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BREAKING NEWS: FIREFIGHTERS RESPOND TO MCMINNVILLE RESIDENCE

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By [Tom Henderson](#) • Staff Writer • April 20, 2017 [📄](#)

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## Council urged to reverse subdivision denial

McMinnville planning officials are asking the city council to overturn a Feb. 16 rejection by the planning commission and put a Baker Creek Road subdivision project back on track,

The planning commission unanimously rejected a request from Stafford Land Company to rezone almost 14 acres south of Baker Creek Road and east of Hill Road for residential development, and to adjust the zoning on another 18 acres to permit slightly greater density. The aim of the increased density is to make the resulting housing more affordable in a market lacking properties in the \$250,000 range.

All told, the developers are proposing to build 280 single-family homes and 70 multiple-family units, in phases over time. The city council is scheduled to consider their plan at 7 p.m. Tuesday in its downtown chambers.

Principal Planner Ron Pomeroy and the city planning staff, which recommended planning commission approval in the first place, are now recommending council approval for three elements — a zone change, planned development amendment and tentative subdivision plan.

In a memo to the council, Pomeroy said the developers kept their basic proposal intact, but made some adjustments to address concerns raised by opponents in planning commission testimony.

Opponents alleged the subdivision would generate too much drainage and traffic for existing systems to handle, but Pomeroy said those concerns had been satisfactorily addressed.

“Transportation, wastewater and water infrastructure had all been adequately planned in advance to support the proposed development, including the appropriate mechanisms to pay for

the increased capacity needed,” he said. “For those infrastructure needs that were not already addressed in the city’s 20-year public facility plans, conditions of approval were drafted and included in the decision document to address those specific concerns.”

Opponents accused the developers of proposing too much density, at the expense of parks and open space.

Pomeroy said the basic density remains unchanged, averaging 5.8 units per acre. “That’s effectively where they were with the original proposal,” he said.

However, he said the developers had included two additional park spaces on the west side. He said they had also created a fifth lot-size variation to provide more diversity and avoid a cookie-cutter effect.

The land is part of a much larger tract originally known as the Shadden Claim.

The city council voted 3-2 to annex the portion lying east of Hill Road and south of Baker Creek Road in 1977. However, a citizen petition forced a referendum at the polls and the annexation was overturned by the slim margin of 985 to 983.

Voters went on to reject annexation of the portion east of Hill Road five times between the mid-1990s and early 2000s. However, it has since come into the city limits, and elements have already been developed without additional controversy.

Stafford recently acquired the rest of the already annexed but still undeveloped acreage.

The company was founded four years ago by development veterans Gordon Root and Rick Waible. It features both development and homebuilding wings, enabling it to follow a project all the way through.

Stafford recently completed major builds in Scappoose and Silverton, and has one currently underway in Molalla. It specializes in planned unit developments like the one it is proposing in McMinnville.