

Open Letter to the Harvest Meadows and surrounding community regarding the rezoning of the Ard Property located at 10225 Chamber Road. I have asked Candace Escobar to post this letter for me on behalf of Velta Ard.

My name is Cindy Wood, and I am the daughter of Nick and Velta Ard. Many of you know that the Commerce City City Council is going to review the rezoning request for my parent's property again during their session tomorrow night (12/16/24.) I know that there are many of you that are concerned about (or disapprove entirely) of the rezoning proposal from agricultural to multi-family residential.

I understand your concerns and would like to share with you here what I will be sharing with the city council tomorrow night.

Harvest Meadows is located on the 40-acre farm where my family lived from 1963 to 1974. My parents purchased the property located next door at 10225 Chambers Road in 1974 and established a wonderful home for their family. Being very rural, it was a lot of hard work and dedication to make it a working farm. However, even then, my father and mother were required to work jobs outside of the farm to cover basic living expenses and farm expenses.

When a person owns a farm property, one tries to have the property be profitable. In 2005, my parents and I approached the City of Commerce City with a plan to establish a large kennel facility which would provide day care and over-night care for pets. The **city planning commission stated then that their plan and desire for the property would be to multi-family residential to be in line with the overall development plan that the city had set forth for the Reunion area.** My parents would have been required to forfeit approximately 30% of their property to the city for roads, retention ponds, green spaces, etc., which made moving forward with the kennel facility financially impossible.

Nick and Velta Ard never complained when all of the farmland around them was developed into the housing that you all now occupy. Velta worked tirelessly as a volunteer at The Food Bank of the Rockies and ran a food pantry out of their garage for 30+ years, which I know directly benefited many of their neighbors in the Harvest Meadows community. Many of you also parked your recreation vehicles for years on their property at no charge. They were good neighbors.

My father, Nick, died in 2021. My mother, Velta, had a serious fall in April of 2022 and has required virtually 24-hour per day care since she is completely bedridden. In accordance with her wishes, I've financed keeping her on the farm in her home this entire time. The financial burden of this care has been crushing. I have no choice but to try to use the assets my parents had worked so hard for all of their lives in order to provide for my mother.

The property was sold to Thompson Thrift and the plan for the property **100% complies** with what the City of Commerce City Planning Commission **has on record for desired development at 10225 Chambers Road.** The city council does not want to approve this development citing over-crowded school, traffic, and enough multi-family development done or having already been considered and approved.

The Anderson property (adjoining Harvest Meadows on the south) has a development plan which includes a 10-acre school facility and 500+ new homes. The plan that Thompson Thrift has provided includes extending 102nd Avenue to Chambers for access to their proposed development.

The decision to denying the rezoning by city council members places undue burden upon my mother and me. We worked in good faith ***within the existing multi-family development guidelines*** to find a group willing to purchase and develop the property.

I would like all of you reading this to consider ***what you would do if you were presented with my situation?*** Is it fair to suddenly have a new set of rules to play by? Is it fair for the city council members to turn down the request that has been part of the city planning process for years without providing a viable alternate proposal? Whose vision is paramount: the city planning department or the city council members? What am I supposed to do to generate income to care for my mother?

For those of you who might understand my dilemma and comprehend how unfair it is for a city to suddenly change directions when needs are greatest, I'd ask you to reach out to your city council member and please ask them to either (1) reconsider their position of the rezoning proposal or (2) at least post-pone the decision until the city council can receive all the required input from the developer and the planning department to make a fair decision.

Thank you –

Cindy Wood