

Written Testimony from:

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Agenda Item – Eberly Place

Commerce City

City Council

May 23, 2002

Honorable Mayor, Members of the City Council, thank you for the opportunity to address the agenda item named Eberly Place.

When this item was first introduced to the City Council last year, I spoke during public comment. At that time the architectural representation of the PUD presented to the City Council showed no road connections to Blackhawk Street (Blackhawk). There was no park along Blackhawk. There was no need to widen Blackhawk to meet spec. I asked that the item be “tabled.”

As this PUD evolved, it was introduced to the Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z) on May 3, 2022 as a different development. There now are two access streets off Blackhawk. Sometimes the houses are arranged to line those new streets. Sometimes they are shown in a horseshoe configuration. Sometimes a park runs along Blackhawk. Discussion at that meeting also included whether Blackhawk was to be extended to Potomac St. or the arsenal.

During public comment I mentioned how the rendering of this PUD keeps changing. One member of the P&Z asked which plan they were voting on. The answer from another member was the one before them that evening. It did not clear things up from a public perspective, so I figured I would have to wait until the minutes come out.

Which led us to the May 16, 2022 City Council meeting. As a member of the public, it was difficult to discern why it was necessary to move the Eberly Place item to May 23, 2022. (Did someone say something was missing? Doesn't the City Council get a copy of what P&Z recommended? Did this PUD change again?) The questions reminded me of why I now stay out of politics. But I still can't answer my neighbors' questions or my own – what will this place actually look like? How can I find out? It is difficult to comment on something when one does not know what it is.

The excessive addition of houses has changed the nature of where I live, Foxton Village. No longer will it be a little area nestled in the farmland of Colorado. It is to be integrated into the seamless transition of houses and apartments between Tower Road and Highway 2. I have heard how these houses will “enhance” open space, without proof of it being so. I have been told that the thousands of houses planned are what residents asked for. When? 15 years ago? Community planning requires models that can stay current as the needs of residents rapidly change in our global world.

As Eberly Place represents only 154 of those thousands of houses, it is a part of the overall difficulty that many residents in this part of Commerce City are now facing. The depth of this area has dramatically increased. This is not to be confused with density. Depth is a perspective. It is not something easily measured.

As communities expand there are often overlooked aspects of planning that produce negative results. It may start as increased stress to residents as traffic increases, commuting time grows and amenities seem less accessible. Safety and security become jeopardized. This will normally result in a rise of hostility and aggression. It is not unusual to find increases in crime, divorce, spousal abuse, and even suicide as depth multiplies. Municipalities begin to ask how to get a “sense of” community back.

One of the discussion points about Eberly Place is that its construction will permanently obscure a view of the Rocky Mountains for residents of Foxton Village. Personally, I find it hard to accept this change. When we purchased our home, the location and view were major factors. We checked the P&Z records that showed land use as “agricultural/light industrial.” Good, we thought. No big houses will be able to obstruct the view. Apparently, the future P&Z plan is the current ruling document.

If you have not viewed the area where Eberly Place is to be located, I urge you to do so. Drive onto Blackhawk and observe the view to the west. Come during a thunder storm and see lightning for hundreds of miles. Come for fireworks from multiple counties on July 4th or New Year’s Eve. Come during the day to see how much snow is on the peaks. Come during the evening when all the city lights twinkle. But come before your final actions and observe the view many of us have enjoyed. I will surely miss it.

As more information becomes available to the public, I appreciate any open meetings regarding Eberly Place. Additional comments may be necessary.

I am available to answer any questions the City Council has.