

## Mill Site Development Comments

Bob Bishop

### **Opening Comment**

As stated in the staff report, the proposed development does not meet many of the WDC requirements. I agree and the following comments list some reasons why I believe the City should not approve this project as submitted.

### **Delaying Improvements Until Phase 2**

The developer makes a strong argument that the costs of providing improvements under phase 1 are not feasible due to the expense of those improvements and the possibility of going bankrupt in not being able to recoup those expenses from the sale of property. Doesn't this issue also apply to individuals that purchase the parcels from the Mill Site developers with the intent of developing multiple lots and homes within the parcel, if they are required to provide those improvements at the time of development. The more remote the parcel is from the improved end of Sunset Avenue, the greater the cost would be to extend the improvements to their particular parcel. Would those parcel developers not ask for the same exceptions for the same reasons?

### **Delay of Water Line Improvements**

Under the Developers plan, Phase 1 parcels could be developed with a single residence on site requiring the use of a well as a water source. Currently there are residences outside of Westfir that are on well water, a number of them obtain drinking water on a regular basis from a faucet located in front of City Hall since their wells apparently do not produce good drinking water. Would the parcels within the Mill site development face a similar issue? It seems water quality is an issue with wells developed in this area.

Another issue is the placement of fire hydrants. Would each parcel require fire hydrants as they are developed and who would be responsible for the cost of installation for these hydrants? Would this somewhat random development of the parcels result in a chaotic distribution of hydrants?

### **Use of Pressurized Sewage Disposal**

The Developer proposes the use of a pressurized sewer system for sewage conveyance. Each home would require a separate lateral connection to the pressurized sewer main and I assume each home would have its own collection tank, pump and piped connection to the sewer main. We have some experience with sewer pumps since our home has a pumped septic disposal system. The pump is turned on and off with float switches and on occasion, perhaps once a year, the floats get hung up and the pump does not turn on resulting in a highwater alarm sounding within our home. We open the septic lid and manipulate the floats to turn on the

pump. Our pump system, including the float switches, was recently replaced due to the age of the system at the expense of over \$1,000 dollars and we still experience the same problem. Many homeowners would require the assistance and knowledge of a plumber to resolve issues with a pumped system. Another issue with a pressurized system that we have personally experienced is power outages, the pumps don't operate during power outages such as the 4-day power outage during the heavy snow of 2019 rendering wastewater disposal unworkable.

### **Closing Comments**

The Mill Site developers make a compelling argument that constructing the improvements to City standards and development requirements are not financially feasible under current economic conditions and therefore are asking for deviations and delays to those requirements. The method of constructing improvements that they believe would be economically feasible would be completed in a piecemeal manner over an unknown period of time. The final product would more than likely result in streets, plumbing, walkways and other improvements being of different ages and therefore inconsistent in durability and ease of maintenance. Since streets, plumbing and hardware eventually degrade with use and aging, the City and HOA would be left with a hodgepodge of infrastructure in different states of useful life and therefore expensive to maintain and repair.

It is difficult to make a determination as to whether the Mill Site Developers argument that the City's requirements are too much of financial burden for their bottom line. They are asking the City to compromise many of it's standards, how could anyone possibly know if acquiescing to their demands is a fair trade off and isn't it possible that once the City goes down that road of not following City standards and delaying improvements other developers will ask for the same.