

Sammamish Seniors

August 24, 2022, 11:00 am

Community Conversation Topic: Sammamish Town Center Development Project

Guest Speakers:

- Matt Samwick, Innovations Realty Partners (IRP)
- Tana Gall and Kyle Reiter, Merrill Gardens (MG)

The Sammamish Town Center Development (TCD) will bring walkable, transit-oriented development with multiple housing choices, retail and service offerings in a sustainable mixed-use environment. Imagine a walkable Town Center that joins seamlessly with the Sammamish Commons and Big Rock Park. To make this happen, IRP is an experienced leader in developing modern, energetic, highly sought-after town centers that include senior housing communities. Matt explained IRP's mission is to do complicated real estate development and do it well. They use their own financial resources for projects and recently purchased another land parcel south of SE 4th.

Phase I Development (ground breaking 2023):

- 10 smaller footprint homes
- 75 townhomes (row houses)
- 300 apartments
- 82,000 sq. ft. of retail
- Retail companies already interested

Phase II Development:

- Senior housing developed by Merrill Gardens
- Intergenerational housing options
- Community/senior center
- Open space for parks, activities, theater, etc. (W between 222nd/225th)

Full Development:

- 2,000 housing units
- Core mixed retail/commercial space
- Activity/green areas
- Encompasses 225 acres

Affordability: With increasing real estate values, the “more affordable” housing options will be affected by market rate. The AMI (area median income) formulas will follow King County and City of Sammamish policies.

Environmental Impact: Smaller footprint housing will have less impact on the traffic compared to the current large, single-family model that exists in Sammamish. Research shows the residents in smaller living spaces become pedestrians and have fewer children per capita to transport.

Merrill Gardens: Tana emphasized their vision is reflected in the organization's footprint as a private, family-owned business. Their founder, Richard Merrill, came to the Pacific Northwest in the 1890s to establish timber holdings and was an innovator. He was the first to practice sustainable forestry, and his tradition of attention and thoughtfulness eventually grew to include the business of caring for people. MG has developed 11 senior housing communities in WA and comes to the project with experience and a reputation for being ahead of the curve in developing new communities. They are excited to bring their experience and expertise to Sammamish, and ready to start!

Community Input: Several virtual participants addressed their desire to have 1) space for arts/music, 2) a thrift shop to support the senior/community center, 3) nearby public transportation options, 4) walkable shopping resources, and 5) accommodations for alternate transport vehicles such as bicycles, carts, scooters, etc. and 6) protection for the environmental integrity of our unique community in the forefront of all planning.