

Matt Martin

From: Suzanne Pepin <suzanne.pepin@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 26, 2022 11:42 AM
To: Matt Martin
Cc: Suzanne Pepin
Subject: Sunset Meadows
Attachments: Sunset Meadows.pdf; Sunset Meadows.docx

(Reference file numbers MP 22-01, SUB 22-01, MNR 22-02.)

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the proposed project. My major concerns regard:

1. Traffic and related safety issues
2. Proximity to forest and fire danger
3. Demands on our water table
4. Impact upon scenic corridor
5. Failure to apply key elements from council adopted vision plan.
6. Preceden- setting variations and modifications to existing code

I briefly discuss each of these below which I have attached formatted as a PDF file as well as a Word document.

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Sunset Meadows concerns:

1. TRAFFIC and SAFETY

Having lived just off highway 242 at Crossroads, I am well aware of potential for congestion accidents along a route frequented by visitors as well as locals headed to and from town or the schools and churches just off the northside of 242, as well as visitors and locals headed up the McKenzie Pass--many of whom are on bicycles. To add so many dwellings to this area would result in hundreds more vehicles accessing Highway 242 on a road already heavily used by school and church goers, as well as sightseers and recreators wishing to take advantage of iconic views of the Three Sisters mountains.

2. FIRE

Forest fires are frequent in our area. Having been twice evacuated from Crossroads due to forest fires, I am only too familiar with the dangers of building in proximity to heavily wooded areas. In fact, the fire danger was one reason for our eventually leaving Crossroads.

3. WATER

With our prolonged drought situation throughout Central Oregon, water is very much on our minds. We see streams drying up and wetlands disappearing along with lots of wildlife habitat and a healthy ecosystem. Sisters residents have been asked to conserve water and many in the surrounding area have had to reduce irrigation and/or deepen wells.

We are all aware of the need for affordable housing and acknowledge that additional housing units will place additional demands on the water table. However, what is being proposed at Sunset Meadow does not appear to be low-cost housing. It is a fact that higher-priced homes tend to consume more water for their landscaping as well as household use where there are multiple bathrooms, for example.

I do not know what kind of landscaping is being proposed at Sunset Meadows, but it should not be of a type that requires irrigation. This goes for the buffer proposed between the development and 242. I do believe that the amount of buffer the developer has proposed along 242 is essential, but it should be left in as natural as state as possible and not require irrigation.

4. SCENIC CORRIDOR

Highway 242 has been designated as a scenic Highway all the way into Sisters. Preserving its scenic qualities and protecting the natural areas around Sisters was an integral part of a plan growing out of the extensive visioning process conducted for Sisters Country and adopted by the city Council not long ago.

5. NON-ACNOWLEDGMENT OF KEY ELEMENTS OF CITY-ADOPTED VISION GOALS

As an original member of the Visioning Committee, I and dozens of other community members, City staff and elected officials spent many months gathering input and developing a plan that reflected the preferences of a majority of residents. High priority was placed on maintaining the unique qualities that make Sisters the place we love to live. Visitors value Sisters as a destination where a small-town atmosphere surrounded by scenic beauty are the big draws. In addition to the expenditure of considerable staff time, consultants were hired to facilitate the process. What is the point of developing and adopting goals and guidelines if they are subsequently ignored?

6. VARIANCES and MODIFICATIONS to existing code

Some of the variances and modifications requested by the applicant include lot sizes, density, square-footage of dwellings, setbacks, and length of driveways. What is the point of having a code if it is not applied? As Scott Woodford, Community Development Director, stated, "If there was [a requirement for buffers between developments], we'd certainly follow that." There ARE requirements in the code regarding lot sizes, density, square-footage of dwellings, setbacks, and length of driveways. By the same logic, shouldn't these be followed?

For the six reasons noted above, as well as others, I urge the planning commission to proceed with great caution, keeping in mind the precedent they will be setting.

Thank you for considering my concerns together with those of hundreds of others in her community.

Respectfully submitted,
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