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El Paso County Planning and Community Development Department
2880 International Circle, Suite 110
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Re: Autumn Hills Sketch Plan

El Paso County Planning and Community Development Department:

This firm represents the Upper Black Squirrel Creek Ground Water Management District (the “UBS District”), a formed and operating ground water management district with the powers enumerated in the Colorado Ground Water Management Act, C.R.S. § 37-90-101 *et seq.* The UBS District has reviewed the Autumn Hills Sketch Plan submitted by Meridian Hills LLC for the development of 160 acres as mixed use residential and commercial and provides the following comments for your review and consideration:

Wastewater Services

El Paso County requires applicants at the sketch plan stage to establish wastewater disposal provisions to ensure conformance with the El Paso Land Development Code at the time of approval of the final plat. El Paso County Land Development Code § 8.4.8(A)(1). According to the Application, the proposed development will be supplied with sanitary services from the Paint Brush Hills Metro District (“PBHMD”). The PBHMD Wastewater Disposal Report for the Autumn Hills Development and Preliminary Plan further specified that Autumn Hills wastewater will flow into the Woodmen Hills wastewater treatment facility. PAINT BRUSH HILLS METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, WASTEWATER DISPOSAL REPORT, AUTUMN HILLS DEVELOPMENT AND PRELIMINARY PLAN § 1.0(A) (Nov. 30, 2022). The Woodmen Hills wastewater treatment facility discharges wastewater within the Upper Black Squirrel Creek Basin and the discharged wastewater is noncompliant with the water quality standards set forth in the Water Quality Control Commission’s Regulation Nos. 41 and 42. Compliance with all applicable site-specific water quality standards is essential to ensure that water quality within the Basin is not unreasonably impaired. Prior to allowing additional effluent to be generated at the Woodmen Hills treatment facility, the County should support the UBS District’s efforts to ensure that the discharge meets the groundwater standards for the Basin. Accordingly, the Woodmen Hills treatment facility should not be permitted to take on additional capacity until it demonstrates compliance with the regulations.

Water Services

Applicant's application provides insufficient information regarding the quantity, quality, and dependability of the proposed source of water supply for Autumn Hills. Applicant must provide information to determine the sufficiency of the proposed water supply in terms of quality, quantity, and dependability at the Sketch Plan phase. El Paso County Land Use Code § 8.4.7(B)(1). According to the application, the water supply for Autumn Hills will be provided by PBHMD. "PBHMD water is sourced entirely from Denver Basin groundwater and a small portion of contracted water from Meridian Service Metropolitan District." RG AND ASSOCIATES, LLC, PAINT BRUSH HILLS METROPOLITAN DISTRICT, AUTUMN HILLS WATER RESOURCES REPORT 1 (Nov. 18, 2022). **Denver Basin groundwater is a non-renewable source and it is well known that the Denver Basin water supplies are diminishing and may not be available in the future.** PBHMD should be required to show a larger percentage of its water supply from renewable sources prior to adding more water service commitments.

Further, in its Will Serve letter for Autumn Hills, PBHMD stated that "[f]inal determination of complete availability of Water is contingent on Denver Aquifers and Replacement plans (Dawson aquifers) which are currently under review at the state level." Such determination should be completed and provided to the County prior to any further approvals.

Underdrains

Due to local high ground water and soil conditions in the area, structures developed in Autumn Hills may need underdrains to capture and drain water that would otherwise flood those structures. Any underdrains will require a large capacity well permit and those well permits will require a replacement plan in compliance with Designated Basin Rule 5.6. Any such replacement plan should meet the requirements of Designated Basin Rule 5.6 by replacing any groundwater collected in any of the underdrains that is discharged to the surface and for the evaporation and evapotranspiration associated with the exposure of groundwater caused by the underdrain. Applicant's application states that it may implement perimeter drains as one measure to mitigate the risk to structures from groundwater but includes no information on whether underdrains will be required and how Applicant intends to meet the requirements of Designated Basin Rule 5.6. See Applicant's Letter of Intent at 7 ¶ 7.

The District reserves the right to provide additional comments at a later date founded upon information not readily ascertainable from the above-referenced application.

Sincerely,



Lisa M. Thompson
for
TROUT RALEY