

Imagine living and working in one of the most populous, traffic-congested cities in America for 35 years. Of course, our top priority after retirement was to find a new home in a smaller city with a home that would not be in a high density area. Then we find the Cathedral Pines community secluded within Black Forest with a minimum lot size of 2.5 acres, great views, and surrounded by wildlife. Cathedral Pines was the perfect location for our "forever" home. We were further encouraged by the existence of the Black Forest Preservation Plan. Now imagine finding out the proposed development north of us that was originally planned to have 6 - 7 acre lots has continually changed in character to now potentially be a highly densely populated area. We have now learned that because of the most recent Flying Horse North proposal, the extension of Milam Road through the middle of Cathedral Pines is planned. The new road linking Cathedral Pines to Flying Horse North would totally change the character of our small quiet community. This is extremely distressing and quite frankly maddening.

Over the years the original Black Forest Preservation Plan has been systematically eroded. The current El Paso County Master Plan calls for one lot every 2.5 acres. The proposed expansion of Flying Horse North even deviates

from the new plan with lot densities as small as one lot per 1/5 acre. I believe the Master Plan should be used as it was meant to be, as a guide in decision-making, and not cast aside in favor of greater density and a change in the development strategy of Flying Horse North.

Cathedral Pines and Flying Horse North are both identified as Large-Lot Residential areas in the Master Plan. The Plan then proceeds to describe Large-Lot Residential/Conservation design (or clustered development), and later says such areas should "provide for a similar level of development density as existing large-lot areas [2.5-5 acres] while maximizing the preservation of contiguous areas of open space and the protection of environmental features".

In addition, the Master Plan specifically states "Black Forest is a community with one of the strongest and most well-established characters in El Paso County. This area is built around protecting the forest and preserving its rural character and quality. Due to this natural amenity, many new residents seek to live in this area when moving to the County. Careful planning is required to promote health of natural areas, especially the forest, while accommodating new development for future residents. The County should maintain existing and expand the Large-Lot Residential placetype in this area in a development pattern that matches the existing character of the developed Black Forest community. Both Cathedral Pines and Flying Horse North are also identified in the plan as "Forested" along with the adjacent Black Forest community. Again, as stated in the Master Plan, "The seamless connection between the natural environment and small scale, low intensity development is critical to their identity."

The existing golf course in Flying Horse North and the two open space parks shown on the preliminary plan, while technically qualify as open space, provide no protection of the forested area. As cited in the Master Plan there is a need to "balance development with environmental stewardship and protect valued areas and habitats." Larger lot sizes and incorporating buffers where appropriate would accomplish the need to preserve this unique characteristic of the area versus allowing much greater density of housing through smaller lot sizes and greater residential development.

I am concerned that the proposed plan would:

1. increase automobile traffic on roads not equipped to handle it (including the extension of Milam Road through the middle of Cathedral Pines into FHN);
2. add sound and light pollution;
3. increase use of our community trails requiring more maintenance and upkeep (an expense our community incurs) and also eliminating some of our trails;
4. would be incompatible with nearby development;
5. would not protect the forested area and wildlife;
6. would impact water supplies;
7. would have a negative impact on our property values.

The infringement on the quietude and nature-filled views of Cathedral Pines along with the inconsistency with the adjoining neighborhood would likely negatively influence the decision to purchase in our community. In addition, any decision to make Milam Road a southern entry point into Flying Horse North would also require the elimination of the heavily forested area at the center of our community and negatively affect all our residents.

I urge the commissioners to consider the possible negative implications of changing the development of Flying Horse North to allow greater density and access through Cathedral Pines, and to remain true to the objectives of the original Black Forest Preservation Plan as well as the new El Paso County Master Plan. Just say No! to this planned expansion.

Many thanks for your consideration.
James Gardner