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El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
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RE: Proposed Sundance Subdivision in Pilot Hill

Gentlemen:

I, of course, am writing this letter to voice my thoughts and concerns about the above referenced subdivision. I have lived at my present address, 607 Starling Lane in Pilot Hill for 18 years.

As you must be aware by now, many pro and con issues have been raised about this project. They are the usual: ag land preservation, water, roads, traffic, fire, and a general concern that this project will negatively affect our small, simple community forever.

First must be water. Land is worthless without a viable water supply. Like my neighbors, I have well issues. Since last summer, my well has been producing small quantities of air. With a depth of 485 feet this could be serious. My immediate neighbor to the west, the Richards, have had water issues such as low groundwater recharge rates since I have been here. The next neighbor west, Roland Neary, has 4 wells on 5 acres. This past fall, he had one drilled to 700 feet. The next neighbor over, Chris Sevierson, has 2 wells. The list goes on. On Amity Lane off of Pilot View one parcel, still unoccupied, has 4 wells. Across the road from him is a virtually waterless house. On the north side in the Pilot Hills Estate subdivision exists 4 houses that have water brought in by truck. On Pilot Creek, on the east side of the project, the end parcel has 2 wells. Many others must exist but I am not aware of them.

The developer's first plan was for 29 parcels with wells. We at that time expressed our concerns to him through town hall meetings. The developer then secured water rights to GTPUD, paying fees to enter into the assessment district and expanded his project to 45 parcels with GTPUD water. He entered into negotiations with the homeowners in Pilot Hills Estates about connecting into GTPUD but the developer decided that the cost was too great. Now he's back to 28 parcels with wells.

28 wells may not seem as too many for a project that is on 298 acres but the acreage actually available to drill on is closer to 200. The reason for this, looking at the applicants' subdivision map of elevations, one sees that parcels 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 all have over 30 to 50 percent surface area of 30 degrees or more. This makes it almost impossible to drill wells on these slopes. This will force the wells to be drilled in a small, concentrated area, toward the road. It is about the equivalent of drilling 9 wells on 5-acre parcels.

The applicants' consultant for the water availability states that they believe enough groundwater is available to all in any given year. The firm did not use historical rainfall data or any of the well production records of the adjoining or neighboring parcels. The report does not address drought conditions and is all based on assumptions. A study based on facts and figures such as rainfall and ground retention and absorption rates by Mr. Bill Bennett clearly shows the water is barely sustainable as is without the addition of the undeveloped parcels that already exist around the project, let alone the addition of 28 more. Drought conditions would further stress the groundwater with the potential to affect many wells.

It caused me ill health to have a Planning Commissioner state, paraphrasing "if your well runs dry, call me at the old folks home and complain" to us who expressed our water concerns at the 18 Nov meeting Planning Commission meeting. I found this an arrogant, flippant and very rude comment to convey to the citizens of Pilot Hill concerning our wells. His statement also caused me consternation as he seems a bit older than me and I'm old.

We must live on water reality, not water assumptions. The surrounding parcels have well issues TODAY, not in the future, that my neighbors and I are addressing, some at great cost. The addition of 28 more wells adds to much uncertainty to our water problems. Add in the ability to construct "Granny Flats" with the addition of 28 more wells adds additional complications. This additional well potential was not addressed in the applicants' hydrological report for water sustainability.

My next concern is the road situation. The developer has requested a Special Use Permit for a fire/emergency gate. This gate is intended to block through traffic from Rattlesnake Bar Road to Salmon Falls Road via Pilot View Drive, but permit its use in the event of an emergency.

If the gate is included in this project, it will have the ability to be detrimental to human life. By this I mean fire. The project is located in a Red Fire Zone as designated by Cal- Fire. DOT, Cal-Fire and El Dorado County Fire all oppose the gate. I have lived here, as stated, for 18 years but I have lived in this area my entire life. We are acutely aware of Red Flag fire days when the hot, dry, north wind blows. If a wildland fire were to occur with a good north wind blowing people could be potentially trapped behind the locked gate at the south end of the project. This scenario is not far fetched as Rattlesnake Bar Road is located on a steep slope and a single cigarette could send a fire racing over the ridge into the subdivision. The other scenario is a fire caused by a wayward resident being careless. Five human-caused wildland fires have occurred within one half mile of my house. I had a quite frightening experience six years ago when the applicant, on his property, driving his mower, on a hot summer day in the afternoon, sparked a 5-acre fire. If a wind had been blowing, the result could have been catastrophic for Pilot Hill and me. A subdivision with a locked gate

with the very real potential for a wildland fire to kill residents trapped in their cars waiting for somebody to open the gate is nonsensical.

The applicant has also requested a waiver of El Dorado County Standard Plan 101C as required in Section 3.A.2.c.ii and the 2007 CA Fire Code to avoid having to improve Pilot View to County Fire standards for his fire exit but still wants to have it as a fire exit. This leaves the possibility of a devastating traffic jam of fleeing drivers and responding fire equipment at the two steep 70 degree-plus curves at the south end of Pilot View Drive as it approaches Salmon Falls.

Another issue of the gate is vandalism. The gate is primarily to prevent through traffic onto Pilot View Drive and as a sap to Pilot View Drive residents. This all is great but, again, reality muddies the best of intent.

I live on Starling Lane. From day one, my neighbors and I have dealt with through traffic from Pilot View Drive onto our road, then onto Rattlesnake Bar. All of the online map companies show it to be a through road. The maps included in the application submitted by the developer also show it as a through road. The Mountain Democrat published a front-page map in a recent article about this project showing a through road. The drive-thru's trespass to Starling using my neighbor's driveway to gain access. All maps will show Salmon Falls Road connecting to Rattlesnake Bar through this project, gate or no gate. We have attempted to block Starling Lane using gates. Every gate has either been destroyed or had locks cut. We have had drunks, out-of-towners going to the campground, residents of Pilot View shortcutting to Cool, lost souls with a map and a motor home looking for a way through etc. The people towing boats can be both annoying and amusing. (Where's the lake?). We have had 3 car wrecks, tires, trash, and furniture dumped, police chases, people using it to convey tractors onto Pilot View, a stuck, lost semi-truck and trailer (4 hours to remove) and at Christmas it was a parade of FedEx and UPS trucks, all with maps showing a through road. Even the applicant unlawfully used our road to assess his property, believing Starling was a public road, forcing us to threaten legal action to get him to stop.

The Planning Commission believes that the gate would be impregnable, thus preventing through traffic onto Pilot View. As any half-mechanical man (or woman) knows, any locked barrier can be breached, a lock cut or a gate opened. The incentive is great, for with an open gate, with a nice, wide, paved road, it would be of better use to the locals than a dirt and rock narrow road with a bunch of people yelling at them to get off it. Commissioner Rains dismissed this concern, asserting that he lives near a similar gate and it has remained secured. But this gate location is quite isolated from any nearby residents and would be for years, allowing for abuse. As the Sundance Home Owners Association would be responsible to secure and maintain the gate, it would be quite difficult as the President and sole member lives in Gilroy. Thus, a vandalized, opened gate allowing through traffic is a strong, unwanted possibility.

on the road, but it's all over the north side of my property. They are avoiding the humans trails, opting to use open woodland trails that are here now, except for the bear that took my lollipops off my kitchen counter last year and I assume is the same bear that broke into my neighbors' sheep corn feed. It made bright yellow scat, which was quite startling.

I must make the assumption that all five Supervisors and staff will physically looked over the area where the project is proposed. If not, you must. On your visits, you will see the limitations of the roads and the limited well drilling locations in the project area. It is not difficult to visualize residents fleeing a wildland fire trapped behind a locked gate or a jammed road. You will notice how high above the surrounding terrain Pilot View Drive is, limiting the ability of GTPUD water being brought in with gravity flow in the event of well failures. And be sure to find the location of the proposed isolated gate.

Send this proposal back to Planning and request they work with the applicant to find solutions to the issues we in the community have presented. The solutions are available, but only if the developer wants to implement them.

Thank you for your careful and thoughtful attention to this matter. Our little, nowhere town is depending on you correct decision.

Sincerely,
Kevin McNaughton
607 Starling Lane
Pilot Hill, CA. 95664
530-887-5456

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin McNaughton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.