

March 10, 2008

Boise City Planning & Development Services  
Planning and Zoning Commission  
P.O. Box 500  
Boise, ID 83701-0500

RE: Plano Lane Foothills Subdivision File #CAR-07-0042, CFH-07-00022

Dear Commissioners:

The Central Foothills Neighborhood Association is concerned about several issues on the proposed Canyon Point Development above Hill Road between Plano Lane and Collister Drive. Since this development will set precedence in many ways for future developers and foothills development in Boise, we believe the proposed Plano Canyon Point Development offers an important test case for the Foothills Policy Plan. With so much at stake, we urge that strict Foothills Policy Plan compliance standards be used when evaluating all aspects of the Plano Development project.

We understand that ACHD and Boise City Planning & Development are often put in a position to advocate for proposed developments; however, we urge you to remain neutral and objective during your evaluation of this apparent foothills test case development proposal. We also urge the *Blueprint Boise* Planning & Development staff to use the opportunity of this proposed development to note where possible refinements and updates may need to be made to clarify and most importantly strengthen any future revisions of the Foothills Policy Plan.

We believe the proposed Plano Development density bonus supporting arguments are for the most part a clear misuse of the intent of the Foothills Ordinance. Using the protection of the Aase onion as a supporting point for the project fails to recognize the harm that placing 155 homes above and/or near the protected area will cause. Lawn chemical runoff and increased foot traffic due to nearby development will not benefit the onion. Also, they are claiming to protect wetlands, but the area contains none of significance. In addition, the trailhead improvements they use to justify a density exemption are minimal and not worthy of trading for density.

Beyond these environmental concerns, approving another ridgeline development will significantly damage the beauty of the foothills for all of Boise. Allowing developers to hand pick ridge view properties to maximize their profits in lieu of less valuable foothills areas is a disservice to the community. We do not need another Quail Ridge, which for many has become a noun synonymous with aesthetically unpleasant ridgeline development. We ask that you consider if developing our ridgelines is the best use of our remaining open space. **Foothills Policy 3.0 Objective 1-2 clearly stipulates development shall be designed to protect the general shapes and textures of the Foothills, shall maximize the retention of the existing natural topography, the natural scenic values of prominent ridges and knolls shall be maintained, project design shall preserve the natural appearance of prominent ridges and skylines, and development concentrated on more obscured areas of the sites.**

In addition to the aesthetics, drainage issues have yet to be resolved. Forcing homeowners onto city water because of contaminated wells is unacceptable. Risking our water resources while approving new developments that will further tax our water supply has no logical justification.

On another issue, we have yet to see the full impact of increased traffic of the currently approved and planned developments in various stages along Hill Road and Northwest Ada County. Eyrie Canyon No. 4 near Quail Hollow Golf Course on upper N. 36<sup>th</sup> has an application for 106 homes; Dry Creek Ranch near Hidden Springs expects to put 4,300 homes in the Dry Creek Valley area; Cartwright Ranch, with about 600 homes, has a hearing scheduled with Ada County P&Z this month; and Kastera Shadow Valley is planning a golf course community of 122 homes. To the north, Avimor Planned Community, which will begin with about 700 homes, and grow to several thousand, is getting ready to market their first home sites. All of these City and County developments will feed more traffic into Boise and some will end up on the already heavily traveled Hill Road and through Boise's historic North End neighborhoods.

Most ACHD Hill Road planned improvements such as the roundabout on N. 36<sup>th</sup> have either been tabled and/or are not even on the current planning list because of the tremendous backlog of unfunded road projects in other parts of Ada County. With this in mind, we believe now is a time to be prudent and to proceed slowly until we fully understand the impact of all the new developments in this area of the city and county. A large-scale Plano development will funnel more traffic on Hill Road, which in many sections is at or near capacity. Allowing a large-scale development is not in the best interest and safety for citizens and the surrounding neighborhoods as it just causes more environmental, social, and cultural decline. Nonetheless, we believe developers should bear the burden of any and all improvements that need to be made to maintain current levels of safety on roads impacted by their development proposals. Road improvements should be part of early discussions so neighbors know how their community safety will be affected.

In summary, we recommend in addition to the above, that the City and ACHD mitigate the impact of the proposed large-scale Plano foothills development, analyze all aspects to make sure it follows the intent of the Boise City Foothills Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan, and be in full compliance with ACHD traffic and safety regulations. We also specifically urge you to remain neutral and objective during your evaluation of the proposal. Many, if not most citizens in our Neighborhood Association area expect Boise City and public agencies to keep all foothills development standards high...for protection and enhancement of our quality of life...not only for the Plano proposal, but for all development proposals.

Sincerely,

Paul Werner, President  
Central Foothills Neighborhood Association

cc: Bruce Eggleston, Boise City Planner II  
Patricia A. Nilsson, Manager, Boise Comprehensive Planning  
Matt Edmond, ACHD Planner II, Right-of-Way & Development Services  
Julie Klocke, President Collister Neighborhood Association