



May 4, 2022

Alan Goldich
Routt County Planning Department
PO Box 773749
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

Sent via email: agoldich@co.routt.co.us

RE: Snow Country Landscaping, 35975 US Highway 40

Dear Alan,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Final PUD, Zone Change, and Lot Line Line Adjustment for Snow Country Landscaping's application (#PL20220029) prepared by Walter Magill of Four Points Surveying and Engineering. This letter serves as a conglomeration of all comments from the City of Steamboat Springs.

Core Trail Comments

Requested Modifications

In accordance with previous plans jointly adopted by both the City and the County, the City requests the dedication of an easement for the future extension of the Core Trail across the subject property. The preferred alignment, as outlined in previous plans, follows the Yampa River. The applicant's proposed alternatives for easements that follow property boundaries are insufficient as they do not allow for connectivity.

History

The City of Steamboat Springs began construction of the Yampa River Core Trail (YRCT) in the early 1990's and it is only a small portion of the larger visioned, Yampa River Trail (YRT). The YRT is a recreational trail that has been identified from the headwaters of the Yampa River in the Flattops to the confluence of the Yampa and Green Rivers in Dinosaur National Park. While much of the route is on paved and/or dirt roads, the City of Steamboat Springs chose to provide an off highway recreation trail that followed the meandering path of the Yampa River within its City Limits. The original City trails master plan, the joint 2004 Steamboat Springs Area Community Plan, the joint 2008 Steamboat Springs Area Open Space and Trails Master Plan and the City's 2019 Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan all show a conceptual route through City Limits following the river corridor. While the route may vary as easements are secured, the intent has always been to follow the river corridor as conditions allowed. Please see the snapshots of maps from City and City/County adopted plans below and the alignment at the City's

southern limits. While easements have not been secured from the existing terminus of the trail at City Limits to Legacy Ranch, the City has requested the preferred easement from the applicant along the river through these 2 parcels.

Proposed Trail Alignment

With the proposed replating of the 2 lots, there is an opportunity to locate the trail easement and alignment within the 50-foot building set back of the river corridor or along the subdivision line. While the City appreciates the easements that are proposed, they do not provide the desired connectivity, nor do they meet the vision for the trail corridor that has been identified through decades of community planning.

Below is a property map showing the preferred alignment for the Yampa River Core Trail. The line shown is near the 50' building setback and could be near the lot line amendment. The City is willing to discuss screening opportunities with use of berms (if allowed in floodplain), trees/shrubs, native grass, and 2-rail or chain link fence with signs to allow the trail to pass through the parcel and stay true to the vision for the YRCT. The City may be willing to purchase the easement at the appraised value and would consider development limits such as the trail not being built until easements and construction funding are in place to continue the trail all the way to the Legacy Ranch. The City would typically request a 20-foot easement to allow for construction and maintenance of the trail.

As the trail continues across the Mount Werner Water parcel, the riparian area/wetlands may not allow for the trail to continue along the river corridor. A preferred alignment may continue along the outside of the existing hay fields to a point near the front of the McArthur parcel. A preferred alignment would be along Highway 40 between the lake and the Highway 40 ROW ditch. It would continue through or behind the mini storage and access the STARS Ranch and Legacy Ranch. A trail alignment and easements on these parcels needs more discussion with all parties to gain support and approval. Additional field investigation would be helpful too. The trail on the Legacy Ranch site could be a loop, connect to the golf course and/or connect to the county road near Chuck Lewis and the RR tracks as shown in previous plans.

Preferred alignment along river near 50 foot setback



Existing Adopted Plan Language Supporting Trails

The vision and community support for the Yampa River Core Trail has been documented over the years in master plans adopted by the City and in joint City/County plans. Some key points include:

2004 Steamboat Springs Community Plan Strategies

- Strategy OS-3.1(c): Require Trail Dedication - Require new trails to be dedicated and constructed by developers and/or landowners when the trails have the current or potential ability to provide a needed linkage between the new developments and key destinations, rather than requiring trails to be dedicated or constructed that have little practical value.
- Strategy OS-3.1(e): Promote County Trail Linkages - The county should emphasize trail linkages in new developments within the county and become actively involved in linking the city's trails to recreational destinations in the county
- Strategy OS-3.1(i): Coordinate Trail Planning Efforts – Coordinate efforts among the city, county, federal government and private landowners for the design, construction and maintenance of trails within the community.

2009 Steamboat Springs Area Open Space and Trails Master Plan

- Goal: Enhance and expand our existing City of Steamboat Springs trail system.
 - Take a comprehensive approach to the region's trail system, to link existing trails as a contiguous system; give neighborhoods access to trails; and connect urban and rural trails to public lands.
 - Focus on expansion of the primary paved trail system.
 - Coordinate trail planning efforts with other agencies and adjacent landowners.

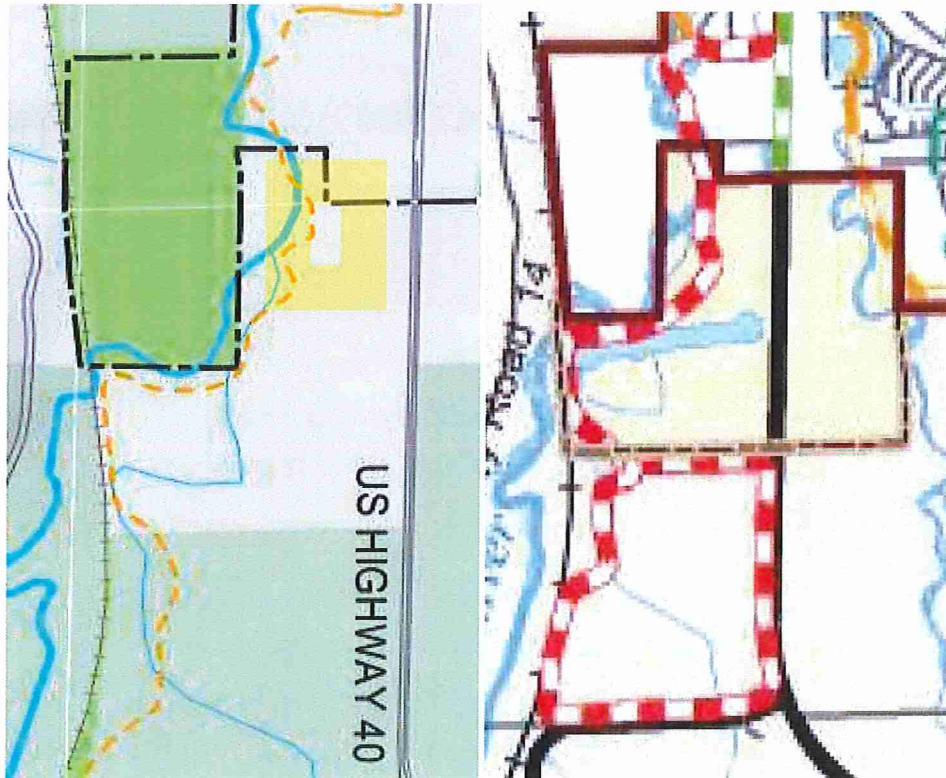
2019 PROSTR Master Plan

- Vision: Our community will take a comprehensive and regional approach to development of a trail system, linking existing trails, giving neighborhoods access to trails, and connecting urban and rural trails to public lands.
- Encourage sustainable, efficient, and resilient transportation systems, thereby reducing impacts on financial resources through the development and maintenance of trail facilities including developing interconnected trails, sidewalks, and transit facilities to increase multi-modal commuting and transportation options thereby reducing the community's carbon footprint.

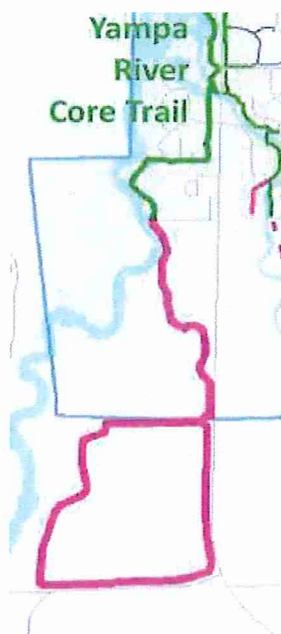
Maps showing YRCT Conceptual Alignment following the Yampa River near the applicant's property

2004 Steamboat Area Community Plan

2009 Steamboat Springs Area Open Space and Trail Master Plan



2019 PROSTR Master Plan



Applicant's Proposed Easements

The City appreciates the discussion to date with the applicant and the options for easements that have been proposed with the submittal. The easements along the North and east property lines are insufficient as Dougherty Road is a private road and the Steamboat Christian Center sidewalk does not meet the design criteria for the multi-use YRCT. Under this scenario, the City would need to obtain easements to continue the trail up to and along Highway 40 which does not meet the community vision for the trail. The easement along the west property line is not preferred because it requires 2 bridges to cross the Yampa River within a short distance and may have negative impacts to the riparian area.

Sanitary Sewer Comments

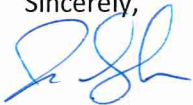
1. The City is open to the consideration of allowing the subject property to connect to the municipal sanitary sewer system. Please be advised that any such connection is subject to the discretion and approval of both the Mt. Werner Water and Sanitation District Board of Directors as well as the Steamboat Springs City Council, in addition to any private landowner permissions required by neighboring properties to access the sewer system across their property. Permission for such connection is neither expressed nor implied with this letter.
2. A plan note on the application states "Septic Leach Field to be Relocated". Said leach field appears to be serving the nursery. Please clarify what this comment means, as leach fields are not readily relocatable items. Furthermore, if the property is connected to the municipal sewer system, then the City would not support the existence of a leach field anywhere on the property.

Watershed Protection Comments

1. As the applicant notes, the applicant will be required to obtain a Watershed Protection Permit from the City of Steamboat Springs prior to construction. Please be advised that the City will not issue a Watershed Protection Permit unless the applicant satisfies requirements for wellhead protection for both the City of Steamboat Springs and the Mt. Werner Water and Sanitation District.

City of Steamboat Springs staff appreciates the opportunity to provide input on this project application. Please do not hesitate to contact us for more information as needed.

Sincerely,



Jon Snyder, PE
Public Works Director
City of Steamboat Springs

Cc: Frank Alfone, General Manager, Mt. Werner Water and Sanitation District
Angela Cosby, Parks and Recreation Director, City of Steamboat Springs
Rebecca Bessey, Planning Director, City of Steamboat Springs