

increases the drainage demands for the area. Phillips spoke similarly at the Planning Commission meeting.

Terry Stokka, chairman, BFLUC, and president, Friends of Black Forest, said he had had responses in support of his objections from almost 700 of the Friends' members. He likened the development to a small town being created in Black Forest with the streetlights, sidewalks, and other things that a small town brings. He said the proposals represented a gross zoning change and that traffic would increase fivefold compared to the original plan.

Kristi Correa, a member of Cathedral Pines Homeowners Association's Board of Directors, stated that the hotel proposals violated the master plan's large-

lot residential guidance on commercial uses as it is not small scale, does not meet the general needs of the local community, and is not planned to be on a major roadway. She asked, "What is the purpose of having a master plan if we don't abide by it?"

There was also discussion of a possible agreement between the Wismer family, who sold the property for development (it was part of Shamrock Ranch), and the developer that the lots would be 5 acres. Stimple said that to the best of his knowledge, there was nothing in the sale agreement that would have precluded the application. Calling a point of order, a member of the public said the matter had been brought up at one of the community meetings and Wismer's daughter had spoken emotionally about it. Balsick confirmed comments were made but stated there was nothing contractual.

Commissioners' deliberations

Commissioner Carrie Geitner asked if it were a possibility that the project could move forward with the city via annexation where density could be higher. Stimple replied that there was no path forward in the city at this time due to its water constraints but that he doubted that would be the situation forever. The area is shown as a potential annexation area in the county's master plan and the city's annexation plan. The lone no vote was Gonzalez, who found the hotel to be inconsistent with the master plan. He had earlier confirmed with Ryan Howser, AICP planner III, Planning and Community Development Department, that the staff's analysis was that tourism commercial,

as the hotel is classified, is not a recognized land use in the large-lot residential placetype category in the master plan.

Commissioners Geitner and Cami Bremer both referred to respecting private property rights in their comments. Geitner, who made the motion to approve, said, "I'm very much hands off when it comes to how government tells people how to use their property and so when I look at the master plan, I don't ever want to be in a place where we just put labels on land all around the county and we say this is what you're going to build." She said she found the application in general conformance with the master plan and feared that if the project did not go ahead under the county, it would be developed at some point via annexation by the city at a much greater density.

Describing it as a difficult decision and seconding, Bremer said, "I am landing on the side of private property rights with this." Gonzalez commented that he hadn't heard any justification for the hotel in their comments. He said, "I know the master plan is a guide but if we're not going to follow it ever, why do we have it?"

Commissioner Stan VanderWerf, describing a sketch plan as the beginning of a lot of negotiation, said, "This is one of the biggest, most contentious ones [applications] I've had the opportunity to deliberate on. I encourage the developer to continue to work with the neighbors and the constituents and the associations and so forth that are here, that came here in force."

Next steps

A sketch plan is only a required step in the subdivision process for more complex, large-scale types of development that have multiple parts to them. They are seen as a conceptual review of feasibility and design. Now that this sketch plan has been approved, the next step will be for the applicant to come back with a preliminary plan application. An amended PUD will also be needed for density changes, something which is normally reviewed concurrently.

2023 proposed budget includes parks work

At the Nov. 15 regular BOCC meeting, the commissioners gave their final direction on the 2023 budget, accepting proposals put forward by Nikki Simmons, chief financial officer. She explained that revised estimates of spendable funding meant the staff was proposing a \$9 million change in the amount that could be appropriated.

Simmons proposed adding \$1.23 million to reserves and allocating an additional \$6 million in one-time funding to the road and bridge budget, bringing funding there to \$16 million. \$1 million would go to the Parks and Recreation capital budget and would specifically go toward the funding of the Northern Nature Center at Fox Run Regional Park. In addition, \$250,000 would go to Parks and Recreation for wildfire mitigation work for The Pinerias Open Space, Black Forest Regional Park, and Fountain Creek Regional Park and would be used as matching funds, allowing \$500,000 of fire mitigation to be done in those parks. Funding would also go to the Department of Public Works to allow it to upgrade gates at certain works yards, to IT for upgrades at the District Attorney's Office, and to Planning and Community Development for homeless camp and code enforcement cleanup.

Geitner commented, "These are all very core priorities to our function as government and so I am proud that we are prioritizing these things and making sure we are prepared for the future." VanderWerf

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