06PL029

From: Wayne Hennen [waynehennen@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2006 11:03 PM
To: planninginfo@rcgov.org
Subject: #27-28

I have a concern regarding the density of houses proposed south of Catron by the developer. I live on Wellington Drive. I do not want to stop development but instead of 4.8 houses/acre by flattening existing natural landscape I am much more in favor of 2.5 houses/acre similar to the nearby proposal at Highland addition and keeping much of the existing beautiful landscape of rolling hills, valleys, and natural waterways.

Please delay this request to develop as per requests #27 and 28 tomorrow, March 23rd, 20006.

Thank you!

Wayne Hennen

06PL029

-----Original Message-----
From: Don & Judy Snyder [mailto:donsny@rap.midco.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2006 12:00 PM
To: consulgroup@rcgov.org; planninginfo@rcgov.org
Cc: Haun, Mike & Pat
Subject: NO. 06PL027 and NO. 06PL029

March 22, 2006

Honorable Representives:

I would like to request that you consider 3.5 homes per **BUILDABLE** acre for NO. 06PL027 Catron Subdivision.

I would also request that you consider 3.5 homes per **BUILDABLE** acre for NO. 06PL029, South Terrace Subdivision. (This is upcoming on the Rapid City Growth Management Departments regular agenda item, which is scheduled for passage).

These changes would enhance this area and align itself to the homes per acre that have already been built in this area.

Thank You for your time.

Donald Snyder
1111 Regency Court
Rapid City, SD 57702

-----Original Message-----
From: Grosz, Evan [mailto:egrosz@rcrh.org]
Sent: Tuesday, April 04, 2006 11:52 AM
To: planninginfo@rcgov.org
Cc: councilgroup@rcgov.org
Subject: 06PL029

Planning commission,
I live at 6620 Wellington Drive which is adjacent to the proposed development. I have a couple of concerns on the 06PL029 proposal.

1. **Change in density**. I have followed the Hwy 16 Land Use plan fairly close over the past year and attended several meetings concerning the densities of the different parcels. At some point in time the density for the 06PL029 area changed from 2.5 to 4.8. I, along with most of my neighbors were comfortable with the 2.5 since it was a close match to our neighborhood and surrounding neighborhoods. It concerns me that we as neighbors had voiced our opinions on the densities and it seemed that we were heard but later on some where down the line it was changed.
2. **Natural Beauty**. I would like to see some effort put into keeping the natural landscape intact during the planning and development of this area. There is a reason why people want to develop and live in this area….its for the natural beauty of the surrounding landscape. It creates a natural draw for people to want to live here. With such a high density (4.8) the developer will no doubt have to destroy (flatten hills and fill in ravines) the natural beauty of the area. I would encourage everybody associated with this proposal to personally come out and take a real look at the proposed plat and then look at the actual area that needs to be developed. You will immediately see what I'm talking about.

Please reconsider the density that is being proposed, it is not a good match for the terrain and surrounding neighborhoods. Development is good but as you've all heard all too often, let's do it sensibly and smart. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time,
Evan Grosz
W – 719-2123
H – 342-6301

Date: April 5, 2006

From: Edward L. Seljeskog
President, Willowwood, Inc.

To: Members of the Planning Commission

RE: **Proposal 06PL029**

As owner of the 400 acres directly east of the proposed 06PL029 development not currently within the limits of Rapid City, I am writing to express my serious concerns about the proposal as it now stands. Some of these concerns are those already being stated by neighbors to the west of the proposed development.

My 400 acres currently is pristine agricultural grassland with natural rolling hills, ravines, creeks, etc. Per the proposal, this same natural beauty and contours of the 160 acres being developed will be destroyed with leveling, filling, etc. and significantly disrupting the natural watershed into my land with its stock dams and ponds.

More importantly in my concern is the proposed housing density which, in my view, appears to be an “anthill” overlooking my property and abutting on the well planned, reasonable existing development to the west. A 2.5 houses/acre vs. the proposed 4.8 houses/acre density would, in my view, seem to enable better preservation of some of the natural contouring and grasslands character of the property.

Finally, there is the issue of street drainage and also, significantly, sewer drainage – usually downhill and in this case to the east. Will there be assurances of adequate planning for these potentially serious issues? Will there be a sewer line across my property, a line for which I have no current need?

Although this latter matter is primarily of personal concern, but taking this project as a whole, I firmly believe that there is a need to move slowly, give this plan plenty of time to mature and to ensure a development of which the city and all of us can be proud. This planned development will set the stage for the future development in the area south of Catron Boulevard.

-----Original Message-----
From: The Seljeskogs [mailto:seljeskogs@rap.midco.net]
Sent: Wednesday, April 05, 2006 11:54 AM
To: planning.commission@rcgov.org
Cc: tom.johnson@rcgov.org; mike.schumacher@rcgov.org; marcia.elkins@rcgov.org; 'Hadley Ray'; mayor@rcgov.org
Subject: Proposal 06PL029

Planning Commission,

I have been reviewing the documents on the planning commission's meeting and agenda website and I am very concerned about proposal #06PL029 – South Terrace Subdivision.

I currently live to the West, overlooking this proposed development. I am not unrealistic, in believing that this area should never be developed, but I believe it can be done responsibly and that it is up to the planning commission to make sure that happens. My primary concern is regarding the natural beauty and ecological impact of this development. From what I can tell from reviewing the documents available, it appears that the developer would like to bulldoze the entire 160 acres, leveling the natural rolling hills, fill in the ravines and bury the natural springs.

At earlier city council meetings regarding the planning of this area, I, as well as many of my neighbors, spoke up about the proposed density of this area. I specifically explained my concerns about "leveling" this area. At the time it appeared that our concerns had been heard and would be considered. However, it now appears that everyone was most concerned about the "Wal-Mart development" and that the issues to the East were soon forgotten.

I am also a part owner in the property to the East of this development. As such, I also have very serious concerns about the impact and long term effects that covering the natural springs and ravines will have on the natural watershed on my land.

At this time I am urging you to deny this proposal as it is, and ask you to recommend that the developers consider a much lower density proposal (2.5 du/acre) and demand that they preserve the natural springs, ravines, hills and overall beauty of the area.

There is a lot of natural beauty in this area and I believe it can still be developed and at the same time preserve some of the beauty and integrity of the land.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my concerns.

Sincerely,

06PL029

RAPID CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

Agenda Item No. 06PL029 is coming before the Planning Commission Meeting tomorrow, 6 April 2006. The 4.8 density will impact South Hill and Edinborough homes bordering this property. In his appearance before the City Council on January 24th, 2005, Mr. Shafai was decidedly less than candid regarding what he claimed were 20-foot deep canyons. He showed the council a photograph taken from Catron Blvd where just beyond the short flat area in his photo was the tail end of a series of canyons that traverse the 160 acres. I spoke to the surveyor while he was working this project concerning Mr. Shafai's contentions, and his comment was, and I quote, "What a bunch of baloney." The surveyor went on to tell me, "There are many areas of the canyons upwards of 100 feet deep."

If you overlay the proposed plat, there is no way the density of 4.8 du/ac can be accomplished without destroying a vast area of beautiful, tree-lined canyons and natural springs. In addition, the homes bordering the proposed development are 1.54 du/ac. Making decisions on proposed developments (based only on a developers request) without seeing the land will continue to lead to errors in judgment as were made on 4 November 2004 when 4.8 was approved without discussion. The subsequent impact if you let this development go unchallenged, will be destruction of the park-like topography, lead to overcrowding in the area, and result in extreme traffic congestion on Catron Blvd. If that happens, we as Rapid City residents all lose. I request you send this proposed plat back to the developer without prejudice and take it under advisement to change the du/ac back to 1.54 which is appropriate for the topography of the land and the adjoining developments.

I appreciate the opportunity to convey my concerns for continued development on the south side of Rapid City.

MICHAEL S. HAHN
1105 Regency Court
Rapid City, SD 57702

394-9112

-----Original Message-----
From: Dempseyrapidcity@aol.com [mailto:Dempseyrapidcity@aol.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 30, 2006 8:45 PM
To: planning.commission@rcgov.org
Cc: Dempseyrapidcity@aol.com
Subject: South Terrace Subdivision

As a citizen of Rapid City I'm very concerned over the plat submission for the proposed South Terrace subdivision, 06PL029, and the affects approving such a submission will have on the appearance of our wonderful city. Let me state that I'm not against development, but that I would hope that the Planning Commission and the City Council would go about it in such a way as to enhance the beauty of our city, and not detract from it.
The land the South Terrace subdivision is proposed upon is to say the least "very diverse"; there are hills, valleys, ravines, rolling grasslands, and natural springs. It would be a travesty to approve a plan that would do nothing more than clear the way for bulldozers and earthmoving equipment to destroy the natural topography of this beautiful landscape. As this proposed development currently stands it is just on paper and can be changed with relative ease, but once the hills are bulldozed, the ravines filled in, and infrastructure developed, it is nearly impossible to change.
I ask that the Planning Commission and the City Council **relook at the proposed South Terrace development** and require the developers to work with the contours of the land and not destroy them. I'm convinced the developers of this project can design a plan that will work with the land and not destroy it, thus creating a win-win situation for everyone.

Sincerely,
Larry Dempsey
6626 Wellington Drive
Home Phone: 399-3901

Patricia K. Hahn
1105 Regency Court
Rapid City, SD 57702
patdocmike@rap.midco.net

RECEIVED
MAY 0 1 2006
Rapid City Growth
Management Department

1 May 2006

TO: The Planning Commission
300 6th Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

TO: Rapid City Council
300 6th Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

After speaking to the Planning Commission on 6 April regarding the South Terrace Development, I spent four weeks doing extensive research regarding the history of these 160 acres. What is now clear to me is how this 4.8 du/ac designation came into being. While the Mayor and several Council members did view this land almost a year ago, I believe that due to the furor over the Wal-Mart issue—the fact the vote was postponed for month after month—and the neighbors (many who had spoken earlier in opposition) were not available on the night of the vote, this item was allowed to slide by uncorrected by the council. The following indicates a real need to review the designation on this parcel of land. The underlying and most critical issue is that the both the original plat and the secondary plat, as presented, destroy the land, put future residents in jeopardy, and give the citizens of Rapid City the impression that developer's profit is more important than preserving the hills for the future.

- I reviewed hundreds of pages of documents searching for any item that would indicate any Planning Commission member looked at this parcel over the past several years and prior to voting on issues concerning its development. I found none.

- Although not an agenda item at the Planning Commission meeting in November 2004, Dream Design requested a change of designation to 6.7 and commission member, Ms. Rodriguez, suggested a compromise of 4.8 du/ac without studying the issue. Since it was a special meeting concerning development of the Highway 16 Corridor, no one was present to argue an opposing position on the 160-acre residential development.

- When I questioned the 4.8 designation on 6 April, the City Attorney immediately stated his opinion that this designation could not be changed. I submit that the dwelling units per acre have been changed so often on the Future Land Use Map, most local citizens have no method for monitoring or for arguing against changes that have been made. I also note that while the City Attorney quickly offered a defense favoring the developer, he did not and has not (from what I have been able to ascertain) researched a solution for the opponents of this development. It would seem to me that to be fair and balanced, the City Attorney should at the very least offered an alternative resolution. If the Planning Commission and/or the City Council face an issue, which was approved due to an oversight or an error, they should be willing to send it back for further review. As no dirt has been moved and no construction started, now is the perfect time to review this issue.

- The most serious problem with this plat and du/ac designation is that it will require destruction of the land. It is obvious when you overlay the plat on the land, hills will be bulldozed flat, ravines with natural springs filled in and the entire topography of the area changed.

- Some of the lots will be backed up to a cliff face dropping almost 100 feet into a ravine. There is currently a house in Edinborough built on a similar cliff edge, which is sliding downward. Who will be legally responsible should the same scenario develop on the South Terrace side of the ravine?

- How long after major ravines, with sustaining springs, are filled in and hills leveled before the houses constructed on top of this fill begin to show damage? How long before basements begin to crumble and crack and major damage occurs to these homes?

- There have already been four landslides on hills adjacent to this property. Do we know what will happen as land is removed and hillsides bulldozed? What will be the resulting effect on the surrounding land?

- If the City Council approves the plat as presented, will the City be held responsible for the resulting damage to properties constructed on unstable land? We have seen the results of building on fill. Concrete fails and structural damage occurs. After having obtained the ultimate in density for the plat, current owners will profitably divest themselves of the property and any responsibility for incurred problems. It is very possible the future developer will point out that Rapid City Planning Commission and Rapid City Council approved everything on the plat. Therefore, they will claim the City is entirely responsible. The unsuspecting future homeowners will suffer major repair costs and many will be unable to shoulder the expense of repair. In my opinion, the City Council is morally mandated to prevent this scenario from occurring. As a taxpayer, I also want to assure this does not occur. This could be avoided if the land was platted responsibly. This is the property where it is appropriate to enhance the land – not overwhelm it.

- Another issue, which has not been addressed, is the long-term drought throughout the area. Six years ago this land was lush green with tall natural grass covering the hills. Ponds spotted the area. These small ponds have dried up and the land is currently extremely dry, but what will happen when the rains return and saturate the soil back to previous conditions?

- The final issue is traffic congestion and access to such a large development off Catron Blvd. DOT does not agree with the currently proposed access to the bypass. By adding hundreds of cars to the tourist season vehicles and present workday traffic volume, leaving and entering the present developments will be not only be frustrating, but dangerous.

I request the Planning Commission and Rapid City Council adopt the following:

- A standard method for assigning dwelling units per acre based on topography, existing neighborhoods, and traffic demands. This would remove any criticism of bias from the equation. Require all proposed 'first' plats to take into consideration existing land issues. This would remove the developer's argument that Growth Management approved the plan when they are opposed at a later date. My neighbors and I have serious reservations about how these past decisions were made and question if any criteria was used in the decision making process.

- A requirement for Planning Commission members to physically view future specific land developments prior to approving special requests or before making changes to the Future Land Use Committee decisions.

- And finally and most importantly to the City Council: Please send the issue on these 160 acres back to the Future Land Use Committee and the Planning Commission for an in-depth study before coming before the City Council for a final vote. If an engineering team is required, I suggest one completely independent from the present owners be utilized to conduct the study. This will preclude the appearance of a conflict of interest by Dream Design and the Rapid City Council.

Let me summarize by saying **I am not against** development of this area. I am, however, against a development that destroys the land and the topography for profit. There are many surrounding areas more appropriate for higher density tracts. The Rapid City Council needs to make a decision and take a stand regarding future land use planning. Will you try to maintain the beauty of this area and future developing areas? Will you ensure developers work with and around the land, or allow profit motive to determine how it will look in the years ahead? This is just the first of many arguments about topography to be made about the land as the City moves outward and southward toward the hills.

Sincerely,

Attachments: Photographs of topography
Copies to: South Hill and Edinborough Residents

THIS AREA WILL BE LEVELED ON CURRENT PLAN

THIS IS NOT A 20' RAVINE. THOSE ARE MATURE TREES

SPRINGS ARE LOCATED IN THE CENTER RAVINE

IT APPEARS HOUSES ARE BACKED UP TO THIS CLIFF

ANOTHER VIEW OF CLIFF