

NEWS

A new plan for Kirkland's Parkplace, owners seek dialog with community



Jim Neal and Bill Pollard, the managing principals at Talon Private Capital, have submitted a new master plan for Parkplace that will have more residential space but be smaller overall. — Image Credit: TJ Martinall, Kirkland Reporter

by [TJ MARTINELL](#), Kirkland Reporter Reporter
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After several false starts, the redevelopment of Kirkland Parkplace might finally be moving forward.

Talon Private Capital has submitted a new master plan for the redevelopment of the site Tuesday to the city, hoping it will approve several zoning changes that would allow for more residential space in order to appropriately scale a much smaller project.

It is the first attempt at redevelopment of the site since 2010, when Touchstone's master plan was approved by the city. The project was ultimately stopped due to financial reasons and the property sold.

Now, the time is right for redevelopment, according to Jim Neal and Bill Pollard, the principals of Talon.

"The economy is moving in the right direction, companies are growing," Neal said. "We think the stars are aligned."

They said their new master plan is intended to complement the surrounding community, taking advantage of amenities already present while providing an urban center for people to live, work and play in the same area. With that in mind, the site was shrunk from the 2.75 million square feet permitted by zoning to 1.2 million, reducing the amount of office space by 50 percent. It also sets aside two acres of open space and plazas.

Pollard said that the master plan was deliberately designed not to maximize the total density

allowed by zoning in order to create a more intimate feel and reserve open space for community events such as farmers markets.

“We felt it was overwhelming,” he said. “The scale has to fit the community. As we looked forward, we tried to size the scale so it was aligned in the marketplace. As the community grows, the project can grow. It allows it to be much more appropriate.”

Before the master plan can get approved by the Kirkland City Council, however, Talon must first get zoning changed to accommodate the 300,000 square feet of apartment space, approximately 30 percent of the total space. Zoning allows for only 10 percent.

Pollard said that with Peter Kirk Park adjacently located, the apartments will work well for young or small families. The plans also call for walkability in order to reduce parking and traffic issues, and the hope is to take advantage of the Cross Kirkland Corridor.

“The more pedestrians we can facilitate, the better it is for everybody,” Pollard said.

Although there will be less office space, both Pollard and Neal said the redevelopment would allow growing companies to take root in Kirkland rather than leave once they outgrow their space.

The retail space will also include more individuality, giving them a more distinct look to separate them from each other, reflecting what Neal said is a growing trend for residents to shop locally.

“The community is very supportive of their local retailer,” Pollard said. “We don’t want to give one experience, but multiple types of experiences.”

As Talon waits for the master plan approval, Pollard and Neal said they will seek out input from the community on the project.

“We’re going to sit down with any community groups and educate them on our vision for the site and how it fits with the community,” Neal said.

“We want it to be for Kirkland, by Kirkland, about Kirkland,” Pollard added.

TJ MARTINELL, Kirkland Reporter Reporter
tmartinell@kirklandreporter.com or 425-822-9166

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