plat for Cavanaugh Ridge (same property, different name) on October 28, 2009. The plat included 252 residential lots. ACHD required a stub street to the Ridenbaugh Canal, but did not list a separate requirement for a road trust deposit for one half the cost of the bridge. The report does not mention the need for the road trust requirement.

3. ACHD approved the final plat of the first phase of Reflection Ridge on September 18, 2013. (The name “Cavanaugh Ridge” was replaced with the original “Reflection Ridge”.) Phase 1 did not include the area where the stub street was to be located.

4. The applicant submitted for final plat approval for Phase 2 in July 2013. The plat shows the stub street right-of-way ending at a common lot adjacent to the Ridenbaugh Canal. The City of Meridian approved this final plat. In the review of this final plat ACHD staff discovered that the road trust requirement was omitted from the last preliminary plat approval. ACHD staff also noted that the right-of-way for the stub street needs to extend to the property line (the center of the canal), not to the common lot.

5. There is an undeveloped 25-acre parcel north of this site with frontage on Locust Grove, with one stub street from the developed subdivision to the north, and the Ridenbaugh Canal to the south and west.
6. There is connectivity over the Ridenbaugh Canal in this square mile, a collector roadway, but it is approximately ½ mile west of the location of this stub street, and would not directly serve the subdivisions north of the undeveloped parcel.

**Fiscal Implications**

With the approval of the final plat for Reflection Ridge Phase 2, there is a potential expectation for ACHD to fund one-half of the bridge over the Ridenbaugh Canal in the future, if ACHD requires a bridge when the parcel to the north develops. The design and construction of a full vehicular bridge is currently estimated at $360,000.

**Policy Implications**

The ACHD policy on stub streets (Section 7207.2.4) states that:

1. The street design in a proposed development shall cause no undue hardship to adjoining property. An adequate and convenient access to adjoining property for use in future development may be required. If a street ends at the development boundary, it shall meet the requirements as described in this sub-section.

The District will consider the following items when determining when to require a stub street:

- Property size and configuration of current application
- Property size and configuration of adjacent parcels
- Potential for redevelopment of adjacent parcels
- Location of vehicular and pedestrian attracting land use (i.e. schools, neighborhood commercial, etc.)
- Comprehensive Plan and Zoning designations
- Needs of the emergency service providers
- Location of existing stub streets
- Location of canals and necessary crossings
- Cost vs. benefit of requiring canal crossing
- Functional classification of adjacent and nearby roadways (i.e. will requiring a stub street achieve the District’s Access Management goals by reducing the potential need for additional connections to a classified roadway)
- The Master Street Map

Benefits of Connectivity and Stub Streets include but are not limited to the following:

- Reduces vehicle miles traveled
- Increases pedestrian and bicycle connectivity
- Increases access for emergency services
- Reduced need for additional access points to the arterial street system
- Promotes the efficient delivery of services including trash, mail, and deliveries.
- Promotes appropriate intra-neighborhood traffic circulation to schools, parks, neighborhood commercial centers, transit stops, etc…
- Promotes orderly development

2. An existing street, or a street in an approved preliminary plat, which ends at a boundary of a proposed development shall be extended in that development. The extension shall include provisions for continuation of storm drainage facilities.
Alternatives
Staff has identified two alternatives and provided pros and cons for each.

1. Construct the stub street to the Ridenbaugh Canal as is required in the ACHD report dated 10-28-09, Site Specific Condition #13 without provisions to build a bridge across the canal.
   a. The applicant is not opposed to this alternative, and originally submitted their final plat with the intent to do this.
   b. The City of Meridian staff has requested that ACHD uphold this condition to allow for potential future connectivity, recognizing that there is not a road trust fund in place for one half the cost of the bridge.
   c. A vehicular bridge over the Ridenbaugh Canal in this location is estimated to cost $360,000 for design and construction.
   d. A pedestrian bridge over the Ridenbaugh Canal in this location is estimated to cost $100,000 for design and construction.
   e. When the 25-acre parcel to the north develops, ACHD could require that developer to construct a bridge over the Ridenbaugh Canal and connect to this stub street. That developer would be required to pay for one half of the design and construction of the bridge, estimated at $180,000. The question remains: Who will fund the other one half of the cost to design and construct the bridge?
      i. ACHD does not typically fund development related improvements.
      ii. The City of Meridian staff has suggested that the City could seek alternative funding sources, but cannot commit the City to future funding.
   f. When the 25-acre parcel to the north develops, ACHD and the City may determine that vehicular connectivity is not warranted based on the Cost-Benefit analysis. Keeping the stub street for Reflection Ridge Phase 2 leaves open the possibility for future pedestrian connectivity, should the City determine that pedestrian connectivity would be beneficial to their pathway system.

2. Remove the stub street requirement.
   a. The applicant is not opposed to this alternative.
   b. The City of Meridian staff is strongly opposed to this alternative because of their perceived lack of north-south connectivity in the area.
   c. The 25-acre parcel to the north can develop without the stub street.
   d. The ACHD Commission has waived similar requirements for stub streets over large canals when it was demonstrated that there was a financial hardship, and/or the cost/benefit analysis showed high costs to construct and maintain a street and bridge when other options for connectivity exist.
   e. ACHD would not have to maintain a street and especially a bridge that would not get significant vehicular use.

Recommendation
Staff recommends that the Commission require the stub street without provisions to build a bridge across the canal, in accordance with the staff report and previous ACHD action for the preliminary plat of Reflection Ridge, to preserve potential vehicular or pedestrian connectivity. When the parcel to the
north develops, ACHD and Meridian should determine at that time if connectivity should be required, and if so, what kind of connectivity (vehicular vs. pedestrian), and funding sources.

Attachment(s):
1. Vicinity Map
2. Reflection Ridge Preliminary Plat (aka Cavanaugh Ridge)
3. Reflection Ridge Phase 2 Final Plat
4. Letter from Applicant
5. Letter from City of Meridian
Location of approved Ridenbaugh crossing/collector street.

Location of Reflection Ridge No. 2 stub street.

25-acre undeveloped parcel.
October 8, 2013

Ada County Highway District
Christy Little
3775 N. Adams St.
Garden City, ID 83714

Re: Reflection Ridge No. 2

Dear Christy:

This letter is written to formally request the elimination of the Northerly stub street shown as S. Luminous Ave. This stub street was originally shown stubbing to the south right-of-way line of the Ridenbaugh Canal.

This modification is substantial and is going to the City Council on October 15th for their decision.

The original Conditions of Approval from both ACHD and Meridian do not speak to the need of crossing the Ridenbaugh Canal. The development agreement is also silent to this. The Conditions for the Reflection Ridge #2 final plat (V. Staff Analysis) states that Ada County Highway District required a bridge connection to be constructed as a condition of approval of the preliminary plat for Normandy Subdivision, which has now expired.

From meeting with ACHD Staff, we understand that there is not a need for the stub road – the property to the north has ample means for roadway accessibility.

I have attached an email from Justin Lucas of Meridian in which he discusses the stub connection. Note that Meridian has taken the stance that Reflection Ridge should not take on the burden of the cost for any portion of the bridge crossing. City Staff is adamant about some sort of crossing at this location and we have proposed a pedestrian pathway crossing to allow for pedestrian connectivity.

In closing we are requesting that ACHD approve the final plat for Reflection Ridge No. 2 with the elimination of the said stub street for the specific reasons as outlined below:

1. The crossing is not a condition of approval for this project.
2. The crossing is not warranted for vehicular purposes.
3. Any financial participation by the Developer would be unexpected and a financial burden.

Lastly, I do hope that our efforts to enhance the development from its original design have not gone un-noticed. The developer is paying dearly for such things like round-about re-construction, storm drainage reconstruction, and other substantial items that benefit ACHD, the Community, and the Developer.

I appreciate your time and effort on this matter and look forward to any questions or comments that you might have.

Respectfully,

John G. Carpenter, P.E.
Project Manager
Carpenter, John

From: Justin Lucas <jlucas@meridiancity.org>
Sent: Friday, September 20, 2013 10:33 AM
To: Christy Little (Clittle@achdidaho.org)
Cc: Sonya Watters; Caleb Hood; Carpenter, John; Matthew Schultz
Subject: Reflection Ridge #2

Christy,

Yesterday City staff met with representatives for the property owner of Reflection Ridge #2 to discuss the stub street (S. Luminous Way) to the north/east property line. In its current configuration the stub street terminates into a common lot which is not a desirable situation. Unfortunately this was not caught during the City’s review of the final plat but apparently it was discovered prior to ACHD acting on the plat (good catch!) This stub street and its history related to a crossing of the Ridenbaugh Canal is complicated and includes expired plats, property boundary issues, and lack of clarity on what parties are responsible for the crossing of the canal.

In an effort to move this project forward the City would like to define its position related to the stub street and canal crossing:

1. Due to the confusing plat and property boundary history and staff’s error in addressing this issue previously in the entitlement processes, City staff is not actively advocating for this project to bear the burden of all or part of the bridge/culvert needed to cross the canal; requiring half of the crossing at this late point in the approval process does not seem appropriate.
2. The City would like to see the Final Plat revised to show ROW/Right-of-Way (whatever ACHD prefers) provided from the terminus of the current improvements to the centerline of the canal to allow for a future crossing at this location, as has been envisioned for many years. The City wants to preserve the opportunity for future connectivity in this area. We probably need to discuss how a future crossing would occur, and our agencies involvement.

The City fully understands that ACHD has jurisdiction over public right-of-way in the City of Meridian and will ultimately decide how to proceed on this issue. That stated, if the applicant requests the stub street to be completely removed staff believes that would constitute a significant change to the City approved Final Plat and would require the applicant to go back before the City Council for a Final Plat Modification. If that avenue is chosen City staff would request that ACHD wait to act on the final plat until the City Council has a chance to weigh in on this issue.

Justin Lucas, AICP
Planning Supervisor
City of Meridian
jlucas@meridiancity.org
208-884-5533
October 8, 2013

Sara Baker
Commission President
Ada County Highway District
3775 Adams Street
Garden City, Idaho 83714

President Baker,

Please accept these comments regarding the Reflection Ridge #2 Final Plat. The City of Meridian acted on the Reflection Ridge #2 Final Plat on July 23, 2013 and subsequently approved the findings on August 13, 2013. After City approval some issues were discovered related to the stub street, South Luminous Way. In its current configuration (on the approved Final Plat) this stub street terminates into a common lot adjacent to the Ridenbaugh Canal which is not desirable. Unfortunately this was not caught during the City’s review of the final plat but was discovered prior to ACHD acting on the plat.

The South Luminous Way stub street and its history related to a crossing of the Ridenbaugh Canal is complicated and includes expired plats, property boundary issues, and lack of clarity in the preliminary plat conditions of approval on what parties are responsible for the crossing of the canal. City staff has met with the applicant and ACHD staff to discuss this stub street and its future extension over the Ridenbaugh Canal several times. Based on these meetings and a review of the project history the City would like clarify its position related to the stub street and canal crossing.

1. The City would like to see the Final Plat depict ROW/Easement (whichever ACHD prefers) provided from the current terminus of South Luminous Way to the centerline of the canal to allow for a future roadway crossing at this location, as has been envisioned for many years.
2. Due to the confusing plat and property boundary history and staff’s error in specifically addressing this issue previously in the entitlement processes, City staff is not actively advocating for the cost of the bridge/culvert needed to cross the Ridenbaugh Canal to be a condition of this project.
3. The City is aware that these types of improvements are typically the developer’s responsibility but this appears to be a unique situation where the road trust for the bridge crossing was not explicitly required though the preliminary plat. Requiring the road trust
at this point of the development review and approval process seems inconsistent with standard practice.

4. The City recognizes that identifying funding source(s) for a future crossing at this location may be challenging, but the City is willing to pursue alternative funding sources to help make this connection a reality (NOTE: The property to the north should be required in the future to provide half of the costs of the bridge/culvert.)

5. The City further recognizes that until the road is constructed across the canal, ACHD may have to accept a small portion of unimproved ROW but much of this ROW is airspace over the canal and the other sections could contain landscaping and a pathway maintained through license agreement by the home owners’ association. There should be little to no maintenance costs to the District with this solution.

The City fully understands that ACHD has jurisdiction over public right-of-way in the City of Meridian. That stated the City is requesting that ACHD consider a unique solution in this case due to the lack of clarity in the public record related to the canal crossing and the fact that only one other crossing of the Ridenbaugh Canal is planned for (2/3 mile away) in this mile section; we feel that preservation of future inter-connectivity in this area is very important to the transportation network.

The city realizes there may be other solutions than those presented above and would be supportive of any solution that preserves the long-term opportunity for vehicular and pedestrian connectivity over the Ridenbaugh Canal at this location. Thank you for the chance to comment and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Regards,

\[Signature\]

Caleb Hood, AICP
Planning Division Manager
City of Meridian