

3 April 2006

Karen Westover
303-665-5588
City of Lafayette, Planning Office
1290 South Public Road
Lafayette, CO 80026

Dear Ms. Westover,

I am a Lafayette resident whose home is immediately south of the Nuoci Farm development site (also referred to as Cabrini Gardens and now Silver Creek). I would like to express my concerns for the proposed Markel Homes development plan.

My three largest concerns are desires for

1. Fewer townhomes and more single-family homes (i.e, a lower population density – the proposed plan appears extreme in its dominance by townhomes and is inconsistent a) with communications at previous city council meetings regarding the intended population density of this area and b) with the existing neighboring communities to the north and south).
2. Trees planted around and/or in the planned detention-pond area so that a) views of townhome alleys are more effectively blocked and b) an open drainage-ditch ambiance for this area is avoided.
3. Information regarding the detention-pond engineering plan, as the neighboring Arbor Drive properties to the south are topographically lower, and therefore may be at risk for flooding.

My wife Diane and I have been attending city council meetings and neighborhood meetings regarding this eventual development for years. The plan for the property immediately to the north of our home was previously always vaguely described as including single-family homes. The now-planned townhome complex has an extraordinarily higher population density than what has been discussed previously. As evidence of this fact, at the 7 March city council meeting, the Cabrini Gardens Rezoning discussion began with a description by staff of the area, including a description of the 12-acre future residential development (Tracts A & B) as planned for "80 individual housing units" (I wrote this number down at the time it was mentioned by staff). In contrast, the proposed Markel Homes Sketch Plan (mailed to us 14 March) includes 112 townhome units in Tracts A & B. This represents a 40% increase in the advertised population density and apparently the expectations of Lafayette City Planners (given staff comments at the 7 March city council meeting). Furthermore, the townhome project does not stop at 112 units (this is just what is contained in Tracts A & B), but instead expands eastward to a full 170 townhome units. Compare this with the existing Baseline Crossing Subdivision immediately to the south of Tracts A & B. It contains about the same area as Tracts A & B combined, but only includes 42 single-family homes and 28 townhome units. In comparison, the planned density of housing units in Tracts A & B of the Nuoci site comprise a 60% greater housing-unit density. Furthermore, considering

that the planned townhome project continues for another 58 units, the proposed project will significantly reduce the quality of life and value of the existing properties. It will have a 60% greater density of people, vehicles, noise and trash, and it will, in short order, be dominated by rental housing units, compared to the predominantly owner-occupied single-family homes in the existing adjacent neighborhoods. *I urge the City Council to please recommend revising the Markel Homes plan to include more single-family homes and many fewer townhomes so that the population density is consistent with the neighboring communities to the north and south and not 40% larger than what the city anticipated on 7 March or 60% larger than the existing Baseline Crossing Subdivision.*

My second concern involves trees in and around the planned detention pond immediately to the north of our property. Though we appreciate the pleasant views open space could offer adjacent to our home, if instead that space provides a clear view of townhome back alleys or if the open space has the look and feel of a drainage ditch, the experience could prove to be unpleasant and lower existing-property values. Regarding back-alley views, I appreciate that a good portion of the plan presents us with front views of some townhomes and some trees, but the current plan also offers us a view along an alley serving the backs of 16 townhomes. Realistically the backs of townhomes will accumulate many cars, trash cans, and other things the occupants do not wish to be seen from the front. A few judiciously placed trees and other landscaping in and around the detention pond, especially to block townhome back-alley views, could make a huge difference. Trees could also break up the monotony of a single large drainage way and give it more of a park feel than a drainage-ditch feel. I hope the City Council will also consider encouraging a more irregular layout of the townhomes so that long and straight-corridor back-alley views from existing neighboring homes do not exist.

Finally, how will the detention pond be constructed? Will excavation be carried out to drop the elevation below the Baseline Crossing homes immediately to the south? Or will a berm be built to rim the detention pond to insure there will be no flooding of the homes immediately to the south? These homes currently have back doors that are several feet below the detention-pond area, and they all have full basements that sit 9 to 10 feet further below that. Also, will an open drain be included at the south-east corner of the detention pond? If so, what will it look like?

I appreciate your time in considering my concerns. I also recognize and appreciate all the hard work you do to effectively plan for development of our neighborhoods. I look forward to a successful and exciting development in the Nuoci site, and I hope you appreciate that my concerns honestly focus on the maximum combined benefit for the city, the developer, and the existing residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. A. Werne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Joseph A. Werne
303-661-0891
518 Arbor Drive
Lafayette, CO 80026