

GARY L. VANDERWOOD A.I.A.

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15 June 1981

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RECEIVED MESA COUNTY
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

JUN 18 1981

re: Persigo Regional Sewage Plant Resolution

Cliff

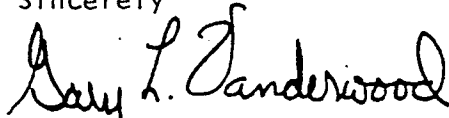
I have felt for sometime that we are seeing attempts, not to plan for growth but rather to plan growth. THERE IS A VERY WIDE DIFFERENCE. If it is our program to CONTROL growth let's be open and above board about it. This proposed resolution appears to be a very strong committment to controlled growth. For a project that was originally known as the Valley Wide Sewer System the present approach seems to be a totally different concept. Will Mesa County become the motivating and controlling force behind the Palisade and Fruita 201 (sewage treatment) Facilities or will those areas be left to service their own needs?

It appears that the Persigo Plant Service Area plat provided with Curt Wiedeman's letter of 12 June 81 outlines what could very well be considered the greater Grand Junction area and might well be the definition of the city limits in a few short years. If the flexibility of expansion is not included in both the treatment facility and distribution system we are likely being very short-sighted in the project.

While I am generally familiar with and sympathetic to the planning principles contained in the resolution forepart statement of items 1 & 2, I submit that the physical divisions required to hold with separation between the Grand Junction, Fruita and Palisade 201 Plans are largely artificial or 'created' for control of growth purposes. If the limits of the city of Grand Junction can indeed jump the Colorado River, one of the strongest topographical features of the valley, any division restricting the combining of the communities of Fruita and Grand Junction at some future date has to be arbitrarily created. I would merely ask to whose benefit would this be? It is obviously much easier to plan for a 'given' than it is to plan for various possibilities as it is easier to plan for a block than for a whole city.

I strongly object to the production and issuance of this material a mere four days before planned action by the Board of Commissioners, especially since two of those days include a weekend. Was this intended to restrict the reactions and comments?

Sincerely


Gary L. Vanderwood

GLV:lw

Gary L. Vanderwood A.I.A.

P.O. Box 2046

Grand Junction, CO 81502

Dear Gary:

In response to your letter of June 15, I really cannot speak for the County Commissioners with regard to their decision on the Persigo Plant service area. Their decision was based upon the input they received from this staff as well as from developers and engineers in the audience. I can respond to your questions as far as the staff is concerned. My first response would simply be that the Valley Wide sewer system as you have termed in your letter, is obviously a phased concept since there is not all the money in Mesa County to possibly build a totally valley wide system at one time. Even now, the Persigo Plant and the anticipated interceptor extensions are perceived to be built primarily with federal funds.

I honestly don't know what you mean by your question, "Will Mesa County become the motivating and controlling force behind the Palisade and Fruita 201 (sewage treatment facilities) or will those areas be left to service their own needs?" I don't think any of the discussion or decision making regarding the Persigo Plant service area had to do with the Palisade and Fruita 201 areas. If you recall, a 201 area is designated through a federal funded process for designing the most cost effective sewage treatment and collection system for a geographic area and population projection. As such, a great deal of money, both local and federal, has been spent in order to develop that cost effective system for the Grand Junction Central Mesa County 201 area. The sewage treatment capacity of the Persigo Plant has, therefore, been designed for a projected population within that original service area. Any additions to that will inevitably require areas within the 201 service area to be excluded from sewage treatment. In other words, there is only so much sewage treatment capacity built in to the new plant, or in this case

not quite built in until we get the rest of the federal funding.

As to where the concern originated, Jim Patterson in the City of Grand Junction's engineering Office, made a good point to the Commissioners that until he is given direction by the board he did not know how to respond to development requests outside the 201 boundary that proposed hooking on to and using the Persigo Plant sewage treatment works. Again, his concern was if we allow a number of developments outside the area for which the plant was originally planned, will we be in turn denying service to those who have come to expect it within the 201 boundary area. What we are dealing with here is a phased situation. It is not possible for the capacity of the plant to continuously be increased without further expenditures of funds. And, of course as you know, there is simply not as great a prospect for continued federal funding of sewage treatment work in the future. Therefore, it appears that a much greater burden for such expansions will be limited to local funding capabilities.

In response to your concerns regarding the separation between Fruita, Grand Junction, and Palisade, again I cannot speak for the Commissioners but from what I have seen it appears that there is an interest in providing low density or low intensity uses between the urban centers. This again would primarily be a service requirement for higher density developments which would require a greater array of services and facilities afforded by the urban areas rather than toward the outskirts of those urban areas. Therefore, I don't think the matter of "restricting the combining of the communities of Fruita and Grand Junction" is based on a conscious concern for creating some benefit to some particular parties. It seems more obvious to me in my observations that the board is merely concerned with the level of services available to prospective development. I think the recent rezones from AFT to Planned Commercial and Planned Industrial all up and down Highway 6 & 50 between Fruita and Grand Junction is an indication that the decision makers are not creating some artificial division between the two urban areas but rather developing a growth pattern based upon service capability and availability.

I appreciate your objection to the issuance of the Persigo Plant service area material a few days before action by the Board of Commissioners. I don't believe this was intended to restrict^{RE} actions or comments by the public, but was intended primarily to respond to constant demands placed upon Jim Patterson for an answer to the question "How do I get hooked onto the Persigo Plant?" As you may have noticed a number of fringe areas were built into the actual service area of the Persigo Plant in order to not pull the rug out from a number of already built or in progress sewerer subdivisions. However, there was concern that those areas demonstrate where the capacity that their developments will take up can be reduced from within the 201 boundary area. As to the actual timing of the decision, I would suggest that you contact Curt Wiedeman, the County Administrator, since he is principally responsible for structuring the board's time schedule. But again, I really don't believe it was any intention on the part of the Commissioners to restrict reactions and comments.

In summary, I believe that when you state there is, "A very wide difference" between planning for growth and planned growth, you appear to be concerned about the word control. It should be obvious that all growth is "controlled" to some extent by the availability of services. If this is what you mean by controlled growth then I would have to agree that growth in this valley is controlled, I have to agree that it is controlled everywhere throughout the country then. The availability of a water line is the first step towards some form of development, while the availability of a sewage collection line is a much greater step toward more intense or dense development. The market is built upon the availability of services in order to move land values higher as more services are available to a particular parcel. This is definitely control, but it is only a matter of who does the controlling that I believe to be the most salient issue to be put before the valley decision makers today. If the public is involved in controlling growth in order to realize the expected return of a sizeable local and federal investment, then I believe the public bit that bullet when they originally made the rather large investment in a

regional serving sewage treatment plant as well as expected interceptors to pick up package plants scattered across the valley from previous developments. I think the Commissioners are now concerned that until they fill in ~~to~~ to speak the gaps between previous development decisions using package plants, that the continued scattering of package plants will only require another required investment at a much sooner time to go out and pick up those plants on an interceptor and on perhaps a larger sewage treatment facility. This is the only form of control that I can personally see in the Commissioners decisions at this time. I think that they are genuinely concerned about realizing a full return on the tremendous investment the taxpayers have made in this Persigo project now.

Thank you for your letter and if you have any further questions I think that this is the kind of discussion that the Planning Commission would like to get involved in. Let me know if I can be of any further help.

Sincerely,

Cliff Davidson