



December 9, 2020

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Pete,

I've put this letter together at your request, as a written response from UFA addressing the decision by the Planning Commission in denying approval on the MDP for Scenic Mountain, Phase C. Let me start by saying I have had several phone and email exchanges with Julie Smith of Fieldstone Homes on this project beginning back at the concept phase. During these exchanges, I worked with her on conceptual site revisions and provided a list of changes I needed to see on the civil drawings to meet the fire code requirements. Each of the issues we discussed were addressed by Julie and her team.

The two issues raised by the PC were lack of "man doors" on the garage side of the "rear loaded" townhome product and street widths / parallel parking along Hurstbourne Drive. Let me address each of these issues.

**Garage Side Man Doors** – First, let me provide some background on this issue. The issue specifically applies to a rear loaded product that fronts on green space rather than fronting along a main roadway. This topic was brought up following a DRC meeting where another developer presented the group with a proposal for a rear loaded townhome project. Following the meeting, I voiced my concerns to the group and provided some history of similar projects I have dealt with in other jurisdictions. This has become an issue for UFA when responding to high density developments utilizing mixed addressing. There was a lack consistency in the way these developments were addressed. Some buildings would be addressed on the front, some were addressed on the back and others fronting along main roadways but still getting addressed off the rear garage side alley. In some cases, identical address numbers are posted on garages on either side of the alley. This happened when one side fronts green space and the other side fronts a main road – but both share the common alley to access garages. Once in the alley, there were no access paths leading to the front door. All of these issues were often found in the same development. It has created confusion in locating the correct address and caused delays in emergency response.

As we discussed this issue, my initial ask was for the city to require all residential buildings to only front along main roadways to alleviate any addressing confusion. Another idea was to have an access door into the residence from the garage / alley side. This was an idea at that time that made sense in trying to figure out the best way to simplify addressing issues. My thought was to create a front loaded home out of a rear loaded home. I had no idea this conversation had been pushed further, culminating with the city codifying this idea into a new development standard.



I only just became aware of *EMMC 17.72.030(C)* today in your email Pete. After reading through this section, I do see an issue however. The man door called out in this code section does not specify direct access into the residence. Technically a builder could install a side door leading into the garage that would meet this requirement and still not provide better fire department access. While additional access is always beneficial, this access door is not a specific requirement called out in the fire code. UFA can only enforce the provisions of the fire code.

Since that initial DRC discussion, I have worked out better solutions for these types of developments to obtain the access and addressing as called out in the fire code. UFA does not serve any other jurisdictions that have this type of development requirement. As far as how these developments are currently handled, each are reviewed on a case by case basis. These developments all differ in complexity and each can provide unique access challenges. I review submittals to identify and correct any potential access / addressing issues while the project is still in the conceptual phase whenever possible.

Today UFA no longer allows a rear loaded, green space fronting product to be accessed or addressed off of a 20' private drive or service alley. All residential buildings, whether front or rear loaded, must access off at least a 26' wide fire access road. This is the minimum road width allowed by the fire code for a residential roadway served by fire hydrants. Walkways are required to be installed at each end of the building leading from the garage side roadway to the main access door(s) on the green space side. Address numbers are required to be installed above the garage door as well as the main access door. When two sides share garage access off this road, only the green space fronting buildings get addressed above the garage doors. The 26' wide fire access roadway is parking restricted along one side (hydrant side) and "No Parking" signs are required to be installed. Scenic Mountain, Phase C meets all of these requirements.

***Hurstbourne Drive Street Width / Parallel Parking*** – There is some confusion on the true width of Hurstbourne Drive due to an incorrect road cross-section being shown on the plans. The ROW for Hurstbourne Drive provides a total of 38' (see the attached update road cross-section). This provides the fire department with 34' of drivable surface. The fire code does not differentiate between public roads and private roads or private parallel parking spots and public curbside parking spots. If a residential roadway exceeds 32' in width, vehicles are allowed to park on both sides of the roadway while still maintaining fire department access. There has never been a requirement for parking restrictions along the full length of Hurstbourne Drive. The only portion of Hurstbourne Drive that requires restrictions is on the NE end at the S-turn where the road narrows down to connect to the existing Saratoga City roadway. By contrast, Vernham Lane is a full width residential road that allows for parking on both sides, yet the PC didn't raise any of the same safety concerns with this road. The 34' road width of Hurstbourne Drive is wider than the typical 32' road width provided in the standard 51' residential ROW currently being approved in the city.



# UNIFIED FIRE AUTHORITY

*FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION*

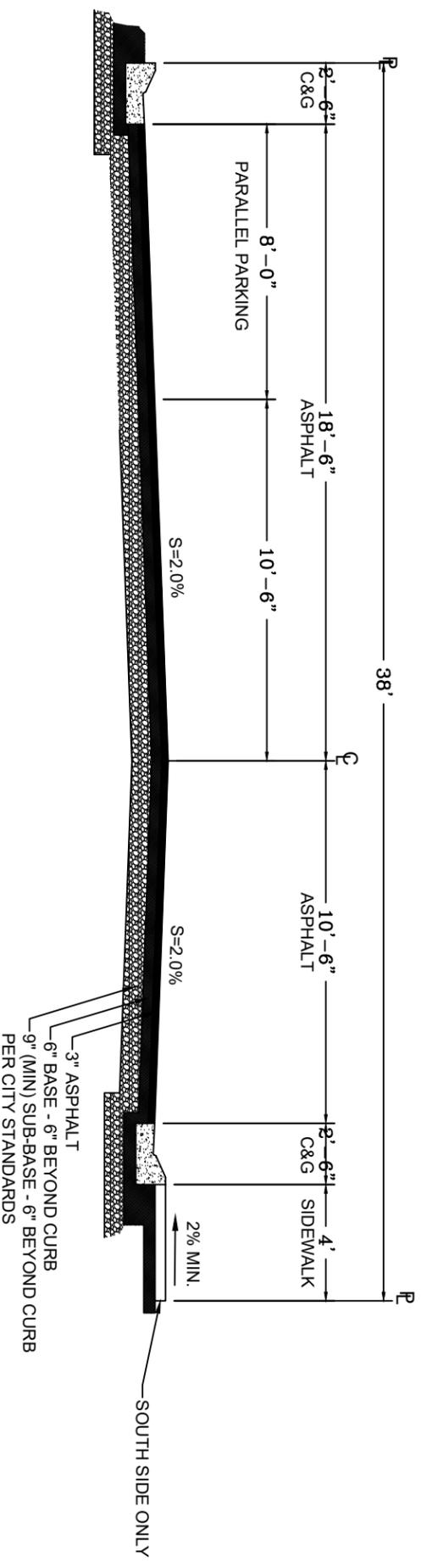
To summarize, I like the idea of a garage side man door as a possible alternative to the access walkways I now require. The door might actually work better than walkways in some developments with topography issues. Ultimately, whether or not the city chooses to keep and enforce the door requirement – or consider it as an alternative is a Planning and Zoning issue. It is not a UFA issue or a fire code requirement. I would recommend amending *EMMC 17.72.030(C)* to allow the use of either option to provide the required access into the residence.

The issue that kept coming up time and time again during the meeting was the lack emergency access on Hurstbourne Drive. Everyone seemed to be hung up with the parallel parking on the north side of the road. It was mentioned that there should be enough access width so fire apparatus had the ability to pass each other during an emergency. That is unrealistic. The city would need to increase the current residential road standard from 32' to 46' in width to accommodate that. The currently adopted residential road standards meet fire code. Hurstbourne Drive not only meets fire code, it exceeds it by 2'. There is not an access issue on Hurstbourne Drive.

Finally, everything I asked of Fieldstone Homes for this project was provided. Julie Smith took the time to reach out to me on the front end and conduct her due diligence on this project. She incorporated all of the changes I asked for. Scenic Mountain, Phase C provides a straightforward design layout which does not present addressing challenges. I do not see the potential for delayed emergency response in this development due to address confusion. UFA does not have issues with this submittal. If there were still issues to be addressed, I wouldn't have signed off on moving the project forward to Planning Commission.

Respectfully,

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**38' ROW-(HURSTBOURNE DRIVE W/PARALLEL PARKING)**