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January 2, 2005

City of Rapid City
Growth Management Department
300 6th Street
Rapid City SD 57701

Rapid City Growth
Management Department

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for the notice of hearing of petition for Variance to Subdivision regulations by Wyss Associates, Inc. for Hart Ranch Development Company to be heard by Rapid City Planning Commission on January 6, 2005 at 7:00 a.m. with consideration by Rapid City City Council on January 17, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.

I have owned and resided with my wife at 23687 Mulligan Mile, Lot T29, Village On The Green #2 of the Hart Ranch Development since December, 2001.

We ask the Rapid City City Council to deny the petition for Variance to the Subdivision Regulations to waive the requirement to install sidewalks as per Chapter 16.16 of the Rapid City Municipal Code.

If, as I have seen in some older cities and developments, variances are to be granted for practically any and all reasons, what is the purpose of planning and zoning regulations?

Although we are in the early stages of development here, with much more development and traffic surely to come, particularly if a high school is established here, (to which, by the way, we are not opposed), and the existing streets seem adequate at present, the need for sidewalks will become more pressing as traffic increases.

Although there is substantial cost involved in construction of sidewalks, which the developer must ultimately pass on to the homeowners, this will over time prove to be a very good investment. Far from being unesthetic, sidewalks give a sense of establishment and permanency to a community. Sidewalks are friendly.

We have here many adults who walk for exercise as well as many children who need a safe hard surface on which to play and run their toy wheeled vehicles. With present low traffic levels, the streets may seem relatively safe for adults and children to move about to walk and play. But, with increasing traffic, the safety benefits of sidewalks will become more and more evident. Without them, there will be accidents, potentially involving serious injury, even death.

Communities which have foregone sidewalks at the time of development eventually wish they had them. We therefore ask the Rapid City City Council to deny this petition for Variance.

Sincerely yours,

Dayton D. Burkholder
Dayton D. Burkholder MD