

May 18, 2017

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Reference: Retreat at Timber Ridge

NEPCO is providing the collective input from its membership that includes 8,000 homeowners, 42 HOAs and 18,000 registered voters within and around Monument. The purpose of NEPCO, a volunteer coalition of Homeowner Associations in northern El Paso County, is to promote a community environment in which a high quality of life can be sustained for constituent associations, their members, and families in northern El Paso County. We collectively address growth and land use issues with El Paso County Planners and the Town of Monument, as well as addressing HOA issues of common interest among the members. NEPCO achieves this by taking necessary steps to protect the property rights of the members, encouraging the beautification and planned development and maintenance of northern El Paso County.

NEPCO's general comments related to the Retreat at Timber Ridge

1. NEPCO has serious concerns about development of this size residing in "rural" El Paso County. Assuming a density of 1.6 homes per acre on 293 acres, and again assuming 4 persons per household, that yields a population of approximately 1,800. This development will reside just north of the Sterling Ranch Development that plans to have several thousand residents. The combination of these two developments will put incredible pressure on the infrastructure supporting this area including roads, water and sewer systems. The potential rezoning of these tracts of land will cause a planned 282 homes under RR-5 to explode into 5,720 residential units under PUD and/or RS-5000 zoning.
2. We are further concerned about a new Metropolitan District, effectively an administrative agency/pass through organization.
 - a. Sterling Ranch Metro District purchases water from Woodman Hills Metro District which has 15 wells in the Denver Basin Aquifers and 2 wells in the Upper Black Squirrel Alluvial (shallow) Aquifer. Metro Districts are a reality in rural developments but they are inherently inefficient and we are witnessing more of these "administrative" Districts that exist only as pass-through entities. Woodman Hills Metro District already has 7 Intergovernmental Agreements with other Districts. The new Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority Area 3 Engineering Report, just publicly released, sounds the alarm

about relying on non-renewable water sources and yet we have another pair of developments stating that there is sufficient water for 10,000 plus new residents relying on the underlying aquifers. The El Paso County 300-year rule for sustainable water resources is all but ignored when these developments are planned.

- b. According to the Neighborhood Meeting Summary, the water provided by the water district(s) “will come from the deep aquifers: Arapahoe and Laramie-Fox Hills.” Is this how the new Timber Ridge Metro District will mine its water, or are they relying on where Sterling Ranch Metro District gets theirs? Will there be a requirement that those development homes that are not connected to the water district mine their water from these deeper aquifers?
 - c. Even under the El Paso County Policy Plan, 10.2.3 and 10.2.4, the goal is to maximize water supply options and economies through the pooling of resources and to encourage the linking of systems among water providers to provide the highest assurance of available service. The Timber Ridge development creates a whole new district to do these things and then states that these policies are “met by the proposed IGA between Sterling Ranch Metropolitan District and the proposed Timber Ridge Metropolitan District.”
 - d. The planting of pines on the berms is a laudable idea to shield the high density of this development in the south. Given the nature of pines in this area (they can be so small as to hide nothing and a sizeable number often die within a few years of planting), will there be a minimum height or girth of these pine trees and will they be replaced if they die before build-out?
3. Who will be maintaining the trails in this development? On page 3 of the Letter of Intent, it states that the proposed major trails will be constructed by the developer, placed in an easement, and maintained by El Paso County. Page 8 states much the same. However, on page 1 of the Development Plan, under Tract Table, it makes no reference to El Paso County maintaining any trails. Also, according to the Maintenance Agreement, “El Paso County will own and maintain the multi-use trail easement, and will own and maintain the open space parks should dedication be accepted,” while the Metropolitan District will “own and maintain the open space, drainage and water quality facilities, common areas, trails, landscape areas and buffer tracts.” Which is correct?
4. Two letters from neighboring 35-acre parcel landowners reference the addition of fire hydrants at least in the periphery of this development. However, the Wildland Fire & Hazard Mitigation Plan states that “At present, there is no readily available water supply for ground suppression fire resources. The local fire protection districts will need to haul water into the site during a fire. The subdivision will be supplied with water by the Sterling Metropolitan District in the future.” We can find no references to, or guarantees of, future fire hydrants in other documents.
5. The Detail Plans, Signs & Lighting makes no references to lighting at all. Will dark-sky compliant lighting be used/required in this development?

Transportation/Access Concerns

1. The Traffic Impact Study is for this development only. EPC Planners should be looking at the big picture of all other traffic impacts in this area, especially Sterling Ranch and its 10,000 people (and number of commercial sites).
2. Currently the road system is inadequate to support the number of proposed new residents.
 - a. **Stapleton Drive** is listed as a future road. The Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) currently lists the Stapleton Road extension as a “Corridor Study” only with \$314K allocated in the current year for the study and no activity currently listed, i.e. it is years away.
 - b. **Aspen Valley Parkway** terminates in a dead-end.
 - c. **Fox Covert Way** terminates in a dead-end.
 - d. **Bison Valley Trail** terminates in a dead-end
 - e. **Mount Jackson Drive** terminates in a dead-end.
3. These roads rely on another development for connectivity-an event not under the control of this development. **Volmer Road** is the only route either into or out of this development.

NEPCO’s final comments:

1. NEPCO has concerns about these large residential developments in unincorporated El Paso County. These developments rely on non-renewable water sources. Urban development should be supported by urban (renewable) water and sewer systems. When the water runs out the residents will be paying large sums to connect the Colorado Springs Utilities-no one likes that kind of surprise.
2. These high-density residential developments stress “rural” transportation infrastructure. The land was designated RR-5 as a reasonable density given the capabilities of rural Colorado land to support residential uses. Transitioning from that density to 1 home per 1.6 acres (thanks to some larger lots in Phase 1 that skew the ratio) is beyond what the land or the transportation infrastructure can support.
3. Thank you for the opportunity afforded NEPCO to engage in this process to work with the El Paso County to ensure we have planned, responsible growth.

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