

**Grand Junction Planning Commission Minutes
December 10, 1998
7:05 p.m. to 10:05 p.m.**

The Grand Junction Planning Commission hearing was called to order at 7:05 p.m. in the White Hall building at 600 White Avenue by Chairman John Elmer.

In attendance, representing the Planning Commissioners, were: John Elmer (Chairman), Jeff Driscoll, Paul Coleman, Mark Fenn, Joe Grout and Robert Gordon. Mike Denner was absent.

In attendance, representing the Community Development Department, were: Scott Harrington (Community Development Director) and Kathy Portner (Planning Manager).

Also present were John Shaver (Assistant City Attorney), Kerrie Ashbeck (Development Engineer), Jody Kliska (Traffic Engineer) and Hank Masterson (Fire Inspector).

Bobbie Paulson was present to record the minutes.

There were approximately 48 interested citizens present during the course of the hearing.

I. PUBLIC HEARING ON ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL

RZO-1998-151 DESIGN DENSITY AND OUTLINE DEVELOPMENT PLAN – REDLANDS MESA SUBDIVISION

Request to establish a design density and approve an outline development plan for Redlands Mesa Subdivision, consisting of 526 residential units, commercial development and an 18 hole golf course on 494 acres.

PETITIONER: Redlands Mesa, LLC

LOCATION: South of West Ridges Blvd

REPRESENTATIVE: Thompson-Langford

CITY STAFF: Kathy Portner

PETITIONER'S PRESENTATION

Ron Austin (600 East Hopkins Avenue, Aspen, Colorado) expressed gratitude to the Planning Commission for holding this special hearing. Mr. Austin introduced his partner and co-owner of the proposed Redlands Mesa development, Dave Slemon. He also introduced Doug Thies of Thompson-Langford who is the primary engineer for the project, Jim Bell of Thompson-Langford, Mark Bancale of MK Centennial who is the traffic engineer and Susan Wade of Downing, Thorpe and James, a planning firm located in Boulder, Colorado who has had extensive experience in planning golf courses and residential communities.

Susan Wade (Downing, Thorpe & James – Boulder, Colorado) gave an overview of the design process. Ms. Wade stated that from day one Ron Austin and Dave Slemon came to Downing, Thorpe and James with a mission statement and that was to create a special and unique golf course community for the City of Grand Junction. In the design process five main goals were created for this project. The first goal is to utilize the site's natural features and character. The second goal is to create a unique and challenging golf course layout to benefit the residents of Redlands Mesa as well as golfers. The third main goal is to create a strong view potential to the Monument, the golf course, the open space and the city lights. The fourth goal is to create small sub-neighborhoods of intimate scale and the fifth and last goal is to create a circulation hierarchy for automobiles, pedestrians and bicyclists.

Ms. Wade stated that an analyses was done in the beginning of this community design process. This analysis included spending several days walking the site, driving the site, driving around the site and driving around Grand Junction. City staff had asked us to do an extensive analysis of this site to help them understand our design process that also helped us clarify our design process as well.

Ms. Wade stated that there were three map analyses done. The first map is an analysis of the slopes. The slope analysis identifies the different degrees of slopes and are categorized in the 0 to 10, 10 to 20, 20 to 30, and 30 and above. By classifying these slopes, it helped us identify areas that would be more easily developed and which ones would be more costly to develop. The second map identifies geology, vegetation and major drainage ways. This map identifies areas of limited development and also identifies key site features that should be utilized in the golf course development as well as the community development. The last analysis map is for soils. There were six main soil types found on this site ranging from large rock outcroppings to fine sandy loam. By combining all three of these maps into one unified map a weighing method was created. Four elements weighed more heavily than any of the other elements and those are very steep slopes, large rock outcroppings, major drainage ways and the floodplain. This created the non-developable categories. Four categories were created in this development potential plan: non-developable, moderately developable, developable and highly developable areas.

Ms. Wade continued; this master plan was then superimposed onto this development potential map. This superimposed illustration portrays where the residential development should take place. The golf course is within the non-developable, moderately developable and highly developable areas which creates a variety of play throughout the course. This process helped everyone understand why the community parkway and the residential development were located where they were.

Ms. Wade stated that this site consists of 494 acres and is zoned for four dwelling units per acre. The infrastructure has been designed and built for the maximum density of four units per acre. This proposal is for 1.1 dwelling units per acre or a total of 526 units. The owners, Ron Austin and Dave Slemmon, came to Downing, Thorpe and James with the idea of developing this project with approximately one third residential, one third golf course and one third open space. The resulting proposal is 175 acres of residential, 160 acres of golf course and 145 acres of open space.

Ms. Wade continued by discussing the design including the golf course layout, the community trail system, the community parkway, the residential mix and the community character and theme. Ms. Wade stated that the golf course design is going to be an exciting and challenging course due to the site's natural terrain. The terrain also creates a variety of housing potential. Homes will be sitting high on ridges in areas looking down on fairways and sitting parallel to fairways. Ms. Wade stated that the golf hole routing has been a collaboration of two key golf course architects, both who believe that this could be one of the top ten courses in the Western United States due to its terrain and its variety of play.

Ms. Wade stated that the community trails system has been a collaboration of working with the Urban Trails Committee. Two types of trails are proposed, one is 2.3 miles of single track trail and the other is a 2+ mile of paved trail. The majority of the paved trail will be a 10 foot detached path that follows the community parkway. This detached trail starts at the main entry and links into the pedestrian trail system at West Ridges Boulevard and follows the community parkway throughout the community. Other areas of paved trails are small connections between parcels where terrain will allow it and within the community as well. Ms. Wade outlined the proposed trails on a map. She stated that the needed connections and linkages to the Riverfront Trail system as well as the Tabeguache Trail system are being made and are consistent with the goals of the Urban Trail Master Plan.

Ms. Wade said that West Ridges Boulevard is proposed to be extended to the entrance of this development. The entry is proposed to have low stone walls, a divided median, accent paving and natural landscape elements. The entry element extends approximately a ¼ of a mile into the project.

Ms. Wade described the residential pods and outlined them on a map. Neighborhoods will range from 15 to 50 homes in an attempt to keep them small and intimate. Ms. Wade described the course of the community parkway. A combination of land uses are proposed along the ridgeline allowing a variety of uses and experiences. For example, Hole 13 will parallel a ridgeline so golfers can experience it. Automobiles and pedestrians will be able to experience the ridgeline as well. Just under half of the ridgeline is proposed to be replaced with golf course and parkway versus residential development. Future planning includes design of the parcels that follow the ridgeline and will comply with the proposed ordinance regarding ridgeline development. The setbacks for residential homes that front on ridgelines are proposed to be 30 and 40 feet. The parkway connects into Mariposa Drive where a secondary entry element is proposed.

Ms. Wade said four major product types are proposed. The first being custom or luxury lots which will range from 1.5 to 2 dwelling units per acre. The second is single family lots which will range from 2.3 to 3 dwelling units per acre; the third are patio homes which will be in the 5 dwelling unit per acre range and the fourth product is attached townhomes which will be in the 5 to 6 dwelling unit per acre range.

Ms. Wade said the anticipated phasing of the project will be as follows: Phase I is proposed to start in 1999 and end in year 2000 and will include construction of the entire golf course, West Ridges Boulevard and a temporary cul-de-sac to a point between holes 10 and 11 and parcels 2, 5, 7 and 8. Approximately 117 units are proposed in Phase I. Phase II will begin in the year 2000 and be completed in the year 2001 and will include the extension of West Ridges Boulevard to a temporary cul-de-sac adjacent to parcel 13b and will include parcels 4, 6, 9, 10, 11 and 12. Approximately 184 units are proposed in Phase II. Phase III is proposed to begin in the year 2001 or 2002 and will include parcels 1, 13, 14, and 15A and the continuation of the West Ridges Boulevard. Approximately 128 units are proposed in Phase III. The last phase, Phase IV, includes parcels 3, 15B, 16, and 17 includes 97 units and is estimated to begin in the year 2002 or 2003 and be completed within one year. The total number of units proposed is 526 and the proposed design density is 1.1 dwelling units per acre.

Ms. Wade discussed the character of the community. She said that an imaging program was used in developing this community to give a visual of how the community will look in the future. Ms. Wade stated that this visual will help in developing a strong set of development guidelines that the builders and the homeowners will need to follow. This site is very unique in its terrain, materials and views, which will be reinforced through the architecture and the site design elements. Ms. Wade discussed and presented their prototypical ideas of what they think the architecture design should look like. She presented prototypical ideas of the luxury home architecture, a standard single family home, small lot patio homes and attached townhomes. She felt that the design elements should help reinforce the natural character of the site through forms, textures, materials and colors and discussed examples of each of these.

Doug Thies (Thompson-Langford Corporation – 529 25 ½ Road, Suite B210, Grand Junction, Colorado) summarized the engineering issues that have been addressed for this project. He stated that Thompson-Langford has done extensive engineering on this particular project. The most critical issue was making sure the road network would work. Roadway profiles were done to make sure that the horizontal and vertical alignments would work. Much of the infrastructure is already in place up to the Redlands Mesa property including water, sewer, and irrigation. Other areas of concern were identified and addressed, i.e. fire protection and availability of sewer to the property. A flood plain analysis was done on Red Canyon to make sure the drainage concerns were addressed.

Mr. Thies said a traffic impact study was done through the year 2018 that not only incorporated this project but included the undeveloped portion of the Ridges. The main result of this traffic impact study was the extension of Mariposa Drive to Monument Road. In Phase I, Mariposa Drive will be roughed out both horizontally and vertically with a gravel surface. Mariposa Drive will be used for a construction access into the project as well as providing for emergency vehicle access.

QUESTIONS

Commissioner Driscoll asked if a neighborhood meeting was held for this project and if so how many residents attended and what comments were made.

Doug Thies replied that a community meeting was held this past Fall at the Redlands Community Center. Notices were delivered or attempted to be delivered to each resident in the Ridges. Basically the same layout and presentation was made at that meeting as is being made tonight. Approximately 200 people attended. Mr. Thies added that there were a lot of positive comments. A lot of residents seem to realize that this property is going to be developed sooner or later. Mr. Thies stated that because this property is zoned for as many as 2,000 units, the residents felt considerably more comfortable with the 526 units currently proposed. The residents seemed pleased with the trail system and the amount of open space that is proposed. Most of the concerns centered around increased traffic. He felt that using Mariposa Drive as a second access was a big improvement and would help alleviate some of the traffic impact on Ridges Boulevard. He stated that the majority of individuals who attended the open house were just curious to see what the development was.

Commissioner Driscoll asked when the connection of Mariposa Drive to Monument Road would take place. Mr. Thies replied that the final paving of Mariposa Drive is estimated to be in the year 2003. He said it is important to put off the final paving until the majority of the golf course is completed so the construction vehicles do not tear up the asphalt. Mr. Thies added that there will also be a detached 10 foot concrete pathway to Monument Road. He said with the cooperation of the City of Grand Junction they would like this to connect to the Tabeguache Trail head. With cooperation of the Urban Trail Committee there will also be a connection between the Riverfront Trail system and the Tabeguache Trail system.

Chairman Elmer asked Mr. Thies to explain the traffic study regarding additional road connections, impacts on Ridges Boulevard and whether or not any off-site improvements are needed because of the added traffic.

Mr. Thies replied that at one time a connection to the West to South Camp Road was discussed and the City and the County did a traffic model showing the connection to alleviate traffic impacts to surrounding roads. There was a lot of opposition to that because of the traffic impact. In addition, the topography and the floodplain would make it very difficult to build a roadway connection to the West. Consequently a roadway connection is not proposed; however, a trail connection is proposed at this time. There was a strong desire to leave Red Canyon open as a visual corridor and as a natural historical feature. There will be golf course greens in Red Canyon but no homes will be built there. Mr. Thies continued saying a traffic study was done on West Ridges Boulevard which included the build out of the undeveloped lots in The Ridges. The study takes into account traffic impacts for the next 20 years in The Ridges and Redlands Mesa. The connection of Mariposa Drive to Monument Road provides some relief. A left turn lane onto Ridgeway Drive will also be added. There are about 1,000 vehicles a day predicted in the 20-year projection that make that left turn movement. With those improvements to the road system, the projected level of service on West Ridges Boulevard is acceptable according to the results of the Traffic Impact Study.

Chairman Elmer asked Mr. Thies to address City staff's concerns as outlined in the City staff report.

Mr. Thies replied that he has worked closely with the City over the past 10 months in providing information regarding the road grades, profiles and site distances. An overall water distribution network analysis and overall sewer analysis is being done to make sure all issues are dealt with. He stated that he has addressed Ute Water's and the Fire Department's concerns. In addition, the Urban Trails Committee has been kept apprised of the development since day one and the Committee has indicated that they are happy with this plan. Mr. Thies added that one of the primary features that shouldn't go left unnoticed is the 12,000 to 15,000 feet of single track mountain bike trail that is proposed. He added that once this property is developed there may be other areas that would accommodate additional trails that the HOA should consider.

STAFF PRESENTATION

Kathy Portner stated that her presentation would include an overview of the Outline Development Plan (ODP) and the design density sections of the Zoning and Development Code, Growth Plan issues and, in conclusion, staff recommendations. The applicant, Ms. Portner stated, is requesting approval of an ODP and a design density in accordance with Section 7-5 of the Zoning and Development Code. Section 7-5-2.B of the Zoning and Development Code allows the Planning Commission and the City Council the option of applying a design density at the ODP stage. This property is currently zoned PR-4. The applicant, at the time of the preliminary plan, will be requesting their specific density at which time staff will propose a zoning ordinance to define that density and that zone district. However, at this point, the design density that is requested will set a maximum density but will be fully contingent on future approvals of other phases of the project. Approval of the ODP doesn't constitute a commitment to approve subsequent submittals and the design density would be approved by resolution by the City Council. At the preliminary plan stage the applicant will be proposing much more detail that will go into an actual zoning ordinance. The ODP serves to generally define the proposal in order to determine whether public or private benefits would be derived through the use of a planned development zone. The ODP should answer the question, "should these uses be allowed in this location at this approximate density related in this manner to surrounding uses?" Ms. Portner pointed out that this question is taken directly out of the Zoning and Development Code. Ms. Portner added for the benefit of the audience that this plan is very conceptual. The Code allows for the Planning Commission and City Council to consider a plan at this level of detail or lack of detail to give some guidance to the developer as to whether they buy into the concept, the general densities and intensities that are proposed. If this ODP is approved, the applicant will be coming through many more hearing processes to iron out the details of the plan.

Ms. Portner stated that there are many Growth Plan issues that staff identified in reviewing this project and many of them are there for guidance as the applicants go into a more detailed design of their project.

The Future Land Use Map (Growth Plan map) designates this area of the Redlands for Residential Medium to Low Density of 2.0 to 3.9 units per acre. Policy 1.6 of the Growth Plan further states that the City may permit the development of limited neighborhood service and retail uses within an area planned for residential land use categories through planned developments.

There are many policies in the Growth Plan that must be considered in the review of this project:

Policy 1.12: The City will require that provisions be made for on-going maintenance of open space areas by an appropriate public or private entity.

Policy 4.5: The City will require adequate public services and facilities to be in place or assured so they will be in place concurrently with urban development in the joint planning area. That includes street improvements and connections that will be needed, water line extensions and everything that is needed to serve this development.

Policy 15.1: The City will encourage the development of residential projects that compatibly integrate a mix of housing types and densities with desired amenities.

Policy 20.7: The City will limit development on steep slopes, ridgelines and hilltops to promote public safety and preserve natural vistas of the Bookcliffs, Grand Mesa and Colorado National Monument. This will need to be looked at closely as they go through the detail design in meeting this policy.

Policy 20.9: The City will encourage dedications of conservation easements or land along the hillsides, habitat corridors, drainageways and waterways surrounding the City.

Policy 20.10: The City will limit cut and fill work along hillsides. In areas where cut and fill is necessary to provide safe access to development, the City may require landscape improvements to reduce the visual impact of such work.

Policy 21.2: The City will prohibit development in or near natural hazard areas, unless measures are undertaken to mitigate the risk of injury to persons and the loss of property. Development in floodplains and/or drainage areas, steep slope areas, geological fault areas, and other dangerous or undesirable building areas will be controlled through the development regulations.

Policy 21.3: The City will encourage the preservation of natural hazard areas for use as habitat and open space areas.

Policy 23.8: The City will require vehicular, bike and pedestrian connections between adjacent projects when such connections improve traffic flow and safety.

In addition to the Growth Plan, the Amended Final Plan for the Ridges, adopted by the City in 1994, also has the following general development standards for the Ridges:

- A. Site planning and design shall preserve, to the maximum extent possible, the existing natural features that enhance the attractiveness of the area and shall blend harmoniously with all uses and structures contained within the surrounding area.
- B. Land which is unsuitable for development because of geologic constraints shall be preserved in its natural state. This shall include drainage ways, steep terrain (slopes in excess of 30%) and rock outcroppings to be identified and mapped by the developer. Areas of "no disturbance" shall be identified around all proposed building sites as applicable.
- C. Existing trails, whether or not improved or legally dedicated, within the platted and unplatted Ridges shall be preserved, improved and enhanced with future development. For the portion of the Ridges not already platted, each development shall integrate with an overall plan that serves to link existing trails with both new trails and trails which serve other areas.
- D. All structures shall be setback a minimum of 20' from all bluff lines (to be identified and mapped by the developer) to maintain visual corridors within the Ridges. For ravines, drainages and washes which are defined by a distinct "rim" or "rimrock", structures shall be set back far enough that a person 6 feet tall cannot see any portion of a structure while standing in the thread of the stream bed.
- E. All development in the Ridges, notwithstanding zoning potential or other approvals, will be limited by geologic and transportation system constraints, as well as other infrastructure constraints.

The adopted Urban Trails Master Plan identifies the Redlands Mesa Property as an area that trail connections are needed. This area of the trails plan includes the following note: Dedicated public trails are anticipated for this area in the future. Actual trail locations will be determined in coordination with developers during the planning process for the affected parcels.

Staff's recommendation on the proposed this ODP and design density is approval with the following conditions:

1. The ODP and design density establish maximum number of units. However, due to constraints on the property it is unlikely that those maximum numbers will be achieved. The design density does not constitute a commitment to approve subsequent submittals. The specific density shall be established at the time of approval of a Preliminary Plan.
2. The rough grading of Mariposa Drive to Monument Road will be in place with the first phase of development for emergency access and for the use of construction traffic. The improvements will include an all-weather surface meeting all structural and horizontal and vertical alignment requirements set forth in the City's engineering and fire protection standards.
3. The completion of Mariposa Drive will be required when the average daily traffic (ADT) generated from the Redlands Mesa Project exceeds that generated by the golf course and 187 homes (2,353 ADT), or when the ADT on Ridges Boulevard exceeds 8,000, whichever occurs first. At the time of platting of the filing that triggers the requirement for the completion of Mariposa, the improvements must be in place or a Developments Improvements Agreement and Guarantee executed.
4. The extension of Ridges Boulevard and Mariposa Drive will meet all City standards, but a 10' wide, concrete, detached path on one side of the streets will be allowed rather than attached sidewalks on both sides. The street connection through parcel 5 will match the Rana Road street section through Cobblestone Ridges.
5. Path connections between housing pods must be improved to City standards, unless at the preliminary design it can be shown that an improved trail is impractical.
6. The unimproved single track trail section will be provided along the rim above Monument Road, including through parcels 7 and 9 unless, at the preliminary plan stage, the applicant can show that location to be not feasible.
7. A trail section must be provided as an east-west connection to the Dynamic Investment property to the northwest. The trail alignment and improvement requirements will be determined at the Preliminary Plan stage.
8. A looped water line will be required to serve the Redlands Mesa project. Prior to submitting for Preliminary Plan review the applicant must have any necessary easements in place or written agreements for the easements executed. In addition, necessary approvals and agreements to provide the looped water line must be in place with Ute Water and the City prior to submittal of the preliminary plan.
9. The design of lots on parcels 9, 11, 13B, 14 and 17 will be reviewed at the Preliminary Plan stage for ridgeline development issues.
10. Through the Preliminary Plan process areas of "no-disturbance" must be identified to preserve many of the significant natural features.

11. Those areas designated as open space should be left as undisturbed. If disturbance is necessary, a plan for revegetation will be required. The open space areas shall not be used for the stockpiling of dirt and other materials.
12. The cul-de-sac accessing the proposed parcel 2 will be allowed to exceed the 1000' maximum City standard provided the applicant do one of the following: 1) provide secondary access, 2) widen the street section to a minimum width of 34', or 3) provide residential fire sprinkler systems.
13. Unless otherwise stated, the project must meet all City code requirements for all future submittals.

QUESTIONS

Chairman Elmer asked staff to summarize the applicant's plans for irrigation.

Ms. Portner replied that she would rather the applicant give the details of the irrigation system. Ms. Portner added that water is available for the golf course and the applicant has worked with City staff on the option of having irrigation water for other open space areas should they need it for revegetation purposes.

Commissioner Gordon asked if the traffic generated by the office, retail space and clubhouse uses were considered in the traffic study.

Kerrie Ashbeck, City Development Engineer, stated that she thought all those were included in the traffic study analysis.

Mark Bancale (MK Centennial - Glenwood Springs, Colorado) stated that four different land uses for this property were looked at including the single family homes, the townhomes, the golf course and 20,000 feet of office space. The parcel that includes the proposed office space may be changed to residential. However, the traffic study took into account the use that would generate the most traffic that would be the 20,000 square feet of office. The data that is included in the study for the golf course includes any traffic generated by accessory uses including a club house, banquet facilities and a retail pro shop. Mr. Bancale added that the estimated traffic that will be generated by any land use comes from a standard manual that is published by a national organization of traffic engineers.

Commissioner Gordon asked if a restaurant and bar were also included in the traffic study. Mr. Bancale replied affirmatively. He added that the data source for golf courses specifically states it includes accessory uses such as driving ranges, clubhouses, pro shops, restaurants, lounges and banquet facilities.

Chairman Elmer asked if there would be adequate irrigation water and where it would come from. Mr. Thies stated that there is adequate water available for this golf course. He added that the irrigation water will be purchased from the City and more than likely will bypass the Shadow Lake pump system which now services the existing Ridges development and be tapped directly into an 18" line. Mr. Thies stated that a study has been done to see how much water the golf course will need and it has been determined by the City Parks and Recreation Department that there is adequate water available. The current proposal is to only irrigate the golf course. The golf course will be a desert green/brown type course which will also help to conserve water. The Tee boxes, greens and some landing or carrying areas will be irrigated. It is also anticipated to provide irrigation to the open areas and landscape areas adjacent to the Boulevard as needed to assure reclamation of any disturbances. Mr. Thies stated that at this time it is not anticipated that irrigation water will be provided to individual homes. There are several reasons for this, one is that there have been historical soil problems associated with some of the water practices in the existing Ridges. Also, it was felt that with the golf course homeowners would probably prefer smaller lawns.

Mr. Austin stated that before he and Mr. Slemon purchased this property, they reviewed the water agreement for the golf course between the prior owner of the property and the City. Mr. Austin stated that in his opinion the agreement was inadequate, had been breached and signed without consent. Mr. Austin and Mr. Slemon requested that this water agreement be revised and signed before they made any further plans for a golf course. Mr. Austin stated that the City Council approved the water agreement for three cubic feet per second of water which will be more than adequate for the golf course. Subsequently Greg Trainor, the City Utility Manger requested that we use the City water system rather than using water rights out of the canal or river. Mr. Austin implied that seemed to be the direction they were heading.

Commissioner Gordon asked Ms. Portner if the staff recommendation to relocate a trail section off the Hoskin's property was resolved. Ms. Portner replied affirmatively; the trail section was relocated on to the applicant's property.

PUBLIC COMMENT

FOR:

Mark Abbott (399 West Valley Circle, Grand Junction) stated that the Ridges residents have been kept apprised of this proposal by the developers adding that he felt the developers have integrity and care about community. He agreed with the proposal to not allow 6-foot high privacy fences. He felt that 6-foot high privacy fences do nothing but "create little islands;" they do not create a neighborhood. He felt that by extending Mariposa Drive for use of construction traffic, it would lessen the impact on Ridges Boulevard. Mr. Abbott stated that the most important item was that the developers were not taking advantage of the current zoning by putting "8 million homes up there." He added that he felt this proposed development was one all the residents could support and be proud of.

Bill Odell (406 Prospectors Point, Grand Junction) noted his approval of the proposed development plan. Mr. Odell asked if there would be any retention ponds on the golf course.

Mr. Thies replied affirmatively; there will be at least one retention pond. In addition, he said, there will be more than one water hazard area on the golf course.

Mr. Odell asked Ms. Portner to clarify her comment regarding Cobblestone Ridges. Ms. Portner stated that a road from this development is proposed to connect to Rana Road. She added that the applicant has proposed to build their section of the road to the same standard as what is existing through Cobblestone Ridges.

Mr. Odell asked what the traffic impact of that road would be. Ms. Portner replied that staff viewed it as more of a neighborhood connection rather than a route people would use to take a shortcut.

John Sparks (2339 C Rattlesnake Court, Grand Junction) stated that he views the entire proposed development from his front yard. Mr. Sparks said he was concerned with light pollution adding that the lights from Canyon View Park, which is 3.9 miles away, cast a shadow in his front yard. He requested that the lighting be limited in the practice area and the club house area. He noted that when he lived in Florida, one golf course had 90-foot towers with arc lights on them and that the lights were left on all night on the driving ranges. Mr. Spark said he spoke with Mr. Slemon at the open house regarding this matter. Mr. Spark later received a letter from Mr. Austin which stated "Dave Slemon has discussed your conversation with me, and he asked me to write you this letter. We have discussed night lighting at our practice range and we have no plans for night lighting nor do we anticipate any in the future." Mr. Sparks submitted a copy of this letter to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Sparks continued by saying he preferred that this open space was not developed but if it was going to be developed he would like to see that is it “done right.” He requested that each time there is a revision or a variance, a complete hearing and analysis should be done to see if it is best for the community. In particular, Mr. Sparks objected to the parcel that is proposed to be commercial.

Terry Binder (2148 Redcliff Circle, Grand Junction) stated she was recently appointed to the Urban Trails Committee and was asked to come before the Planning Commission with the following comments. The Committee has worked very diligently with the developers to continue the existing trail system through this development. The Committee asked the developer to extend a 10 foot paved pedestrian path from the entrance feature on West Ridges Boulevard east to the existing paved path at the corner of School Ridge Road and West Ridges Boulevard and the developer has agreed to that. The Committee also asked that an unimproved single track path be provided from the northeast corner of the property west to connect the existing single track trail that heads west to the top of a mesa, north of Red Canyon and west to the pink water towers. The Committee has asked for a commitment from the owners to work with the Urban Trails Committee to provide an easement on the north and south sides of Monument Road for future trail use as determined by future planning for pedestrian and bike trails. The Committee encourages the City of Grand Junction to build consistent trail connections on Mariposa Road to Monument Road. The Committee requests an unimproved single path track from West Ridges Boulevard west between parcels 6 and 7 connecting into the existing single track trail that goes west from Red Canyon and connects with other existing trails in that area. Ms. Binder stated that the Urban Trails Committee also recommended relocating the proposed unimproved single track trail located south of hole 13 to the north side of hole 13 which the applicant has done.

Ms. Binder added that the Urban Trails Committee is only a planning group. She referred to documents that indicate the Urban Trails Committee would acquire and maintain these trails. The acquisition and the maintenance should be assigned to the City of Grand Junction.

Ms. Binder stated that the main goal of the Urban Trails Committee is to provide a connection between the Tabeguache Trail, the Riverfront Trail and the Kokopelli Trail. It is very important that the connection of these trails be made through this development.

Ms. Binder stated, as a citizen rather than an Urban Trail Committee member, that she was concerned with the traffic impacts not only within the development but also on the exterior. In particular, the increased traffic on Monument Road, which she referred to as a “ribbon road” because it has no shoulder lanes. She stated that Monument Road is classified as a rural collector and is not equipped to handle the additional traffic that will be generated from this development. She asked the City to consider making any needed improvements to Monument Road and Highway 340 to accommodate the additional traffic.

Ms. Binder asked if there are going to be street lights in this development. Ms. Portner replied that the City has requirements for street lighting in any residential development, however, staff has not gotten into that level of detail with the developer. In Canyon View Subdivision there were some differences allowed that were not typical of the City standard. Ms. Portner added that she did not know what the developer would be proposing for staff’s consideration.

Mike Stubbs (2408 Hidden Valley Drive, Grand Junction) stated that he is the president of Dynamic Investments which owns property contiguous to this proposed development. He stated that he is generally in favor of the project as proposed. He felt it was consistent with the original PUD and the vision he had when he was working on a similar concept twelve years ago. Mr. Stubbs stated that he felt the golf course would be a great amenity to community at large as well as the Ridges community. The proposed density is much lower than what would be allowed with the existing zone. Mr. Stubbs stated that he was concerned that the developer was not providing irrigation water for individual homes. He also

noted that the applicant has indicated that they will get credit for some of the expense of extending West Ridges Boulevard and Mariposa Drive through the TCP or recover some of the cost from other developments that may piggy back onto that expense. Mr. Stubbs pointed out the existing Ridges residents have already paid for the infrastructure in the Ridges which was designed for more traffic than what is being proposed. He asked that the City consider this information before giving a credit to the applicant for the TCP. Mr. Stubbs added that he is also concerned with the proposed office use.

Johnny Price (419 Prospector Point, Grand Junction) stated that the increase in population must be accommodated with housing. He stated that development is going to happen; however, what is important is that it is "done right" and it is up to the Planning Commission and City Council to see that it is "done right." He added that he is glad to have a golf course close by.

Greg Motz (2398 East Plateau Court, Grand Junction) stated that he has been a homeowner and landowner in the Ridges since 1979 and that he supports this ODP. He stated that he felt Mr. Austin and Mr. Slemmon were honest and sincere. Because the Ridges and its surrounding area is not suitable farm land, Mr. Motz felt it is perfect for development. This area is a wonderful place to hike, bike and enjoy and this plan enhances that by giving the general public the vehicle to enjoy it. Mr. Motz pointed out that the Redlands Mesa property is private property; it does not belong to BLM, Forest Service or the City of Grand Junction. The people who are currently using this property are trespassing although they have been allowed to do it for a number of reasons. The development of these trails will allow those people to use this property legally.

Ted Munkres (121 Chipeta Avenue, Grand Junction) stated that he owns several properties in the Ridges. He felt that the planning firm Downing, Thorpe and James was doing a terrific job with this development. Mr. Munkres encouraged the lack of irrigation particularly for private homes because of potential foundation failures. Mr. Munkres said he is a member of the Ridges Architectural Control Committee (RACC). The RACC would like to maintain the rural atmosphere that exists in the Ridges. He added that when the City annexed the Ridges there was "a little bit of head butting" with the first development proposals that came in the Ridges that had streets sections with sidewalks, curb, gutter and so forth. He felt that in order to maintain a rural atmosphere some modifications of the street standards needed to be made. Mr. Munkres stated that he thought the RACC would rather see detached and somewhat meandering sidewalks that were an enhancement to the trail system as opposed to having attached sidewalks along every street.

Linda Afman (388 Hidden Valley Court, Grand Junction) spoke of how unique the Ridges area is. She stated that she was in favor of this proposal and felt that it strived to preserve the Ridges beauty and would enhance the quality of life for the residents.

AGAINST:

Mike Holland (2398 Mariposa Drive, Grand Junction) stated that he lives in the last house on the existing Mariposa Drive in the Ridges. He was opposed to extending Mariposa Drive to be used as a construction access. He questioned if the streets were designed correctly so they would not drain into and pollute Shadow Lake.

Chairman Elmer stated that the applicant is proposing a separate retention pond.

Mr. Holland asked if the taxpayers would be paying for the extension of Mariposa Drive to Monument Road and the deceleration lane on Monument Road.

Kerrie Ashbeck replied that the right turn deceleration lane that is required will be installed at the developer's expense.

Mr. Holland felt that Mariposa Drive was too narrow to be a major inlet to this development.

Chairman Elmer stated that Mariposa Drive will need to be built to City standards and may require additional right-of-way.

Mr. Holland disputed that the homes along Mariposa Drive were not set back far enough to widen the road.

Kerrie Ashbeck replied that as far as the existing portion of Mariposa Drive, staff has asked the applicant to look at both the width and the condition of the asphalt and determine if improvements will be necessary. Ms. Ashbeck added that Mariposa Drive may not be upgraded to City standards per se but it will be upgraded to meet the needs of this development.

Mr. Holland continued referring to the Tiara Rado Golf Course; at one time this golf course was privately owned. The owners couldn't afford to run the golf course so the City took it over. Mr. Holland questioned what would happen to this proposed golf course if the developer can't afford to run it, do the taxpayers buy it? He added that he was also concerned that the noise from the golf course, particularly the PA system, would be a problem.

Cecila Barr (410 Country Club Park, Grand Junction) stated that she wanted to make sure the Planning Commission and the developers were aware that this property is one of the few sites in Mesa County where a wild flower called Jones' Blue Star is found. She added that it is not an endangered plant.

Morin Harney (2377 Ridge Circle Drive, Grand Junction) stated that his major concern is with increased traffic and people ignoring the speed limit on Ridges Boulevard and Ridge Circle Drive. Mr. Harney questioned whether or not Monument Road could handle the additional traffic, specifically the construction traffic, because it is a very narrow road.

Chairman Elmer closed the public comment portion of the hearing.

A brief recess was called at 8:55 p.m. The hearing reconvened at 9:05 p.m.

PETITIONER'S REBUTTAL

Ron Austin stated that he is very proud of this project, the concept and his development team. There has been a lot of hard work that has gone into this project. He also acknowledged the City staff for their perseverance in making sure we do everything right. Mr. Austin stated that it is very hard to convey to the public their concerns have been considered. Mr. Austin said that his team and City staff have considered a great many of these concerns and have done everything that is possible consistent with doing some kind of reasonable development to take care of those concerns. Mr. Austin added that they will continue to work hard to make this a project that everyone can be very proud of. A great deal of time and effort has been put into addressing the traffic issues and Mr. Austin added that he felt his team addressed them in a "incredibly responsible fashion" and intends to continue doing the same. In respect to the conditions stated by City staff, Mr. Austin said that while there are "some fine tuning issues" and some things that need to be addressed at the preliminary plan stage, they are willing to accept those conditions.

Chairman Elmer asked for Mr. Austin's permission to enter in the public record the letter from him addressed to Mr. Sparks regarding the lighting issue. Mr. Austin agreed to enter it into the public record.

Chairman Elmer stated that normally the overall lighting issue is not addressed at the ODP stage but asked Mr. Austin if he would consider managing it.

Mr. Austin replied that he thought the City Code dealt with the lighting. He added that it is his attitude and thinking that it would be “crazy” to put up 50 foot pole lights that would impact everyone of the lots in their own development.

Commissioner Gordon asked if he would object to not having lights such as these on the driving range. Mr. Austin said that he did not want to make a blanket commitment but said he is willing to work with the City staff. He added that he would not allow all night lighting under any circumstances.

Chairman Elmer asked Mr. Austin to address the proposed 20,000 square feet of commercial. Mr. Austin replied that he hopes to retain some flexibility and that he would like the option of designating it office space or residential at this time. He added that if it were offices they would be very low impact, i.e. engineering, architect type businesses and the covenants would limit the types of uses allowed.

Commissioner Gordon asked Mr. Austin if he felt the pedestrian golf cart crossing on West Ridges Boulevard was safe. Mr. Austin replied affirmatively. He added that the sight distance standards were complied with.

Chairman Elmer closed the public hearing.

PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Commissioner Coleman stated that it seems that the developer is willing to work with the community. He added that he would rather see 500 homes than 600-700 under another plan.

Chairman Elmer said that this land is currently zoned at four units per acre and the applicant has proposed a much lower density with a golf course which is a community asset.

Commissioner Fenn pointed out that the geographic and topographic constraints on this piece of land may never have allowed the four units per acre anyway. Commissioner Fenn felt that the conceptual plan was well thought out and friendly to the neighborhood and the environment.

Chairman Elmer asked staff if each preliminary would be tied to a rezone. Ms. Portner replied affirmatively.

Commissioner Driscoll felt that conceptually, this plan fit in well with the existing Ridges development. He added that it is unfortunate for Mr. Holland’s location, but it is important to have an additional outlet for this development. Commissioner Driscoll echoed the concerns voiced earlier regarding the traffic impact to Monument Road and that at some point it would need to be improved to handle the additional traffic. He added that he appreciated the developer holding a neighborhood meeting and resolving a lot of the issues before this hearing.

Chairman Elmer stated that he some traffic calming measures may need to be looked at along the long, straight stretch of Rana Road.

The Commissioners discussed the lighting issue and felt it could be handled sufficiently at the preliminary plan stage.

MOTION: (Commissioner Coleman) “Mr. Chairman on item RZO-1998-151, I move that we forward this on to City Council with the recommendation of approval of the ODP and the design density subject to staff conditions.”

Commissioner Gordon seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously by a vote of 6-0.

Chairman Elmer announced that this proposal will be heard by City Council next Wednesday (December 16, 1998) in the City Auditorium at 7:30 p.m.

Ms. Portner stated that if anyone has questions, they are welcome to contact City staff.

OTHER BUSINESS

Scott Harrington gave the Planning Commission an overview of the agreement between Mesa County and the City of Grand Junction providing for an interim joint plan consistency review and amendment process for the Joint Urban Area Plan.

There were three issues the Planning Commission requested to be considered:

1. Making sure the burden is put on the applicant to prove that the plan is in error and what they are asking for is more appropriate.
2. Limit the number of amendments to two or three annually.
3. Require the applicant to “address” all of the criteria.

Mr. Harrington noted that staff will be drafting an Administrative Regulation to interpret the process so that the developer will understand what is required of them and how the process will work.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

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