

To: Holly Williams, El Paso County Commissioner, District 1
Carrie Geitner, District 2
Stan VanderWerf, District 3
Longino Gonzales, Jr., District 4
Cami Bremer, District 5
Ryan Howser, El Paso County Dept. of Planning and Community Development
Nina Ruiz, El Paso County Planning Supervisor

From Debra Bowers
3935 Foxchase Way

Date: 12/21/2021

Re: Flying Horse North Development

I am a resident of Cathedral Pines and have recently found out about the proposed expansion of Flying Horse North. I am extremely distressed over these plans. Over the years the original Black Forest Preservation Plan has been systematically eroded from a minimum density of one lot per 5 acres to one lot every 2.5 acres per the new El Paso County Master Plan. 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 (part in the Forested area) 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 increase automobile traffic on roads not equipped to handle it, including the extension of Milam Road through the middle of Cathedral Pines into FHN; add sound and light pollution; increase use of our community trails requiring more maintenance and upkeep (an expense our community incurs); would be incompatible with nearby lower-cost and denser development; would not protect for the forested area and wildlife; would potentially impact water supplies; and 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. Enough new growth in this area.

Many thanks for your consideration.

Respectfully,