



BVNABoise@gmail.com

April 5, 2016

P&Z Commissioners
City of Boise Planning and Development Services
150 N. Capitol Blvd
Boise, ID 83702

RE: Ben's Crow Inn PUD16-00005, SUB16-00006, CAR16-00002

Dear Commissioners,

The Barber Valley Neighborhood Association (BVNA) has been a dedicated partner with the City, County, and developers in jointly creating a vision for the Barber Valley that is walkable, safe, and supportive of active living and healthy lifestyles. At the same time, in the unique ecosystem where the foothills meet the river, we have worked hard to preserve space and mobility for wildlife and seek to be the first planned area development in the West to successfully integrate new urbanism and wildlife preservation. It is in this spirit and history of collaboration that we request the following:

Deny the subject application, in accordance with **PDP3.2: AOCI ANNEXATION AREAS** "*Annex lands within AOCI when it can be demonstrated that the proposed annexation is consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.*" The proposed development does not yet fit with the overall vision for the valley and sets precedents that are incompatible with existing and planned development. In this letter, we provide reasons for denial in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Should the Commission choose to approve, we provide concrete suggestions for improving the application by directing the applicant to create a new plat, in collaboration with adjacent property owners, Ada County Parks and Waterways (manager of the Greenbelt in this area), City Planning staff, and the neighborhood to create a development plan that is compatible and in alignment with the Comprehensive Plan.

We believe that the extent of changes recommended to bring this application into the overall vision is significant enough that denial or deferral and re-application will be necessary.

Part 1: Reasons for Denial – Comprehensive Plan

The proposed application is not harmonious with the following comprehensive plans goals:

Principle GDP-N.1: CONNECTIVITY "*Provide a continuous network of sidewalks, bicycle, and pedestrian paths, and roadways to connect different areas of neighborhood.*"

BV-C 2.3: TRAIL CONNECTIONS *“Connect Ridge to Rivers trails to each other and with the Greenbelt. Specific connections include the following: Provide a safe crossing across Warm Springs at two points: from Highland Valley Road to the Greenbelt; and from the Homestead Trail to the Greenbelt.”*

BV-C 1.2: WARM SPRINGS CORRIDOR PLAN *“Work with ACHD to implement a Warm Springs Corridor Plan to provide an attractive gateway with traffic calming measures, such as roundabouts. Pedestrian crossings and control of traffic speed are critical elements to be implemented.”*

Goal BV-PSF1: *“Continue to improve access to public facilities and services in the Barber Valley.”*

The proposed homes are not an attractive Boise gateway.

- The application does not make provisions for a pedestrian crosswalk at either Skybar St. or Highland Valley Road, for a connection to the Greenbelt, and denies current access.

BV-CNN 1.1: CONTEXT SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT *“Design development to preserve wildlife habitat and connectivity, open space, and context-sensitive recreational opportunities.”*

- 21 two and three-story houses are not context sensitive. They create a wall adjacent to the Greenbelt bordering the Barber Pool Conservation Area, a treasured natural area.



Figure 1: Triplett Ranch - Side Elevations

- This style of building is more appropriate at the base of the foothills (as pictured) but is not compatible at a gateway location to Boise.
- There is not another row of homes like this in the Barber Valley. The proposed blocky, drab gray 21 units are not compatible with home-styles in the nearby east Barber neighborhoods – East Valley, Riverland Terraces, Highland Valley Road, Brian Subdivision, and Eastern River Heights. These homes are a mix of older and newer types, all featuring a variety of elevations and color schemes.



Figure 2: East Valley Front Elevations



Figure 3: 6883 Warm Springs (adjacent to Crows Inn)

BV-CNN 1.3: MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COORDINATION *“Collaborate with Ada County and the Ada County Open Space Task Force regarding planning issues and development east of the AOCI and within the Barber Valley’s geographic boundary.”*

Has the applicant coordinated with Ada County regarding access to the Greenbelt and impact on the Penitentiary Canal?

Goal BV-CCN 3: Implement the adopted specific plans for Harris Ranch and Barber Valley
BV-CNN 3.1: PROPERTIES OUTSIDE OF THE HARRIS RANCH AND BARBER VALLEY SPECIFIC PLANS *“Use the adopted specific plans for Harris Ranch and Barber Valley as the policy basis for additional development in the Barber Valley.*

The Harris Ranch and Barber Valley specific plans visions are one of pedestrian- oriented public streets, plazas, greens, riverfront walks, and pathways. The streets are lined with and shaped by mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented buildings connected to encourage bike and pedestrian use with neighborhoods that are framed by architecture and landscape that celebrate the rich Barber Valley history. This application does none of the above and would remove a central East Valley commercial area and connection to the Greenbelt.

Although the proposed application is dense, it is not walkable (no interior sidewalks) and is disconnected from other parts of the neighborhood.

BV-C 1.2: WARM SPRINGS CORRIDOR PLAN *“Work with ACHD to implement a Warm Springs Corridor Plan to provide an attractive gateway with traffic calming measures, such as roundabouts. Pedestrian crossings and control of traffic speed are critical elements to be implemented.”*

The application does not make provisions for a pedestrian crosswalk at either Skybar St. or Highland Valley Road

A crosswalk should be required and taken through ACHD as part of this platting process

The application does not protect the Barber Valley’s commercial corridors in accordance with Blueprint Boise Chapter 3: Community Structure and Design.

Blueprint Boise prioritizes designated uses for a commercial area. Housing is secondary.

“Primary – Convenience, neighborhood, community and regional shopping center, hotels/motels, car sales, restaurants, entertainment and similar uses

Secondary – Housing, offices, entertainment, and other complementary uses are encouraged as ancillary uses within commercial projects; however, developments seeking to incorporate a mix of uses are encouraged to seek a general mixed-use designation.”

From a 20,000-foot-high land use perspective, the application is not congruent with preserving the commercial designation that is intended to provide opportunities for retail and commercial services. The revitalization of established commercial areas is encouraged to promote economic vitality and a more pedestrian and transit-friendly pattern of development.

We do not want to lose the East Barber Valley’s commercial center which functions as a Community Activity Center. For the last 47 years, Ben’s Crow Inn has operated at the site and is the community activity center for five area neighborhoods: Riverland Terraces, Brian Subdivision, Pet Haven, East Valley and the eastern phase of River Heights. People and families meet and socialize here; neighborhood

association meetings and seasonal parties are held here. With the new East Valley and River Heights developments adding over 250 new East Valley homes, it is apparent that Blueprint Boise would today classify the commercial area as a Community Activity Center, as are two other East Valley commercial areas as shown below.

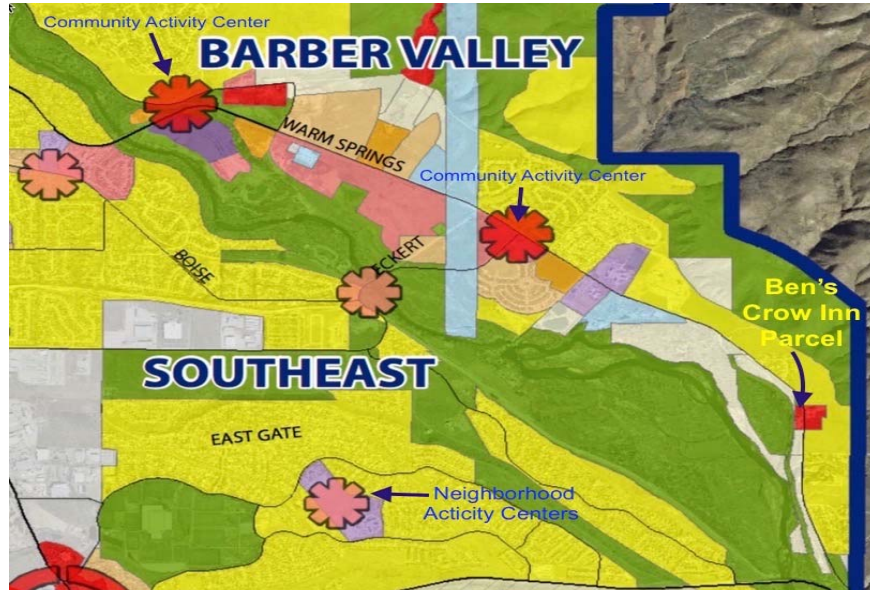


Figure 4: Map of Barber Valley

Planned Unit Development

As defined by the City of Boise's Zoning Code (Chapter 11-03-04 Subsection 7), a planned unit development (PUD) is "opportunity for land development that preserves natural features, allows efficient provision of services, and provides common open spaces or other amenities not found in traditional lot-by-lot development. Planned developments are intended to provide certain benefits to the public and to the developer."

Although code states that an approved planned unit development provides certain benefits to the public and to the developer, we see no benefits to the public with the elimination of a public greenbelt access point and an essential commercial corridor for the Barber Valley.

In addition, the developer is not providing the necessary amenities to warrant the reduction in lot widths to 40'. The required 30' landscape buffer due to the road classification of Warm Springs as a minor arterial, should not be part of the required open space. The landscape buffer is a requirement from the subdivision zoning code (Chapter 11-09-03 subsection 7); therefore, the applicant is not going above and beyond the requirements of 10% open space to warrant the PUD approval. The applicant is simply providing the minimum requirements set forth within the subdivision code.

Summary for Part 1:

If approved, the application will set a precedent for future development along Warm Springs and the Barber Pool Conservation Area.

A question to the Commission: “Is this the standard the City wants to set?” Barber Valley residents do not want this precedence set. **The application is not in compliance with and does not support the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. We request you hold developers to established standards by denying the application.**

Reasons for Denial

A. That the proposed use is not compatible to other uses in the general neighborhood.

The proposed rezone deprives the community of existing, walkable commercial uses and conflicts with the goals stated in Blueprint Boise Chapter 3: Community Structure and Design. The plat as proposed is not context-sensitive and conflicts with BV-CNN 1.1, which calls for designing developments “to preserve wildlife habitat and connectivity, open space, and context-sensitive recreational opportunities.” The 3-story homes proposed abut a natural area and the plat does not currently offer wildlife crossings or a recreational access that would accommodate existing future growth in the area.

B. That the proposed use does place an undue burden on transportation and other public facilities in the vicinity.

As proposed, the plat makes it more difficult to access the Greenbelt by including two additional 90-degree turns from the entrance to the subdivision without an obvious connection. This conflicts with Blueprint Boise Principle GDP-N.1: CONNECTIVITY, which calls for a “continuous network of sidewalks, bicycle, and pedestrian paths, and roadways to connect different areas of neighborhood.” It is also found to be in conflict with BV-C 2.3: TRAIL CONNECTIONS, which specifies “connect Ridge to Rivers trails to each other and with the Greenbelt.” Finally, the plat lacks a crossing of Warm Springs Avenue from Sky Bar to the new private drive, which conflicts with BV-C 1.2: WARM SPRINGS CORRIDOR PLAN, which calls for safe and frequent pedestrian crossings. “Pedestrian crossings and control of traffic speed are critical elements to be implemented.”

C. That the site is not large enough to accommodate the proposed use and all yards, open spaces, pathways, walls and fences, parking, loading, landscaping and such other features as are required by this title.

The site is not large enough to accommodate the homes proposed, driving the requests for variances, excessive easements within the lots and the planned unit development to attain lot width reduction. Blueprint Boise Goal BV-CCN 3 calls for the implementation of similar concepts put forth in Specific Plan 1 (SP01) and SP02 throughout the Barber Valley for cohesive development. SP01 and SP02 both envision pedestrian-oriented public streets, plazas, greens, riverfront walks, neighborhood-scale commercial, walkability, and pathways. The proposed application creates a zone of housing separate and very distinct

from the rest of the Barber Valley that does not allow for an integration of the neighborhoods and uses north and south of Warm Springs Avenue. Further, SP01 and SP02 provide for a mix of home style, colors, and architectural standards (attached and detached housing) that is not reflected in the elevations and color palette of the subdivision as submitted.

D. That the proposed use, if it complies with all conditions imposed, would continue to adversely affect other property of the vicinity.

In accordance with previously cited portions of Blueprint Boise calling for connectivity, it is important to establish connections that make sense in collaboration with Ada County, since they manage many of the recreational amenities of the area (BV-CNN 1.3: MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COORDINATION “Collaborate with Ada County and the Ada County Open Space Task Force regarding planning issues and development east of the AOCI and within the Barber Valley’s geographic boundary.”). Failing to look at the long-term planning for the area and simply connecting to a sub-standard access point, does not serve the needs of City nor County residents for access to opportunities for healthy lifestyles and would, in the long term, conflict with Blueprint Boise Principle #7: A Safe, Health, and Caring Community.

E. That the proposed use is not in compliance with and does not support the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

As proposed, this application does not align with the concepts nor frameworks of SP01 and SP02, as directed in Blueprint Boise Goal BV-CCN 3. For this reason, and because it changes the land use from nearly 50 years as a commercial/community center to housing, it is also in conflict with Blueprint Boise Principle #2, A Predictable Development Pattern, and Principle #3, which calls for “vibrant, mixed-use activity centers.” Failing to collaborate with other agencies and landowners for the future of all residents conflicts with Principle #4 for a connected community; a remedy to this solution lies with affected and adjacent landowners, the Geographic Area Planner for Boise City, Ada County, and BVNA. As mentioned, the absence of crosswalk facilities is in conflict with Principle #7 for safety.

Part 2: Recommendations for Improvements and Site Design Solutions

Should the Commission choose to approve, we provide concrete suggestions for improving the application. The Applicant should work with the City, Park and Rec, Ada County and the surrounding neighborhood to work on revisions to the proposed greenbelt location.

Provides ADA Greenbelt access across from Skybar St – Collaborate with the County and neighbors to create an easement and design that plans for future changes.

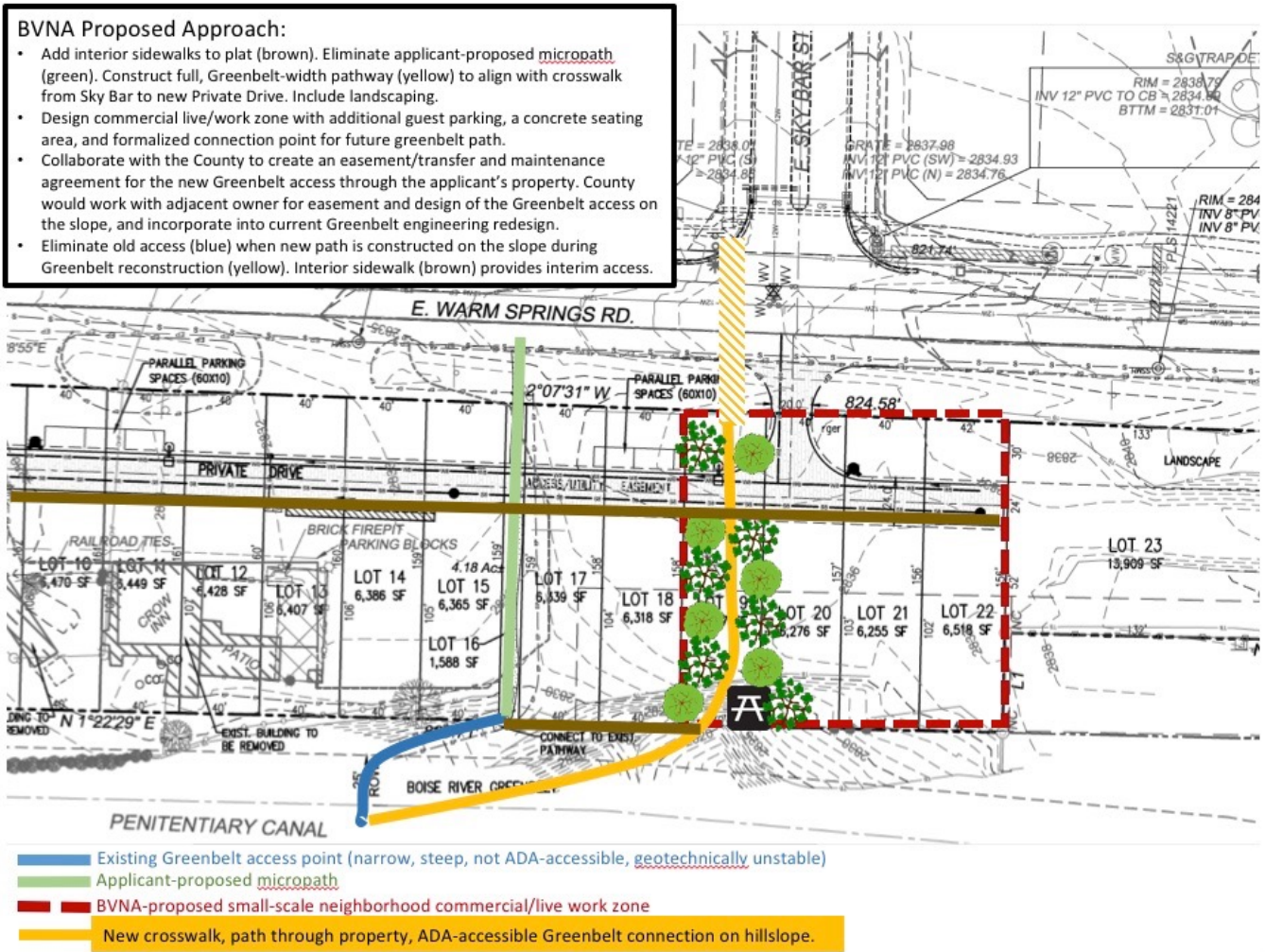


Figure 5: Realignment to Proposed Greenbelt

Provide an ADA access point that serves the entire neighborhood and is not buried in a micro-path between three-story homes far from the street. Even if it is not constructed immediately, the point of planning is to plan.

Ada County Parks and Waterways is in engineering design (expected to be completed in August 2016) for reconstructing the Greenbelt to the Diversion Dam. The project including burying the Penitentiary Canal and widening the Greenbelt is projected to start in summer/fall 2017. This is

the right time to coordinate this change. Collaboration is necessary with the County to create an easement/transfer and maintenance agreement for the new Greenbelt access through the applicant's property. County would work with adjacent owner(s) the design of the Greenbelt access on the slope, and incorporate it into to Greenbelt engineering redesign.

Include high density housing styles that are compatible with area neighborhood and fitting as a Boise gateway:



Figure 6: Front Elevations for Detached Homes, Mill District



Figure 7: Live/Work Units at the 951 Front

Consider including commercial work/live units – a Greenbelt destination with living units above.

The only other commercial property in the area, across Warm Springs Ave from BCI, is less commercially desirable because it only fronted by Warm Spring Ave while the BCI property is

fronted on both the street and Greenbelt with a superior view of the BPCA and all it offers. The BVI parcel is more desirable for a walkable neighborhood commercial and ultimately a more profitable small business.

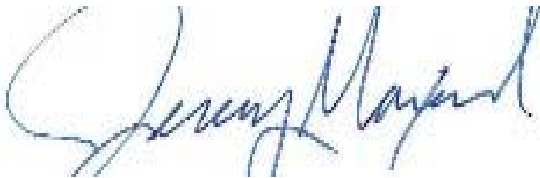
At an absolute minimum the property should incorporate mix-use, with residential and light-commercial opportunities. It should provide safe public access to the greenbelt, with public parking and sufficient open space, these revisions to the application, will not only make it a better design, set a higher standard for new developments to follow, but also be in conformance with the City of Boise Comprehensive Plan Goals, making a far superior option to what is currently being proposed.

Summary and a Market Solution

The BVNA has cited justification for denial and recommendations for improvement and possible conditions of approval.

Keeping in mind that Ben's Crow Inn will be open until at least Labor Day, if the applicant is unable to agree to changes, we request that during a six-week period the property be re-marketed to determine if there is a commercial or mixed-use developer that would buy the property and compensate the applicant for expended development expenses.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeremy Maxand". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Jeremy Maxand
President

The BNVA Board Members:

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