

GARDENS AT NORTH CAREFREE – ALTERNATIVE LANDSCAPE PLAN

LETTER OF INTENT

JUNE, 2020

OWNER:

Mule Deer Investments, LLC
2727 Glen Arbor Drive
Colorado Springs CO 80920

APPLICANT:

Covington Homes, LLC.
13725 Struthers Rd, St 201
Colorado Springs, CO. 80920

CONSULTANT:

N.E.S. Inc.
619 North Cascade Avenue
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903

REQUEST

Covington Homes requests approval of an Alternative Landscape Plan for the Gardens at N. Carefree PUD Preliminary Plan.

LOCATION

Gardens at North Carefree is located southeast of the intersection of North Carefree Circle and Akers Drive. The property is currently vacant, undeveloped land comprising 11.56 acres. The north of the site abuts North Carefree Circle, beyond which is the Pronghorn Meadows subdivision. The western boundary is bounded by Akers Drive, with the Mule Deer Crossing subdivision adjacent. Along the southern boundary of the site is the Sky High at Mule Deer Business Park.



The building to the south is currently occupied by a Charter School, which is served by an unnamed private driveway running between the two properties. The western portion of the business park is currently undeveloped. To the east is property owned by Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU). Immediately adjacent to the site is a chain link fence and a 450-foot wide berm approximately 10-feet higher than the site. This berm provides a buffer between the project and the active part of the CSU property, which is used as a gas storage facility.

SITE HISTORY

The property is part of a 14-acre parcel within the Pronghorn Meadows (Hilltop) Sketch Plan. The Sketch Plan was originally approved in 2001 (SKP-01-002) and designated the area of the subject site for industrial use. An amendment to the Sketch Plan was approved in August 2005 (SKP-04-001) which reclassified the land designation to Industrial/Retail development. The PUD Preliminary Plan was approved in July 2019 (PUDSP 18-004) and an Amendment to remove one lot was approved in January 2020 (PUDSP 19-008).

ZONING

The site is part of a County enclave within the City of Colorado Springs. The site is zoned PUD for single-family. To the north of North Carefree Circle is the Pronghorn Meadows subdivision, which is zoned RS-6000 and the lots are generally between 6,000 - 7,000 square feet. The western boundary of the site is bordered by Akers Drive, with the Mule Deer Crossing subdivision adjacent. This subdivision is zoned PUD and the lot sizes are generally between 4,000 - 4,500 square feet. To the south is the Sky High at Mule Deer Business Park, which is a condominium complex zoned CS and currently used as a charter school. The CSU property to the east is zoned RR-5 but is clearly not intended for use as 5-acre residential lots as it acts as a buffer to the active part of the CSU gas storage facility.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project proposes an alternative landscape plan to reduce the amount of buffer trees, landscaping, and irrigation on the east and south side of the property. This amendment removes the trees on the east boundary due to the 3:1 slope and the significant berm. To replace the required trees Landscape Note 20 has been added that one tree be installed in the rear yard of lots 10-28.

Figure 1: East boundary existing fence, berm, and separation



To the south tall drought resistant grasses that can grow to approximately 5' have been substituted for the trees. In addition, a 6' vinyl privacy fence is provided to screen the uses. The xeriscape landscaping to the south is per the request of the school. While the landscaped area to the south (Tract I) is on this property it is functionally separated from the project and functions as part of the school site.

Figure 2: South boundary landscape area to the left with existing boulders.



PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

The reduction in landscaping meets the goals of the Water Master Plan while maintaining the intent of the buffers. The site still maintains screening and vegetation on both the east and south. The alternative landscape plan proposes to reduce the amount of water use for trees that are unlikely to survive on the slope and trees that buffer compatible uses.

Water Master Plan Goals

Goal 4.2 – Support the efficient use of water supplies.

Goal 4.4 – Protect and enhance the quality, quantity, and dependability of water supplies.

Goal 5.3 – Reduce end user water consumption in the County.

Goal 5.5 – Identify any water supply issues early on in the land development process.

Goal 6.1.2 – Promote water conservation.