

Homebuilder revises plan for Forest Lakes development

By Lisa Hatfield

On Nov. 15, Classic Homes hosted a neighborhood meeting to present a third revision of its plan to develop Phase II of the Forest Lakes development at the west end of Baptist Road. Land Planner and NES Principal Andrea Barlow, Classic Homes executives Doug Stimple and James Boulton, and El Paso County Project Manager Kari Parsons shared the 180-lot proposal with adjacent property owners. Barlow said the revisions were made due to neighbor feedback and technical constraints on the previous proposals.

In 2002, El Paso County approved a site plan including 131 lots for this land, but nothing was built. In February and April this year, the new developers proposed both 231-lot and 199-lot configurations, which adjacent neighbors opposed citing concerns about the urban density next to rural neighborhoods, traffic and safety, hiker access and parking, and water supply. In response, Classic Homes proposed this 180-lot design for this westernmost phase of Forest Lakes. It will be of similar density to Forest Lakes Phase I to the east, with more open space and continuation of the hiking trail, Barlow said.

Stimple said even though neighboring parcels are zoned for residential, rural 5-acre lots, when the Forest Lakes Metropolitan District water and sewer plan was approved (and the two dams were built) in 1986, Forest Lakes officially changed from a rural residential community to a municipal services community. That means it is a planned urban

development with water, sewer and roads coordinated by a metropolitan district.

The El Paso County Master Parks Plan requires that the development include a trail with access to the national forest to the west. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reviewed the location of the trail with respect to the Preble's meadow jumping mouse habitat along Beaver Creek. Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District has approved the proposed road configuration. The U.S. Forest Service looks at wildfire mitigation needs. The state engineer evaluates the sufficiency of the water supply. Forest Lakes has "enough groundwater and renewable surface water for other communities beyond Forest Lakes," Stimple said. See www.ocn.me/v18n5.htm#flmd.

Parsons asked all residents with questions about a development to look at the "100 percent transparent" El Paso County Electronic Development Application Review Program (EDARP) at www.epcdevplanreview.com. Search for Forest Lakes Phase II PUD (Planned Urban Development) Preliminary Plan Amendment. The site displays all of the development application archives, applications under current review, and more. Call 520-6300, or write to kariparsons@elpasoco.com with questions after reading the multiple review agencies' comments.

Classic Homes will submit this most recent proposal to the county by mid-December, and Parsons said she will thoroughly review all agency comments. Then the proposal will be heard by the



Above: Doug Stimple of Classic Homes, left, talked with Dick Redman about a new Forest Lakes Phase II development proposal, which will be reviewed by the El Paso County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners in December. Photo by Lisa Hatfield.

El Paso County Planning Commission, which will make a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. Stimple said he hoped that if the plan is approved, construction might begin this spring.

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Northern El Paso County Coalition of Homeowners Associations, Nov. 17

Transportation concerns rise as area grows



Above: Colorado State Representative Terri Carver, District 20, explains her idea to change the current toll-determining system of governor-appointed commissions to entities comprising elected officials to provide greater constituent input and broader representation. Photo by Jennifer Kaylor.

By Jennifer Kaylor

The Northern El Paso County Coalition of Homeowners Associations (NEPCO) convened to hear Colorado State Representative Terri Carver, District 20, give her perspective on Colorado's current tolling system at its Nov. 17 regular membership meeting. NEPCO Vice President and Transportation and Land Use Committee Chair Tom Vierzba updated members about growth projections and potential impacts.

Representative proposes toll lane changes

Carver explained that she has a problem with the unchecked authority of the governor-appointed transportation commission, the body that determines which roads are tolled. Similarly, she expressed displeasure with the High-Performance Transportation Enterprise, also governor-appointed, that determines toll amounts. Both entities should comprise elected officials who must answer to constituents, she said.

Noting billion-dollar projects in Denver, she voiced her intention to create uniform statewide parameters to invite public input and ensure that all Coloradans, not just those living in the Denver metro area, reap the benefits of projects funded by tolls. Carver commented on the additional funds made available to the transportation department that resulted from the state's under-projection of 2018 revenue. A proponent of public transit, Carver proposed increasing the multi-modal portion from its current 10 percent of the transportation fund and separating it altogether from the fund. Carver may be reached at 303-866-2191 or terri.carver.house@state.co.us

More cars, fewer dollars

Growth statistics and projections continue to concern community leaders about how the community's infrastructure—primarily roads, water and wastewater, schools, and emergency services—will manage and support the number of people estab-

lishing new homes in the area.

For example, Vierzba said that traffic passing through the Higby Road-Jackson Creek Parkway intersection in 2014 totaled about 6,000 cars per day. By 2023, the same intersection is expected to bear more than 34,000 cars per day. The speculated increase along Higby potentially creates deterioration and safety issues, he said. The impacts of sharp curves, additional exit and entrance junctures—Home Place Ranch proposes about five such junctures along Higby—and drivers who speed excessively have the potential to become a volatile mix. Multiple roads throughout the Tri-Lakes region face similar situations.

A significant road repair and maintenance hurdle is that multiple entities can be responsible for a road, Vierzba said. For example, the Town of Monument and Triview Metropolitan District oversee different chunks of Jackson Creek Parkway. Some entities have better funding than others, which can result in a patchwork effect on road maintenance and repair, he said. Collaborating among the different entities can be challenging due to the piecemeal nature of funding road repair projects.

President's term ends

Secretary Bob Swedenburg presented a token of appreciation to President Larry Oliver, who reached his term's end as of Nov. 30. Treasurer Greg Lynd stepped into Oliver's vacant position.

The next meeting is Jan. 12, 2019. Meetings are generally scheduled on the second Saturday of the month, 10 a.m. to noon, at the Monument Town Hall conference room, 645 Beacon Lite Road off Highway 105. See www.nepco.org for additional information.

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November Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

For the second month in a row, temperatures were below normal and this time precipitation was well above normal. This has been a good start to the snow season and a welcome change after last season's near-record low snowfall amounts.

The month started with normal temperatures in the 40s and 50s and dry conditions, ahead of a quick-moving storm that produced periods of snow showers on the 3rd. The heaviest burst of snow and wind blew through between 10:30 and 11:30 that morning, with another round of snow that evening. Overall, about 2

inches of snow accumulated during the period.

Quiet conditions returned from the 4th through 10th, but temperatures remained below normal. Highs were in the 30s and 40s each afternoon, about 10 degrees colder than normal.

A strong storm began to move into the region lat-