

Dear Elaine,

January 20, 2021

This letter is sent on behalf of the more than 200 members of Gunbarrel Community Alliance (GCA) and the more than 6600 people who have signed our online petition opposing this development. It presents the initial concerns of GCA members after our first few days of access to the site review documents for 4775 Spine Road.

Gunbarrel Community Alliance is a registered Colorado charity organization, an IRS-certified 501(c)(3) charity organization founded to represent Gunbarrel residents as we seek to conserve local wildlife and open spaces in Gunbarrel and work with the City of Boulder and Boulder County government to reach mutually acceptable decisions on land use and development in Gunbarrel.

Our organization is all volunteers. We live in Gunbarrel, some in the City and some in the County. We have worked overtime these last several days to plow through the 724 pages of the site review documents we first obtained access to only a week ago yesterday. We want our concerns to be heard as part of the initial review so you (and other city staff) will know to involve us as fully as possible going forward on this project.

Many of our members have written individual letters stating the concerns that matter most to them. Let me speak for all our members with this short list of our major concerns.

IM Zoning should only be used for residential use in appropriate locations. According to the criteria described in the BVCP, this is not an appropriate location. If you are careful in this review, you will not approve this use request.

The call for affordable housing is not just a call for rental apartments. In fact, vacant rentals are easy to find in Gunbarrel and indeed in Boulder; those in Gunbarrel are more affordable, because we are so far outside of the rest of Boulder. What people cannot find are housing units they can buy: townhouses, single family houses, duplexes, patio homes. Let's change the design to meet the real need. And we feel this developer could provide more than the minimum. Let's see 40% or more affordable.

Ultra-high density is inappropriate at this semi-rural location. This is not downtown Boulder, where this design would easily fit in with surrounding densities. For this location, the density needs to be reduced to no more than 17 units per acre, the density of the adjacent Powderhorn development. A transitional density would be even better, since this land sits between densities of 3 on the south and 17 on the east. Maybe 12 units per acre would be a good transitional density for this location. This would reduce the oversize footprint of this design: more than 250,000 square feet, which is about 40% more than would be allowed if it were used for IM development. (I go back to my original observation: Residential use should not be permitted at all in this location, much less to be more intensive than the intended IM use.)

Breaking new ground goes against Boulder's climate and sustainability goals, and it's particularly bad thinking now as COVID is forcing us to change our habits of how we live and work. Businesses are changing to more work from home, freeing up considerable downtown

commercial space that could be used for residential development. Now is the time to pause and begin to realize the benefits of this new real estate landscape, and reshape Boulder into the walkable neighborhoods that people want and need. This would contribute positively to our climate and sustainability agendas, and create a more liveability city!

The number of units is far too high, even so high that enough standard-size parking spaces will not fit. So high that the size of the open space will not be adequate to provide relief from the urban density for all the residents, their pets, and guests. We expect the local private park (a block away) will be an attractive refuge for these residents, since the nearest City park is more than a mile away. A more reasonable number of units would be about 160, which would enable this site to better accommodate all the needed parking with standard and even oversize spaces AND provide a local park space.

Alternative transportation estimates need to be revised downward to a reasonable number: probably under 10%. Bike travel is dangerous and not for everyone and bus service is being cut. The center for jobs, and recreation, and retail, and education, and culture and is miles away in Boulder, proper. Families and even individuals will drive almost all the time because Gunbarrel is "out there." Even our little King Soopers and the rest of "Gunbarrel center" is not walkable from this location. Changing the alternative transportation estimate would help indicate a more reasonable number of parking spaces needed.

Finally, the "sales language" in this set of documents is frankly outrageous. The number of "inaccurate" bits of text and misleading illustrations raises a serious question as to the integrity of the entire proposal. I would be happy to provide numerous examples if you haven't found them already in your work. Documents from consulting companies do not seem to have the kind of misleading language we see in the summary documents. The City should not have to ask, but the applicant should be required to eliminate exaggerations and other misstatements and provide an honest picture of this oversize urban plan stuffed into a small, out-of-town, semi-rural location.

We hope city staff and the applicant will take our comments seriously. We have worked more than 100 person-hours this week to review the documents and prepare our comments. We are working to be engaged in the site review process. And when I say "we," I mean many of the more than 200 GCA members.

Thank you, Elaine, for your difficult work on behalf of city residents, especially during these unprecedented challenges. Thank you for reviewing our comments and working with the applicant on these, the most serious of our concerns. In the coming weeks and months, we look forward to working as closely as possible with you on these and more detailed concerns that will probably surface in more thorough reviews.

Best regards,
Kit Fuller, GCA Chair
Gunbarrel Community Alliance
Board of Directors: Kit and Wanda Fuller, Julie Dye, Susan Lambert, Ardith and Rod Rietema, Rhona Unsell