

current infrastructure, difficulties in transplanting trees as the developer suggested, and apprehensions about crime associated with multi-family housing.

On the other hand, some individuals spoke in favor of the proposed development. Theresa Sidebotham, the owner of Telios Law also neighboring the development, highlighted the importance of annexation to maintain tax revenues for the town and advocated for the proposal's low-density approach. Another property owner adjacent to the site praised the proposal for preserving a gateway to Monument and endorsed apartments in the area as recommended by developers. Chris Fox, a resident in the vicinity, expressed preference for having a say in the development through annexation rather than leaving it to the county, indicating support for town oversight. Other supporters emphasized the developer's responsiveness to community concerns, the potential benefits of more apartments for housing affordability, and the belief that the town should move forward with the development to maintain some control over the process.

Whitehead assured the council that Monument Hill Road would not be eliminated by their development and that sound barriers would be installed along the highway to mitigate noise impact. Whitehead defended the annexation as not unusual and stated that plans were in place for constructing sanitary sewer systems, backed by a letter of approval from the district for water supply. Whitehead did not directly address concerns toward views or the apprehensions

about high-density housing and potential impacts on neighboring properties. Instead, he emphasized that the presented zoning was preliminary, acknowledging that much work remained ahead in the development process, and clarified that the project did not include any apartments, which had been a point of contention raised by some citizens.

#### Proposal fails and applicant withdraws

Following the citizens' comments and the developer's response, the debate among the council members centered on several key issues. King expressed his belief that the property should be handled as a PUD and criticized the proposed RA zoning, emphasizing concerns about clear-cutting and the lack of tree preservation. Councilmembers Jim Romanello and Fiorito supported keeping the development within Monument, expressing distrust in the county's handling of the project and the need to find a compromise. LaKind voiced his major concern about the density, hoping for a resolution through compromise. Councilmember Laura Kronick asked if an agreement could be reached, leading to a recess for private discussions. However, no compromise was achieved.

The council then voted on two resolutions related

to the annexation. Resolution No. 51-2023, which outlined findings of fact regarding the proposed annexation, passed unanimously with a 7-0 vote. However, Resolution No. 52-2023, which would have approved the annexation agreement with the developer, failed with a vote of 2-5 against. Councilmembers King, Kimple, Kronick, Sana Abbott, and Mayor LaKind voted against, while Romanello and Fiorito voted in favor. LaKind wished the developers luck with the county, and King warned citizens that the proposal would now be subject to county jurisdiction.

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The Monument Council usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. The next two regular meetings are scheduled for Monday, Aug. 7 and Monday, Aug. 21. Call 719-884-8014 or see [www.townofmonument.org](http://www.townofmonument.org) for information. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets or to download audio recordings of past meetings, see <http://monumenttownco.minutesondemand.com> and click on Town Council.

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#### Monument Planning Commission, June 28

## Town Planning Commission recommends approval of Monument Ridge 1 and 2 despite community concerns

By Leslie Hanks

The June 28 Monument Planning Commission hearing on Monument Ridge 1 and 2 was standing room only, with many people forced to stand in the hallway and listen to the hearing over the internet on their

phones.

Chairperson Martin Trujillo, Vice Chairperson Danny Ours and Commissioners Nicholson, Greg Collins, Sean Zernickow, and Ray Egley were in attendance. Alternates Joe Kneeder and Chad Smith were sworn in as regular members for the meeting. Commissioner Cathy Green was in attendance online as a non-voting member.

The proposed annexation and zoning proposal had previously been heard and tabled Nov. 22, 2022.

Planning staff reviewed and recommended the annexing and rezoning of Monument Ridge 1, 90.98 acres on the southwest corner of County Line Road and I-25. The assertion was made that the property is contiguous to Monument, as required by state statute. However, it was later discussed that it was a "flagpole zoning," which involves annexing narrow parcels of land to reach another parcel under annexation consideration. Staff member Sheila Booth explained that the developer was asked to resubmit the proposal so that Monument could have control of the project rather than El Paso County. Apparently, the project would be phased in until the missing 16 acre-feet of water required at the proposed density is acquired.

The staff recommended annexation and Residential Attached (RA) zoning.

There was discussion of boarding house and multifamily use being removed as possible uses.

The staff noted there were no letters of support received but there were letters of opposition.

The staff then presented plans for Monument Ridge 2 at the southeast corner of County Line Road and I-25, which is a 71.01-acre parcel. Annexation was recommended with RA 358 patio homes/condos. They stated the contiguity requirement was met. Woodmoor Water and Sanitation (WWSD) would provide the water and there would be a metro district. Both proposals are within the town's recently adopted Three Mile Plan.

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