

Attachment 2:
Public Comments Received since the Staff Report
for October 4, 2012



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PETROGLYPH NATIONAL MONUMENT
6001 Unser Blvd., NW
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120

In reply refer to:
L30 (PETR)

October 2, 2012

Mr. Hugh Floyd
Chairman, Environmental Planning Commission
P.O. Box 1293
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103

Dear Chairman Floyd:

It has been almost 25 years since the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan (NWMEP) has been approved by both the City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County. This plan was approved even prior to the establishment of Petroglyph National Monument. Development has climbed to the mesa top. New infrastructure has been planned and in many cases constructed. New archaeological inventories have documented both more petroglyphs and more associated archaeological features, most of which are immediately adjacent to the escarpment (as defined by the 9% slope).

In 1990, the Congress of the United States established Petroglyph National Monument as a unit of the National Park System, to be cooperatively managed by both the City of Albuquerque and the National Park Service. This is the only such management agreement in the country and the eyes and ears of others will be looking closely at the decisions of the city, as to just how carefully the cultural and natural resources of the monument are being protected. Petroglyph National Monument belongs not just to the National Park Service but to all of us!

As for development within the Impact Area adjacent to the monument, we are pleased with the requirement that building height in the Impact Area will be limited to 15 feet, and we request that no exceptions be allowed for any structures to the 15' height limit and that natural grade be retained, keeping cut and fill to a minimum. As was stated in the NWMEP "the topography of the site is not to be substantially altered." In the past, the City has allowed exceptions. This should not be allowed in the future. This plan appears to respect the spirit and intent of the NWMEP.

Looking at the Mesa development as a whole, one must wonder at the visual impact that thousands of homes will have. We ask this Commission to look at the views from the monument, specifically in the vicinity of Piedras Marcadas Canyon as well as of the West

Mesa from across the valley. The specifics of the View Area of the NWMEP (Policy #20) calls for "The Predominant colors used on structures within the View Area shall blend with the natural colors of the mesa" This makes sense. The plans calls for external surfaces of commercial and multi-family buildings to be in the pallet of Approved Colors, allowing for up to 80% of opaque materials on any façade to be other colors (such as white trim). Unfortunately, the View Area regulations call only for roofs of single family homes to be of Approved colors and we ask that the plan require the same of single family homes as it does of commercial structures. The views from outside the area will be softened and muted with this simple requirement.

As we requested at the southern end of the monument, when Sun Cal had proposed a Master Plan, the National Park Service agrees with the City Open Space Division in favoring single loaded streets for many reasons. They help to better define the boundary, storm water can be retained upstream, streets- if wide enough- can be used as a trail for walkers and bicyclists, and the streets themselves create a visual buffer from development. In 2006 city Council approved the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan. This Plan welcomed, and in fact embraced, general natural and cultural resource protection strategies. It reflected the significance of the cultural landscape as well as the geologic features. We see that this 2012 version does much the same if:

- 1) Single loaded streets when roads about the monument boundary.
- 2) Residential structures are limited in height to 15', with no exceptions
- 3) The Approved color palette applies also to all residential structures within the View Area

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph P. Sanchez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joseph P. Sánchez, Ph.D.
Superintendent

City of Albuquerque
Open Space Advisory Board
October 3, 2012

To: Environmental Planning Commission

Subj: Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan (VHSDP)

(Ref: Summary booklet labeled "Agency Distribution", Sept. 4, 2012)

The Open Space Advisory Board strongly endorses the concept of a single-loaded street to be located adjacent to the boundary of Petroglyph National Monument. Such a road/street is shown on various maps in the SDP with an optimum alignment, and it is proposed to be mandatory.

Why should this road/street be required in the SDP? Because in Albuquerque many, many subdivisions (mostly residential but also commercial) have building lots laid out so that they back up to, say, the foothills, or the arroyos, or the irrigation canals and drain ditches, or to the river, or the escarpment, or to designated public open space land, and even some to landscaped parks. Wherever there exists some land or landscape that might provide a view or offer some sort of amenity value, Albuquerque's developers have chosen to turn their backs, to build houses and backyards, and usually block walls, that shut out everyone.

This sort of urban layout effectively cuts off both physical and visual access. The general public cannot see nor actually get to the foothills or the arroyos or the ditch banks. Not only is the public kept out, but even the people who live in the houses are pretty much turned away. At this sort of close-up level, Albuquerque's beautiful physical environment, as it is often called, is ignored.

There are a few exceptions, places where a single-loaded street lies between the houses and the natural landscape, providing an attractive street "edge" where the houses look out to the landscape and where people on the street can also see. One such place is a too-short stretch of Camino de la Sierra, at the foot of the mountains.

There are already too many places along the boundaries of Petroglyph National Monument where houses have been allowed to back up to the monument, such as Santa Fe Village. Here only the dead branches and grass clippings that people throw over their back walls get to "enjoy" the landscape.

In conclusion, we argue that the proposed Park Edge street in the VHSDP will provide a view of the National Monument's natural landscape and of the distant mountains. It will provide on-foot access and visual access. It will provide a sense of delineation and environmental integrity to the Monument, in at least this one area.

Jerold Widdison, Chairman



Renz-Whitmore Mikaela J.

From: kanschuetz@comcast.net

Sent: Sunday, November 11, 2012 10:05 AM

To: Renz-Whitmore Mikaela J.

Subject: Comments on Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan, August 2012 (working draft) for Environmental Planning Commission Hearing on December 6, 2012

Ms. Mikaela Renz-Whitmore, Planner
Urban Design & Development Division
City of Albuquerque Planning Department
600 Second Street NW, 3rd Floor
Albuquerque NM 87102

RE: *Comments on Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan, August 2012 (working draft) for Environmental Planning Commission Hearing on December 6, 2012*

Dear Ms. Renz-Whitmore:

I am writing this letter for members of the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) in advance of their second scheduled hearing of the *Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan, August 2012 (working draft)* (draft VHSD plan) on December 6, 2012.

In my September 20, 2012, letter to the EPC via your office, I expressed my general support of the draft VHSD plan in advance of the EPC's hearing on October 4, 2012. I also identified a number of important topics that remain underdeveloped in the present instrument in the effort contribute to its refinement.

Two months later, my general endorsement of the draft VHSD plan stands. Because the EPC did not address the specific issues that I raised in my earlier letter during its October hearing, I will use this opportunity, in part, to restate these points in the first part of my comments that follow. The second part of my commentary asks for the EPC Members to mind the community's interest in its significant investment in the Volcano Heights Sector during in their deliberations of the draft VHSD plan's regulations when some stakeholders ask for public infrastructure support but balk at planning criteria that they judge to be too restrictive upon their individual interests. *Community* matters, and planning variables that do not fall under the rubric of the *built environment* as neatly as water, transportation, sewer, etc., are also relevant to the public's interests, not just for the here and now of the Volcano Height's Sector's development but also the greater Albuquerque *community* over the long term.

I.

As a professional anthropologist and archaeologist with practical experience working in the Volcano Mesa area and known for contributions in the recognition, documentation, evaluation, and management of cultural landscapes in north-central and west-Central New Mexico, I remain unconvinced of the draft VHSD plan's meaningful commitment to its stated goals of contributing to the Volcano Mesa's environment to:

- 11.1.1. Establish an interconnected open space network comprised of parks, arroyos, the Petroglyph National Monument, and other open spaces,
- 11.1.2. Respect Albuquerque's culture and history, including Hispanic and Native American, through contextually sensitive development of Volcano Mesa, and
- 11.1.3. Conserve Volcano Heights' archaeological resources and protect and emphasize views and visual connections to the Volcano's Sandia Mountains, and Rio Grande. [p. 172]

The draft VHSD plan includes certain regulatory (e.g., p. 160) and policy (e.g., p. 180) statements regarding these issues, but their discussions are generalized and disconnected. Overarching strategy is needed in the discussion of the incentive programs to help development interests visualize the full assortment of "carrots" that are available to them, as well as understand their options. For example, land owners and developers should be helped to understand that archaeological sites, just the basalt outcrops, are significant cultural resources eligible for the incentive program. I further think that these stakeholders should be helped to understand that the costs of archaeological resource mitigation might be much higher than the alternative of in-place avoidance. What is more, the protection of archaeological sites through avoidance can potentially be part of an incentive for greater development density and height elsewhere. Talk about having your ("carrot") cake and eating it, too!

A larger issue is that I do not think that the discussion of the above topics in the presentation of the draft VHSD plan is sufficient to enable decision-makers, regulators, and stakeholders to comprehend how these issues are important to the development of a more livable community with a unique sense of place. In fact, language used in the policy statements relating to these issues (e.g., see p. 180) is so weak (e.g., the use of the word "should") that fulfillment of policies related to cultural-historical and recreational amenities is left in doubt. It is easy to anticipate that decision-makers, regulators, or stakeholders might think that such amenities are entirely optional.

As seen in the planning document's traffic study (Appendix C), the Paseo del Norte and Unser Blvd. rights-of-way will carry heavy vehicle loads within the Volcano Heights Sector. High traffic densities, of course, will largely be the product of sector's development as a Major Activity Center replete with Town and Regional center scale facilities. To fulfill the plan's goals for the sector's residential use and the promotion of a pedestrian-friendly environment, I think that the City of Albuquerque needs to make clear policy statements and specific commitments that the construction of grade-separated pedestrian crossings across these bustling corridors is a necessity. Additionally, the proposed intersections shown in the sector plan (e.g., Exhibit 4.3) are insufficient, both in terms of number and placement, for a safe and workable pedestrian environment.

At the very least, the City, which wanted the Major Activity Center designation in the now-adopted Westside Strategic Plan Amendment, now has the obligation to guarantee the construction of supplemental grade-separated pedestrian crossings over Unser Blvd. in the area of the Volcano Heights Sector's north and south boundaries. The timing of the construction of these facilities must be tied to specified levels of traffic flow in and out of the sector to prevent the "can" from being kicked down the proverbial "road" year after year. Regarding the north boundary, the tragedy of a student attending either the Sunset View Elementary School or James Monroe Middle School dying in a pedestrian traffic accident must not have to happen before this topic is addressed.

II.

I listened attentively to the comments made by EPC Members and stakeholders during the October 6, 2012, hearing. Several individuals, both from the EPC and the public, talked about the unreasonable economic burden that VHS land owners and development interests would have to shoulder if City, County, State, and/or Federal governments do not step forward and share in the expense of infrastructure development. Staff Report Finding 7 (F) (12EPC-40061—October 4, 2012, p. 43) was specifically called out by one EPC Member during this discussion:

Proposed zone changes do not require major and unprogrammed capital expenditures by the city. Property owners and developers are responsible for providing infrastructure to serve development as it occurs. The plan suggests various strategies to finance infrastructure, including Public Improvement Districts (PIDs), Tax Increment Development Districts (TIDDs), or Special Assessment Districts (SADs), which all require property owners to collaborate, veto to institute the mechanism, and work with the City of implement the agreed-upon infrastructure improvements.

The EPC Member contended that because the proposed zone changes identified by the draft VHSD plan, in fact, does require the City (among others) to use public funds for development to proceed, the wording of Finding 7 (F) is inappropriate. As the discussion continued, several EPC Members took the position in their commentaries that the draft VHSD plan is a “cart before the horse.” Additionally, EPC Members and some members of the public agreed that both coordinated infrastructure planning for water, transportation, sewer, etc., is needed and infrastructure development needs to begin for the VHSD plan to be feasible.

At a base level, I agree with the EPC Members, landowners, and development interests who call for holistic infrastructure planning and development. (In fact, I have joined other members of the public who have called repeatedly for the adoption of holistic planning since I first became in the Volcano Mesa proceedings more than two years ago!) I was pleased to hear the EPC Member acknowledge publicly that the City (if not also County, State, and Federal governments) has used—and will continue to use—public funds in support of the Volcano Heights Sector development for the benefit of the *community*.

As we have heard, private landowners and development interests are willing to accept—and, in some cases, have stated the need for—public funds for essential infrastructure planning and development in the Volcano Heights Sector. Given that public funds are being—and will continue to be—committed to this planning development enterprise, the *community* not only has a role to play in the planning process, it has the *right* to expect that it will receive tangible benefits for its investment.

I request that the EPC Members keep the public’s interest in its investment in mind as they continue their deliberations of the regulatory guidelines designed to ensure the achievement of the Westside Strategic Plan’s goals during development in the Volcano Heights Sector. A private stakeholder’s acceptance of public funding requires their acceptance of obligations for betterment of the *community*. Parks, open spaces, trails, etc., are parts of holistic environmental planning, just as the regulations governing the physical characteristics of the built environment of roads, utility infrastructure, and buildings.

Landowners and development interests will change over time, and the rate of change will surely accelerate as soon as the development of necessary infrastructure begins. On the other hand, the *community* will always be here; leaving is not an option.

The persistent question, however, is this: What will the *community* be left with?

I encourage the EPC to continue the Volcano Heights Sector planning process and contribute to the refinement of the plan. In this endeavor, I also urge the Commission to consider aspects of the environment other than just the built environment for the betterment of the greater Albuquerque *community* over the long term.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. I continue to look forward to seeing this process move forward.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kurt F. Anschuetz, Ph.D.
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and Volcano Heights Sector Neighbor
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AIA Albuquerque

A Chapter of The American Institute of Architects



November 19, 2012

Russell Brito
Manager, Urban Design and Development Division
City of Albuquerque Planning Department
600 2nd Street NW
Albuquerque NM 87102

Dear Mr. Brito:

AIA Albuquerque is pleased to respond to your request for assistance with the draft Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan. We offer two sets of written comments, one drafted by Robert Heiser AIA, a former EPC commissioner, and the other by myself, a former Planning Department director. Members of the AIA Local Government Affairs Committee discussed and edited the lists, both of which our Board has approved.

Our comments are intended to be constructive, but we want to emphasize that certain aspects of the Plan trouble us very much. For instance, we believe the building design standards are unnecessarily and excessively prescriptive. And we foresee problems applying the standards if the Volcano Heights Review Team and City staff involved don't include a majority of licensed design professionals.

Your original letter asked us to evaluate the regulations and standards via design simulation, if possible, but resource constraints haven't allowed that. However, we can readily visualize some effects that will limit legitimate prerogatives of owners and architects. Moreover, broad public policy goals such as energy conservation will not be served if building design standards, especially for facades, impede the design of high-performance building envelopes. We strongly advise a new take on these standards.

We are available to discuss our concerns with you at your convenience. Thanks, again, for asking our assistance.

Sincerely yours,



Richard W. Dineen, AIA
President

AIA ALBUQUERQUE
Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan Review Committee

Members

Richard Dineen, AIA
Bob Heiser, AIA
Edgar Boles, AIA
Ellen Pierson, AIA
Joseph Brawley, AIA

VOLCANO HEIGHTS SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN COMMENTS
Bob Heiser, AIA

Chapter II2.1.2ii

- P. 16 NWMEP – Measure of grade versus VH (Volcano Heights) versus COA (City of Albuquerque) -- Why are they different?
- P. 20 Why does VH have precedence over COA codes, ordinance regulations and standards?
- P. 21 Table 3.1 This is a confusing table.
If a change of ‘use’ occurs that is allowed in the underlying zone why would that trigger a planning review?
- P. 22 Table 3.1
Signage based on value? Does this occur anywhere else in COA? How is this enforceable and does the zoning department really want to take this on?
- P. 25 3.2.6 Volcano Heights Review Team VHRT Is there any precedence for a Review Team RT in Albuquerque ?
- P. 25 – 29 Why include a definition of the role of the DRB 3.2.7 and City Council 3.2.9? It’s defined in COA codes and ordinances .
Why are the following in a Sector Plan ? The plan should reference COA criteria (since criteria may change) and not list them in the Sector Plan. There are legal implications due to the potential contradictions and changes that may occur over time.
- 3.2.10 Minor deviations – should follow the same criteria as the C.O.A.
- 3.2.11 same as above
- 3.2.12 same as above
- P. 25 – 29 Same as above

P. 30 Table 3.2

P. 31 Table 3.2

P. 32 3.3

P. 33/34 3.4 as stated above , just use COA criteria.

These tables are very confusing.

P. 35 Yikes – matrix – this is very confusing

P. 36 Table 3.6 Why is it different from COA , in particular # 10? Change of use ?

P. 37 Table 3.6- Why wouldn't #13 and # 14 be an EPC decision versus a recommendation. Does the decision go to City Council after the EPC process ?

P. 38-50

Are these definitions the same as COA zoning code definitions? If not, why not. If there is a new definition not found in the COA zoning code it should be added to that code. It's problematic for the COA to have different definitions of terms and for staff to have to have multiple definitions of terms to work from.

Chapter II 4.0

P. 54 How can there be "three centers" - town, regional and village in a Sector Plan?

P. 57 4.6.1g and 4.6.3 h (similar) – Any paved area within the setback shall match the material of the sidewalk and be constructed at the same grade level .
This is a perfect example of how restrictive this plan is. A requirement like this would not allow the majority of walkways in Old Town to exist and may inset areas between buildings and public sidewalks all over Albuquerque of tile, granite pavers, brick pavers and other materials would not be allowed.

P. 59 Exhibit 4.6 -- Consider a vertical curb at the 3' buffer between the driving lane and the bike lane – How do you park a vehicle in this street section?

P. 61 4.6.3 h – Any paved area intended for pedestrians , within the setback, shall match the material of the sidewalk and be constructed at same grade level .
This requirement seems unwarranted and shouldn't apply to any site in the COA. Please show us a city where this exists.

P. 57 Street sidewalk width is ok.

- P. 64 Pavement requirements are 19' for sidewalk versus a 6' sidewalk – why so much pavement? Doesn't all this additional pavement add to the urban heat island, reduce permeable site areas and promote global warming?
- P. 64 (cont'd) ... Why are there 10' sidewalks at residential areas?
- P. 67 ok
- P. 69 4.17
Huge pavement cross-section – bike 6.5'; multi use – 10'; sidewalk – 10' = 26.5' in addition to traffic lanes.
- P.70 R – side – 73' wide pavement section . Why do we have a – 26' wide bikeway and sidewalk ?
- P.71 ok
- P.74 Why are parking space widths different on pages 74 and 75? Why not have 8' wide parking spaces as a typical dimension ?
- P.77/78 4.8 to 4.9.7 The COA standard for street trees should apply. Delete this from plan.
- P.78/79 COA standards should govern. 4.10.9 -- Why must a lamppost have a base, middle, and top?
- P.80 Street furniture should use COA standard language.

5.0 Zoning

- P. 82 Why are there so many zones (6)?
- P. 85-95 We are adding (p. 89) new zoning 'use' designations in (6) character zones.
- P.90 Why are B&B not allowed in TC, VC and garages not allowed in TC, RC, VC?
- P. 91 to 95
- Scale and architectural style complements single family development.
 - Character complements single family development
 - What do the above statements mean and how does the staff interpret 'complements' ?
 - 5,000 NSF max bldg. size . Why impose this restriction in these tables. Where else in the COA do we restrict building development to 5,000 NSF.

6.0 Site Development.

- P. 99 The maximum height is 40' in the NWMEP view area as noted– TC, RC, Mixed U, NTZ p. 16 & p. 15 (NWMEP reference)
How can you allow a formula that exceeds the NWMEP maximum height?
 $K = \max HT (40') + 15\%k = 46'$

- P. 99 6.1 Why and how can First Floor elevation be flush to sidewalk? This might not be possible on some sites.
- P. 100 ii 2. Interior clear height 12' ? Why mandate this in a Sector Plan ?
- P. 101 6.1.9 I, II, III, IV all too restrictive
V ok
VI, VII, VIII, IX, X all too restrictive
XI ok
XII too restrictive
XIII ok
- P. 102 6.1.10 I, II, III, IV all too restrictive
a, b, c
V, VI
a. EIF – 10%? Why restrict materials such as EIF ?
b. clapboard
c. clapboard 50 yr warranty
Again, why are we restricting materials and requiring a warranty on materials in a Sector Plan?
- P. 102 6.1.11 Windows –
III – Shall be recessed
May be arched on ground level and flat top on upper floors
Vertically proportioned – shall be w/multiple panes in double hung and casement
Windows separated from other
Windows – punched wall openings vs. grouped – shall be – why?
Ornamental arches shall be deeper on ground fl and shallower on upper - why
For all of the above, why is any of the above in a Sector Plan ?
The Historic Overlay Zone Design Guidelines are not anywhere close to being this strict.
- P. 103 6.1.12 Architectural Details and Other Elements
I
II
III
IV
Again, why is this in the Sector Plan ?
Towers are not that significant a part of vernacular nor are elaborate detailing and decorative windows.
Is there a definition of 'elaborate' or 'decorative' in the zoning code that a designer or staff planner use to determine if you meet the 'shall' requirement of this section ?
- P. 105 "L" Ground Floor 12" Above sidewalk
First floor-to-floor height a minimum 15' -- why?
- P. 106 (see P. 100 too) Why are windows areas 25% in TC, 20% RG, 25% VC, 20% VHM, 20% NT.
This is an example of how difficult this plan will be to enforce -- why impose all of these different percentages?

G. Doors windows – 50%-90% TC, 30% RC, 50% - 90% VC, 30% VHMx, 25% NT, 25% ET
Same comment as above.

GENERAL

Design standards (below) all very restrictive
p. 101, 101, 107, 108, 109, 113, 114, 118, 119, 123, 124

Example: (P. 107) (shall) ...requiring rhythm, tripartite, a distinct base, middle, cap, cornice, transom, bulkhead, display windows ... this entire section should be taken out . It is too design restrictive . This Sector Plan is not an existing historic district , why impose these standards ?

Why is EIFS limited to 0% or 25%? (p. 124)

P. 119 Example of limitations and material requirements. Remove this restriction.

P. 126 Why are some finish floors required flush to a sidewalk and others required to be 12" above the sidewalk ?.
If you have residential in a principal building are you required to have a 15' floor to floor height?
Why mandate minimum floor-to-floor heights ?

7.0 Site Development

(Recommend striking this entire section)

P. 130 NWMEP (VIEW" p. 15) restricts HT to 40' p. 16 (allows some fill)
Cupola – 10'
Equipment 6'
15% of 40' height and corner towers – to 46'
and
7.2.3 TC 200 employee companies are exempt from the maximum height requirement.
7.2.3 – How to enforce the clawback 5 yr provision. Why would the city want to include this at all in a plan ?

P. 131 Point system – **The point system seems really problematic for the city staff to implement and it may create some legal issues .**

P. 132 Same as above

8.0 BLDG DESIGN STANDARDS

P. 140 Building facades shall include architectural details and ornamentation
What is "ornamentation"? Not defined.
Once again, this is over-reaching and problematic for the city to enforce.

P. 141 Building Color

8.4.1 Appendix E

- Appendix E in this plan is the plant list. It should not be in this section.

Why not include color list in this document?

P. 141 8.5.4 Is a sloped parking floor a ramp ?

Why is this restriction on ramp included? Some difficult sites might warrant a ramp along a street or integrated with a berm.

P. 142 – Note 1 : Garage Type D mim 5' Linearfeet of fenestration on the street facade and be articulated to resemble main structure. Once again, this sort of requirement is too restrictive.

9.0 SIGNAGE COA STDS

This is more restrictive than COA and as restrictive as some historic districts. Is this a zoning dept enforcement problem?

10.0 OPEN SPACE

P. 152 10.3.1 Rock outcropping buffers of 100'. Why not identify significant rock outcroppings in the plan area and route road ways around them. See P. 158, 159. Instead of imposing a "grid" that intersects rock outcropping per intent of 10.1 p. 152.

P. 154 b. Non Residential mixed use -- 2-5 acres sites shall have publicly accessible plaza, patio, courtyard, amphitheater, or roof garden 1,500 SF - problem. Publicly accessible for some uses, hotel, restaurant could be problematic... can a business restrict access to dining patio, courtyard, roof deck? What does the term "publicly accessible" mean?

P. 156 10.3

- Balcony – 5x8 min (not flush)
- Patio 150 sf min
- Courtyard must have connection (pedestrian) to adjoining buildings. or a public sidewalk
- Roof garden, min 50% of bldg. footprint area. Why?
- Roof terrace shall include landscaping in form of potted plants and seating
- Private walks shall be asphalt, cement, or **crushed fines** (so according to this, no brick, tile, granite pavers , cobble or wood walks are allowed in private areas?)

P. 157 Plaza – minimum .25 acre (10,890 SF) to 1 acre

P. 162 10.7.1 I Wall Height not exceed 72" – what about sloping sites w/grade differential.

P. 163 10.7.5 Rainwater – Does a water harvesting requirement of first ½ of rainfall "capture" violate the 96 Hour Rule to get water on developed sites to Rio Grande?

P. 165 10.7.8 Plant list.

I. Native plant list A

II. Xeric plant list B – COA – refer to COA list due to periodic update of plants.

11.0 GOALS

11.1.3 Conserve ... “rock outcrops” and features -- then don’t impose a street grid on top of rock outcroppings and buffer zones in the Sector Plan.

11.1.5 Building Height – does the NWMEP height restriction apply ?

11.4.3 Encourage architecture and landscape treatments that are consistent w/regions traditions and climate and help to establish a unique sense of place

- Real problems here –
 - The design standards with shall in districts require design features w/ornamentation, tripartite design towers --- generally features not reflective of local cultural design – and on the other hand are not climate sensitive due to glazing requirements on buildings – regardless of façade orientation.
 - Courtyards must have a pedestrian connection to sidewalk or other building and buildings shall be rectangular...
 - Canopies for shading with photovoltaic (solarcollector) arrays seem not to be allowed , yet they are a basic sustainable design item.
 - Stucco & EIFS are limited
 - Roof materials shall be (pitched) barrel clay tile, copper, standing seam metal, synthetic slate or similar materials per the plan, this restricts new technology in roofing materials such as photovoltaic roof tiles and the use of concrete roofing tiles and other materials.
- Design standards are very restrictive, more so than historic overlay zones under Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission standards. Contemporary design and materials are really discouraged by this plan and unique design solutions and response to site conditions with a range of geometry is discouraged.
- This plan is way more restrictive than Mesa Del Sol...why? It will discourage development for years and will be difficult for the city to enforce, regulate and defend it due to its complexity, specificity, and variation from established COA standards that govern the rest of the city.

Some building design standards read similar to H.O.A. rules rather than City sector plan regulations.

AIA ALBUQUERQUE
Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan Review Committee

Members

Richard Dineen, AIA,
Bob Heiser, AIA,
Edgar Boles, AIA,
Ellen Pierson, AIA
Joseph Brawley, AIA

VOLCANO HEIGHTS SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN COMMENTS
Richard Dineen, AIA

Chapter II Regulations

3.0 Administration

3.1 Applicability No Comment.

3.2. Development Review and Approval Process.

3.2.1. It is unclear as to what steps will be taken to “streamline the process”. This Plan has more layers of control than other Sector Plans adopted by the City including the Downtown and the Uptown Urban Center Plans.

3.2.3. Follow adopted procedures already in place. Do not invent a new process unique to this plan only. Reference sections numbers for ease of use. Don’t reinvent adopted, tested procedures already adopted and in place.

3.2.14.-5. Approval procedures should follow existing processes where adopted not create another process for an area of the city that contains only 570 acres (less than a square mile).

3.2.6. Remove this section and use existing review processes already in place. Creating a separate review will not streamline the process. The VHRT team is too large and too cumbersome. The purpose and authority of the Team is too vague. Can a conflict be appealed?

3.2.7. What is the purpose of this approval? This appears to add a new layer to the review process.

3.2.8.-9. Amend and reference appeal procedure in Zoning Code.

3.2.10.-11. The deviations are too restrictive, subjective, broad, and they add another layer to the development approval process.

3.2.13 -3.4. These sections again reinvent many of the procedures and processes already in place in other codes and ordinances.

3.5. Definitions. Some general comments follow. A good example of what to do more of is the reference for Accessory Buildings to existing tested language in Zoning Code. Ditto for definition of “Exception”.

Full Service Grocery definition needs to be reworked. It is too vague and will be difficult to enforce and may not comport with state law.

Where possible use the dictionary definitions for architectural terms such as “pilaster, portal, plaza,”etc.

4.0 Streets & Streetscape Standards

4.10.2. & .3-.4-.8-.9-.10 Regarding street lights and their design aesthetics and placement. Mandating heights and placement of fixtures without considering their function such as coverage and intensity of the light output is arbitrary and conflicts with Zoning Code requirements for parking areas.

Placement and heights of fixtures are a function of light intensity and coverage measured in lumens. These placement restrictions can conflict with other functions.

What is the purpose of 4.10.9.? Why do all lamp posts have to have a base, middle and top?

6.0 Site Development and Building Design Standards VHTC

Table 6.0

6.1.4 Height Standards What is the purpose of restricting the internal dimensions of building floors? These are design regulations more appropriate as part of the building code, not a Rank 2 Sector Plan or even the City Comprehensive Zoning Code.

6.1.9 Massing and Facade Composition. This section dictates design, and is arbitrary and capricious. Using subjective terms with a mandatory “shall” meaning it must be done with phrases like “generally...rectangular or ...shall be express with well-balanced facade compositions...is aesthetic zoning. Architects will be held accountable for subjective design requirements by potential review bodies who

have no expertise in design. Another example of subjective requirement with no clear public purpose is the requirement for “heavier massing “stated in (vii) and aesthetic zoning stated in (xiii) prohibiting vinyl and chain link fencing. Clearly these are aesthetic concern subjective in nature that serve no meaningful public purpose.

- 6.1.10. Building Materials. Here again are examples of aesthetic zoning. What is the purpose of (i) and (ii) dictating materials and coverage even process calling for only 75% use of stucco along one street street type and then requiring it be placed on using a three step process.

General Comment: Don't prohibit the use of certain materials or require certain construction procedures. Standards should be written to express the design intent such as providing shade and covered walkways for pedestrians. Don't dictate canvas awnings in our climate (they get sun rot) or see-through walls as required in 6.1.12. There are many solutions to providing visual interest without dictating what they must be. Avoid requiring the use of specific materials or construction methods or even non functional elements such as “tower elements”.

6.0 Site Development Standards VHVC

- 6.2.2. Building Placement. Under “Principal Building Standards eliminate floor heights, ground floor finish level and upper floor-to-floor heights for reasons stated previously.

- 6.2.9 Massing and Facade Composition (ii) & (iii) requirements need to be changed to design intent statements or change “shall to may.”

Change the word “awnings” to “shade structures” throughout. Eliminate (xi).

- 6.2.10. through 6.2.13. and other similar sections in the VHMx,VHNT,VHET, also should eliminate material restriction, specifying materials, and construction restrictions. Restate these as performance-based requirements or state what the urban design intent is.**

These standards are unnecessarily restrictive and add to the cost of doing business. They restrict the design decisions of the owner and the owner's consultants, adding costs with no real benefit to the public. Furthermore, there is no assurance that they will create quality design. They pre-empt the responsibilities and the role of professionals licensed and given by the State under licensing requirements for architects, landscape architects, and engineers approved to do design.

General Comment: Eliminate (iv) requiring that changes can be only made after being “considered” by the Volcano Heights Review Team consisting of

volunteers and city staff. This is not meeting the intent statement goal to “streamline the approval process”. The review process cannot be handed to volunteers or even staff with no experience or expertise or training in architecture, engineering or other related building fields. This should be done throughout the plan.

Conclusion

The intent of the Plan stated in the Executive Summary is to encourage development that creates an attractive, vibrant, Major Activity Center. The plan area consists of 570 acres and is one of three Sector Development Plans in the area.

The local component of the American Institute of Architects (AIA Albuquerque) were asked to review the plan regulations in a letter from the Planning Department dated April 10, 2012.

1. Are the regulations clear and well organized to be usable for development?
2. Do they result in high-quality, attractive development and preclude low-quality undesirable development?
3. Do they insure a reasonable balance between ensuring predictability while still providing enough flexibility to guide a wide range of development that may occur over 10+ years?

The following comments attempt to speak to these three questions:

While well organized the regulations as detailed in the above analysis are excessive & overly detailed. as written. The Plan has over 150 pages of regulations. This is almost as many pages as the City Comprehensive Zoning Code. This seems excessive for an area of 570 acres.

The Plan pre-empts design prerogatives given to the owner, developer and their professional consultants by over regulation of design elements as stated in the previous comments.

The Plan adds excessive design review to the approval process. It adds a new review body of staff and volunteer community members (Volcano Heights Review Team) which consist of at least seventeen members.

The Plan requires notice and hearings for compliance and deviations by the DRB or EPC for sites less than 5 acres for any projects in the Transition zone or Center VHMx zone. This is more restrictive than the Downtown and the Uptown Urban Center Zones. It also adds more review time and cost to the development process.

The Plan has many regulations that attempt to legislate “quality design” by dictating restriction on appearance, even calling for internal limits on heights of floors. Unlike the performance-based code adopted in the Downtown Urban Center, which does have a existing building inventory, this plan’s regulations are excessive and in some cases capricious in what colors, material, and design elements are allowed. It is unclear how such regulations if implemented will insure “quality development”.

The Plan provides no information on land ownership nor does it talk about an assembly strategy to consolidate the antiquated platting which exists in the area. Not having such a strategy coupled with the need for completion of Unser Boulevard means development of the Plan area may be more than ten years away. Excessive regulation, especially without a major developer, could also delay implementation.

Providing ROW for future public transportation is an important in the Plan but development implementation will not occur until private demand occurs. Without a major developer on board the area will not develop and the plan will outlive its “shelf life” as have other plans.

Good plans don’t insure quality development nor do excessive regulations. Without a market-driven demand the Plan will not become a reality. In reality quality is hard to insure through a legislative process



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
PETROGLYPH NATIONAL MONUMENT
6001 Unser Blvd., NW
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87120

In reply refer to:
(D34) PETR

November 20, 2012

Mr. Hugh Floyd
Chairman, Environmental Planning Commission
P.O. Box 1293
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103

Dear Chairman Floyd:

In a letter to the Environmental Planning Commission, dated October 2, 2012 the National Park Service has consistently requested:

- 1) Single loaded streets when they are along the Petroglyph National Monument boundary
- 2) Residential structures to be limited in height to 15', with no exceptions
- 3) The approved color palette to apply also to all residential structures within the View Area

Just to clarify, this plan works towards these requests by proposing a single loaded street along much (but not all) of the eastern plan area. Also, regarding limiting structures in the Impact area to 15', we do question that the height measurement is from the approved rather than the natural grade. Additionally, application of the approved color palette as stated in the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan does not, as it turns out, regulate color for residential structures in the View Area. We can support this Draft Volcano Heights Sector Plan (dated August 2012) if the above requests are included in the next version.

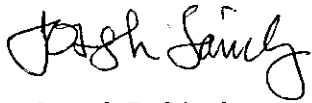
Therefore, we again request:

- 1) Single loaded streets along as much of the boundary of Petroglyph National Monument as is feasible
- 2) The height limit in the Impact area should be limited to 15' from natural grade, with a possible exception not to exceed 4' of fill if and only if required by the City Hydrologist, and
- 3) That the approved color pallet apply to all (commercial and residential) structures (walls and roofs) in the entire View Area

As the Monument is cooperatively managed by both the City of Albuquerque and the National Park Service we appreciate the opportunity to comment. Over the past 22 years

we have seen numerous violations of the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan, and we believe these requests help retain that plans intent and integrity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Sanchez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Joseph P. Sánchez

Renz-Whitmore Mikaela J.

From: Hoffman,James,FORT WORTH,R&D [Jim.Hoffman@AlconLabs.com]

Sent: Wednesday, November 21, 2012 7:50 AM

To: Renz-Whitmore Mikaela J.; Webb, Andrew T.; Carruthers, Madeline

Subject: VHSDP comments for 12/6/ EPC meeting

Mikaela / Andrew,

I would like to reiterate my ongoing support for approval of a Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan (VHSDP) which is greatly needed to provide a framework for organized development in Volcano Heights. The current draft VHSDP has made significant progress in achieving the plan goals regarding Zoning, Streets, Development Standards, and Open Space. The negative impact of not approving a Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan would be a significant setback for the City of Albuquerque in helping address the jobs / housing imbalance on the West Side as well as continuing to aggravate traffic congestion problems in Northwest Albuquerque and at river crossings

I would like to thank the planning department for their response and discussions with ABCWUA, AMAFCA, and City DMD regarding infrastructure coordination following public comments at the 10/4/12 EPC meeting. The VHSDP plan language should be modified to encourage ongoing infrastructure dialogue with these three agencies, including landowner participation, both during the remaining VHSDP approval process and following City Council approval.

Near the end of the 10/4/12 EPC meeting it was questioned whether approval of the sector plan was premature. Clearly this is not the case. This is the third version of the VHSDP in a process dating back to 2004 and the WSSP amendment, VCSDP, and VTSDP have all been approved nearly two years ago. All three agencies (ABCWUA, AMAFCA, and City DMD) commented to the planning department that the current VHSDP provides the appropriate level of detail for planning. Failure to approve a sector plan would only serve to stall these planning activities for the area.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and I am supporting approval of a Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan.

James Hoffman

817-551-4335 work

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817-689-4897 cell

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Thank you.

11/30/2012

Renz-Whitmore Mikaela J.

From: John Ransom [jransom@nmrea.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 21, 2012 11:53 AM
To: Carruthers, Madeline
Cc: Renz-Whitmore Mikaela J.; Webb, Andrew T.
Subject: VHSDP Comments

Dear Chairman Floyd:

The Ransom Family continues to be involved with and following the Sector Plan being prepared by the City of Albuquerque and are one of 35 land owners in the plan. We are in favor of approving the VHSDP now. The intent and the development of the plan brings to the West side the needed employment center and job balance that the City needs desperately for the community. There has been so much progress made towards flexibility of the plan to allow for "phased-In" development that can help spur jobs, earn gross receipts taxes and reduce trips over our overcrowded bridges. We believe that the zoning is what the City needs and the density to create that job balance. While the Sector plan deals with land use and, to some extent the traffic and access, what is still missing in the plan is additional planning to bring this plan to fruition. Our community appreciates the EPC's comments at last October's hearing that the City take the leadership role to bring the necessary agencies together to study and complete plans for the drainage master plan, extension of water and sewer to the area as well as the regional backbone infrastructure and regional roadways that will have impact beyond the sector plan boundaries. In closing again we support the plan. Thank you for the opportunity to review the plan.

John Ransom, CCIM, SIOR
Grubb & Ellis|New Mexico
505.880.7011-direct
john.ransom@grubb-ellis.com
www.RansomWith.com

Comments for December 6th, 2012 EPC Hearing on the Volcano Heights Plan

Rene' Horvath – Taylor Ranch Neighborhood Association

A) The two main issues we want to address are preservation and transportation:

The challenge for the Volcano Heights Plan is to preserve the unique features of the mesa top and to address the traffic issues.

- 1) **The natural/ cultural landscape:** The Volcano Mesa area is rich in geological, natural and cultural resources.
 - a) **Rio Grande Rift:** There are only a few rifts in the entire world, the Rio Grande valley is one of them. The volcanoes sit in the middle of it. This is why Albuquerque has unique land formations, such as the mountains, river valley, and volcanoes. They were all formed by the Rio Grande Rift. These land formations give Albuquerque its topography with the beautiful views. We should recognize that this is a unique situation that most cities don't have.
 - b) **Rock outcrops/ escarpment:** The rock outcrops and the escarpment were created from the lava flows. They add to the geological landscape on the mesa top. That's why there is a lot of effort being made to preserve them.
 - c) **Petroglyphs:** There are 24,000 petroglyphs carved on the volcanic boulders along the escarpment. Most were made by the pueblo Indians (1300's to 1650's) and early Spanish settlers. The petroglyphs are sacred to the Indians and we need to make sure they are protected.
 - d) **Plant and animal life:** There is a variety of plants (ex. juniper trees) and wildlife on the mesa top. The variety is comparable to what's seen in the mountains. This makes the mesa a very interesting place. That's why we have asked for keeping arroyos natural so they can serve as wildlife corridors.

People value these resources and special consideration is needed to protect them.

- 2) **Transportation:** Transportation is a huge concern on the Westside.
 - a) **Limited amount of river crossings:** Traffic severely bottlenecks at the river crossings during rush hour. Travel time is increasing to and from work. All this growth from the Volcano Mesa area and from Rio Rancho will make the traffic congestion worse.

- b) Paseo del Norte/ Unser:** As the population grows, traffic will certainly bottleneck onto these two roadways when it travels up and down the escarpment. The traffic situation will be similar to the river crossings.
- c) Communities downstream:** Adding more traffic to the communities downstream adds to the traffic burden these communities are already experiencing. Taylor Ranch is one of these communities.
- d) Natural features vs. transportation planning:** Special consideration has to be given to protect the geological features. That's why road networks have gone around the volcanoes, and only two roadways have gone through the escarpment-Unser Blvd. and Paseo del Norte. Both roads were very controversial, because of the Petroglyphs. This is why Unser Blvd. was developed as a 4 lane parkway, and why Unser and Paseo del Norte restrict truck traffic. This was to mitigate the traffic impacts.
- e) West side vs. eastside road systems:** The Westside is different than the eastside. The eastside has a better road network, more of a grid system and less natural features to consider. If one roadway is blocked on the eastside there are several other roadways to take.
- f) Westside development not pedestrian/ transit oriented:** Westside neighborhoods are not being designed to be pedestrian or transit oriented. They have too many walls and don't connect to one another, thereby restricting pedestrian travel. This makes Westside residents auto dependent. This needs to change.
- g) MRCOG:** MRCOG is fully aware of the transportation problems. At numerous meetings, they have told us there are no bridges being planned; traffic is going to get worse. They are very concerned about the situation and strongly promote mass transit. They said we need to look at land use, and how we develop it for transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

We feel that the Volcano Heights Planning team is trying to address all these challenges. They are trying to address the jobs/housing balance with the town center. They are encouraging protection and preservation of the cultural and natural resources, and to design development to be better suited for pedestrians and transit. We support their efforts and want the vision and the language in the Plan to be strong in order to meet these challenges.

B) Below are additional comments to help support and strengthen some of the details in the proposed plan:

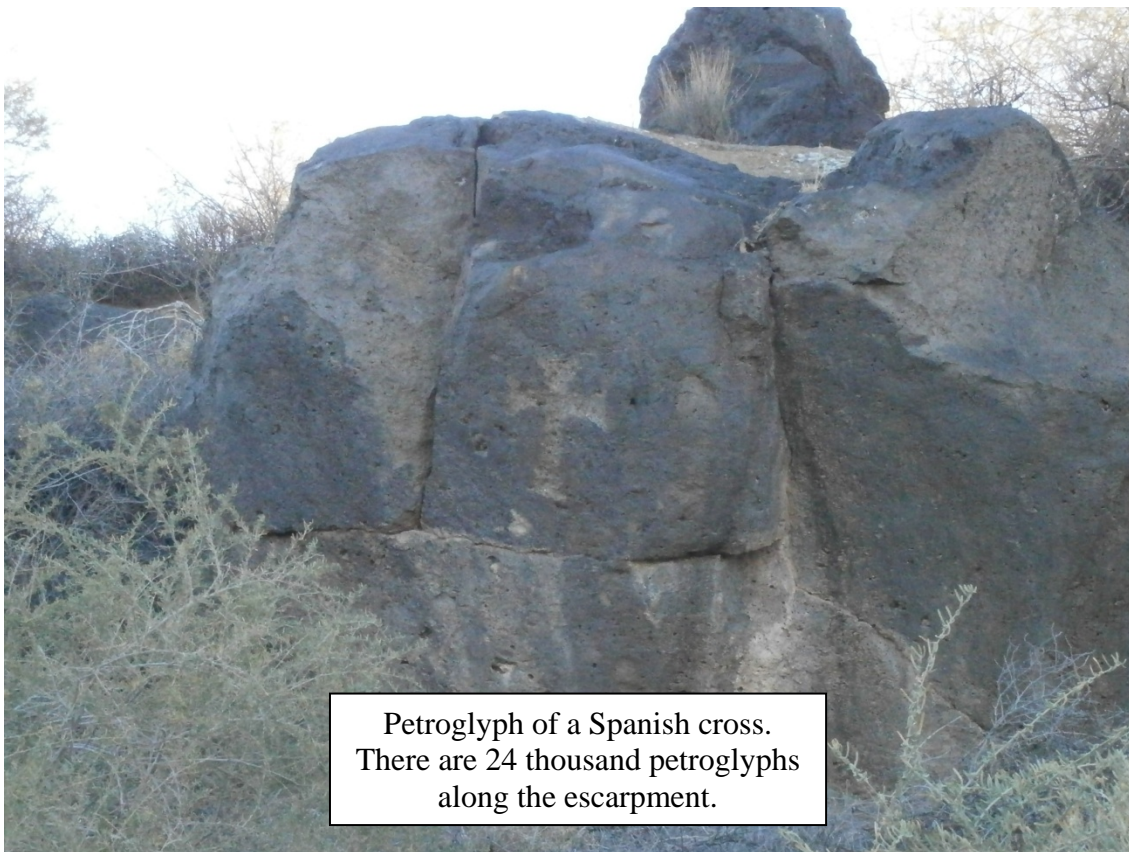
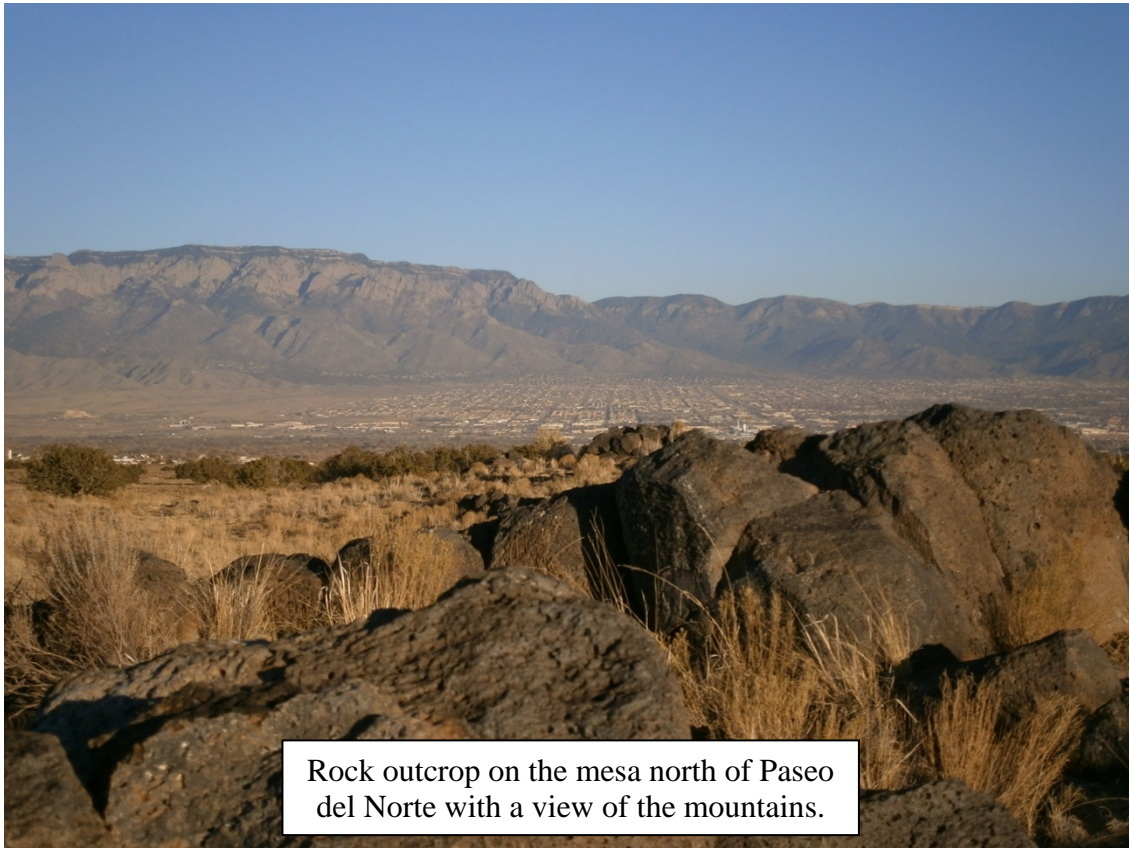
- 1) **Single loaded street:** We support the plan using single loaded streets along the Monument boundaries. A street edge is more attractive, and protects the escarpment and National Monument much better. Pedestrians can use the street as a walkway along the open space areas, which helps to prevent rogue trails from forming in the natural areas. It allows views to be seen for everyone to enjoy. It also serves as a buffer between residents and visitors of the Monument, which provides more privacy for the resident. A street edge benefits the whole community. We strongly support this design feature not only along the escarpment, but also for parks, and other public places as well. Please do not water it down.
- 2) **Rock outcrops and Open Space:** We support the preservation of the rock outcroppings and open space areas. There needs to be more vigilance in obtaining open space funding to purchase open space in order to preserve the rock out crops, and to increase the buffer along the escarpment edge. We also need to develop an impact fee system specific to the Volcano Mesa area, as another source of funding for open space acquisition.
- 3) **Impact fees:** We encourage the development of an impact fee system specific to the Volcano Mesa area. This will help the property owners to share in the costs of road building and drainage improvements and it will provide a source of funding for Police, and fire services, open space, parks, and trails.
- 4) **Cluster development/ density/ preservation/ transportation:** Cluster developments are a great way to build high density in one area in order to set aside land for open space preservation in another. This would help in our efforts to preserve the rock outcrops, the magnificent views, the archeological sites, etc. It would also provide the necessary common space areas for the residents. The high density residential area will also function better for pedestrian and transit use. We encourage more cluster development for preservation and transportation efforts.
- 5) **Subdivision connectivity:** Neighborhoods need to connect to one another like they use to do and provide for easy access to transit, trails, shopping and employment areas.
- 6) **No Gated Communities or walled subdivisions:** We support the plan not having gated communities. Walled subdivisions and gated communities restrict pedestrians and bicycle mobility. This type of design adds to our traffic congestion. WSSP also discourages gated communities.
- 7) **Urban Streets:** We support the Plan's concept of the mandatory A & B streets by having smaller blocks with buildings built up to the streets. This is a good design for pedestrian travel and transit use.

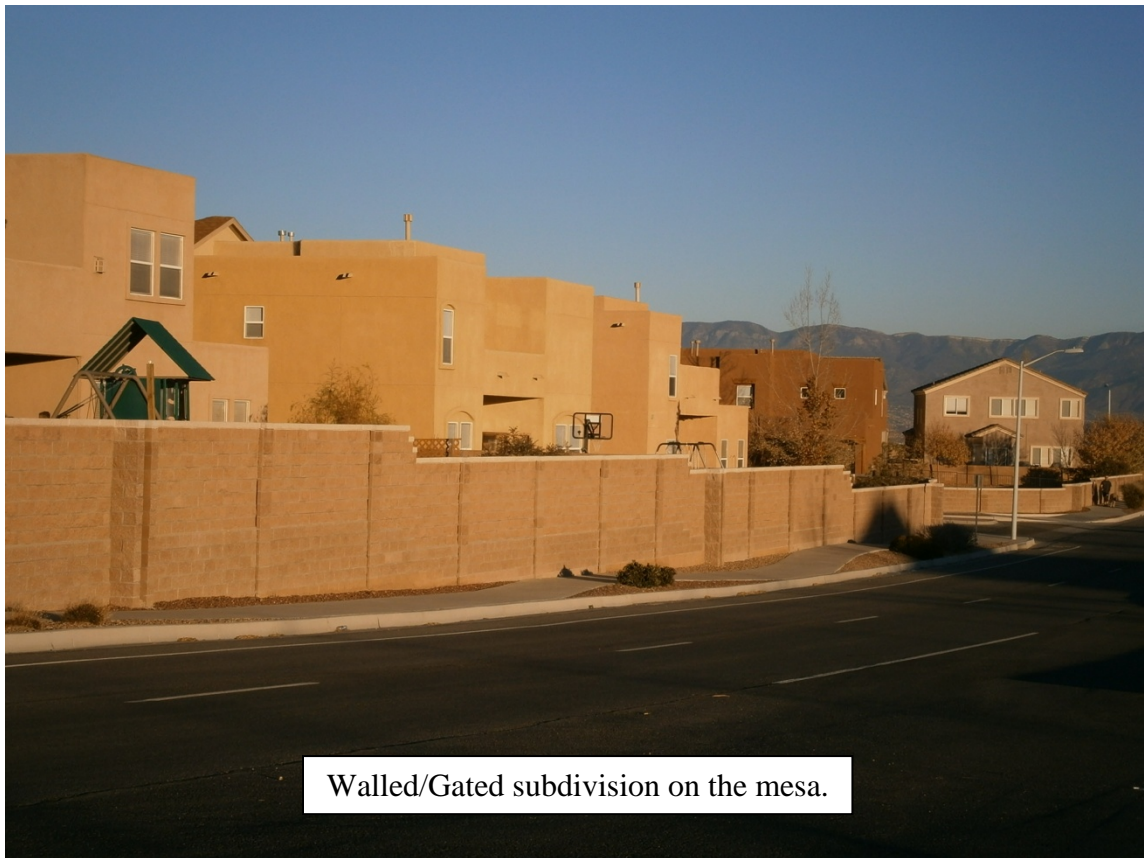
- 8) Architecture:** Architecture features are lacking on new development. Lack of architecture with lots of walls is making Albuquerque look very monotonous and unappealing. This needs to change. All sides of the building facing a street should have more attractive architecture features. We support improving the looks of the built environment.
- 9) Bright Lights/ LED signs:** Bright lights or LED signs will be a beacon for the whole city to see. We need to minimize unnecessary lighting and limit the bright LED signs. Unser Blvd. prohibits LED signs; we should consider doing the same for Paseo del Norte on the mesa top.
- 10) Building height Bonus system:** We will support the building height bonus system as long as the incentives are strong for preservation of the rock outcrops and open space, etc. Not everyone is crazy about having tall buildings here. Tall buildings seem out of character for the mesa top and will block the views which the community enjoys. The bonus system should remain strong, not watered down.
- 11) Fugitive dust:** Land that is graded is creating a dust bowl situation when the wind blows. It affects the community and is burying the escarpment in sand, making it a sand dune. Councilor Benton had to address this in the last Volcano Mesa Plan. We need stronger language in the plan to correct the problem: No grading shall be approved until buildings are ready to be constructed.
- 12) Oversight of the Plan:** Because it is a complex plan, someone knowledgeable that knows the vision and intent of the Volcano Heights plan should oversee the approval process, since there will be no further EPC review. It is very critical that we obtain quality development, and to meet the preservation and transportation challenges to ensure the success of this plan. If the plan is successful in addressing these challenges, then we as a community will be successful too.

Thank you,
Rene' Horvath ,
Land Use Director for TRNA

C) Attached below are photos exhibiting examples of the points made above:









Renz-Whitmore Mikaela J.

From: John Edward [jbedward@edwardgroup.net]
Sent: Wednesday, November 21, 2012 4:17 PM
To: Renz-Whitmore Mikaela J.; Webb, Andrew T.; Brito, Russell D.; Lubar, Suzanne G.
Cc: Gerald Gold
Subject: VHSDP

RE: Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan (VHSDP) Comments

Dear EPC and City of ABQ Planning Department:

I would like to restate that the VHSDP, once passed will be a vital/critical component to the City's growth and development, especially when it comes to leveraging other in-place infrastructure, like the bridge crossings over the Rio Grande. This hub for employment will allow things like the traffic patterns of our City to be more efficiently utilized and school populations to be balanced. It will be the counter weight to balance our lopsided city.

To this end, the recent requested work with DMD, AMAFAC and ABCWUA is essential and vital to the VHSDP and we are encouraged by the fact they are engaged. However, it can't stop here. There must be more meaningful work done.

Most recently the US Dept of Agriculture via the US Forrest Service, had an RFP for a 200,000 sq. ft. office facility, which was forwarded to your offices. VHSDP and the land which it encompasses, currently is inadequate to reply to this RFP, in terms of any viable infrastructure (either by lack of design or being not physically in place) to attract these jobs. Hence a plan must get passed sooner rather than later and one which is flexible enough to meet an RFP's demands like this in terms of type of building and space, but also in terms of time horizons/demands. The USDA goal was 10 months. This plan should be pursued with the reality and vigor that time horizons like that are essential and critical to it being a success.

If the City of ABQ wants to be a leader in keeping and attracting jobs, then it needs to be a team player and visionary leader to be sure places like VHSDP are viable, practical, attractive and real. My only hope is that we are not having another hearing a year (or more) from now on getting a VHSDP approved. If so we all run the risk we again of missing out on another major employer, which could help re-balance the jobs/housing mix between East and West Sides of ABQ. Today VHSDP is flat footed and cannot run to catch any demand for improved real estate.

We would request a few additional changes and that these additional changes are made without delaying the plan further.

1a. There is a more **flexible design provision per building heights**, that they can be modified to higher limits (exclusive of the bonuses), as need be in the future to meet basic industry cost parameters when cost of materials, site work and things like elevators or energy use are considered. **If there is an economy of scale needed to complete a project, then the plan allows for this and takes this into consideration.** This may come into play for not just building heights but block size too. Additionally, there should be wording to allow for broader flexibility per building placement and building sizes, when it comes to usual and customary building standards for an particular industry at a point in the future which we cannot predict, i.e. hotels, event centers or things such as floor heights for multi-story buildings.

1b. As stated there should also be **flexible wording, when it comes to designs, for market demands, 20 to 30 years from now, for which we cannot predict.** That any plan approvals within the VHSDP cannot be unreasonably withheld, if it can be demonstrated that economic, market demand or legislative restrictions/requirements (i.e. state or federal) conflict substantially with designs of the VHSDP. This may not be just buildings, but open space or roads or common areas. An example may be that buildings are required to have energy generation on site and in doing so conflicts with color or reflective material restrictions in the VHSDP. Another example, may be the size of type of vehicles visiting the development and parking or road designs can change to accommodate these.

1c. The plan for the VHSDP, in its genesis, had a much **bolder component for density and thus a stronger ability to provide for more jobs from within the development.** It was denser essentially for employment purposes. Most currently the plan's density per aspects such as limited building heights have put a damper so that it cannot be as big a factor in balancing the work/housing imbalance of east and west sides of the river. There should be either a current modification to allow more square feet for employment or a date certain in the future, that will increase the density factors to help the city further try and balance its use of other infrastructure. Namely, this will help adequately address the stress of the river crossings we have today and most certainly in the future. This greater employment density should add value to area housing west of the river because a homeowner can realistically live west of the river and work west of the river and not waste resources traveling to east of the river.

2. **Topography, still needs to be addressed outside of the City Departments listed above, especially when it comes to building heights.** It is my understanding that building height restrictions come from some localized neighbors' demands, most if whom do not have views of the VHSDP, due to natural changes in elevation. For this reason, 26 ft and 40ft height limits are without merit, because large portions of the plan have elevation changes of ranging from 70-100 feet (within the plan itself). These elevation changes can allow taller building to be constructed and hidden from these neighboring eyes. To broadly apply a building height limit, to large areas (even considering bonuses for heights), ignores the benefits of the land's unique variable nature. To not leverage this feature, ignores the real estate premise that a property has a highest and best use and should be allowed to develop in that manner.

3. **Intermediate land use needs addressing.** The time it may take to have this land develop in some cases may be 20-30 years in the future. I would request that there is an established broader allowance for intermediate uses of the land per the VHSDP, one of which could be an agricultural nature, such as grazing, (grazing is historical to this land.) Or allow for other regional agricultural related uses or recreational uses. Examples are grazing, a driving range or equestrian riding facilities. The benefits would be that better long term choices can be made, without economic pressures forcing something to occur sooner, which may not be ideal but allowed per the plan none the less. Currently the plan does not allow for many intermediate uses, which are not urbanized uses.

Bold. Be Bold. Bold steps are needed to make a vibrant place people want to be. The City should be bold with VHSDP, in terms of commitment and resources too. Allow this plan to be bold and give it the leadership it needs to become not just a heart for the west side of ABQ, but a place that makes ABQ an even better place to be as a resident, a shopper, an employee or a business.

Thank you.

John

Someday is not a day of the week. Have you made plans today for the long term?

11/30/2012

Hope is essential, but Hope is not a plan

John B. Edward, MBA, GBDS, CLTC
Broker

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The Trails

September 21, 2012

Mikaela Renz-Whitmore
Urban Design and Development Division
Planning Department
City of Albuquerque
200 2nd Street, NW
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102

Re: Draft Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan

Dear Mikaela Renz-Whitmore,

The purpose of this letter is to provide comments on behalf of The Trails regarding the draft Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan. The Trails owns approximately 43 acres of undeveloped land within the proposed sector plan boundaries. The Trails greatly appreciates and supports the efforts of the planning department and staff in developing this important sector plan. The Trails supports the proposed sector plan with a few considerations.

SECTION 4.0 STREETS UNIVERSE BLVD. STANDARD

The proposed typical section for Universe Blvd., page 73, shows a 4 lanes roadway (2 lanes north bound and 2 lanes south bound), plus 16' median, plus bike lanes. Please revise this detail to show a 2-lane facility (1 lane north bound and 1 lanes south bound) as is recommended in the "Volcano Heights Multi-Modal Transportation Analysis" prepared for this sector plan. This section should be consistent with the traffic study. Also, the west portion of Universe Blvd. is constructed and consists of a 6' sidewalk within an area of 10' (face of curb to west row). The Trails recommends that both sides of the roadway have the same geometry and landscape space.

SECTION 5.0 ZONING ADD VHVC ZONING AT OTHER LOCATIONS ALONG UNIVERSE BLVD

The Trails request that 2.0 acres of VHVC zoning be allowed at the intersection of Woodmont Ave. and Universe Blvd. More specifically the requested location is the northeast corner of the intersection. The current plan places the entire Village Center zoning at the intersection of Universe and Paseo Del Norte. Other opportunities for this zone should be considered at the suggested locations along Universe Blvd. Woodmont Ave. continues west and east (into the sector plan area), is planned to be a signalized intersection and provides appropriate access and location for this higher standard. The area requested is a small adjustment to the sector plan.

SECTION 7.0 SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS MAXIMUM HEIGHT REQUIREMENT IN VHMx ZONE

The current height limitation proposed 26', with allowance to go to 3 stories with specific bonus requirements met. We believe that a 3 story standard is appropriate with 4 stories allowed if the same bonus requirements are met. The intent of the sector plan is to create and attract "vibrant Major Activity Centers" and clearly a more intensely urban environment than adjacent areas. The VHMx zone can and should allow some 3 and 4 story structures. The VHVC is allowed that standard and is located in similar areas as the VHMx. Therefore, location should not be a problem relative to this consideration.

The Trails

Allowing the additional height opportunities will allow more diversity in the type of structure to be planned for this area. Therefore The Trails requests that the Maximum height be 3 stories with the option to increase to 4 stories based subject to meeting the required performance criteria.

SECTION 7.0 SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS UPPER STORY HEIGHT ODF 11'

The Trails also requests that the definition of an upper story height be increased from 10' to 11'. Most of the product The Trails is developing for multi-story construction uses 9' ceilings. In order to meet the intent of the plan in number of stories allowed, a higher maximum dimension is requested to allow for 9' ceilings.

SECTION 8.0 BUILDING STANDARDS STUCCO STANDARDS

The current plan requires "integral color stucco" and "three-step process stucco". The Trails requests references that this standard be removed. The Trails and Longford Homes (a builder in The Trails) has significant experience in housing construction having constructed over 5,000 homes. From experience these required standards have limitations. We have found other options for stucco work better for various reasons. These other options should be allowed. Please remove requirements for "integral color stucco" or "three-step process stucco".

SECTION 10.0 OPEN SPACE WATER HARVESTING

Section 10.0 requires water harvesting in various manners. This sector plan area is situated on a unique geological formation. Most of the sector plan is over a large basalt formation. In these areas there is concern that intentionally concentrating and infiltrating storm water may result in water being trapped on the surface of the underlying basalt. It is possible that such water could travel horizontally and may encounter a structure such as a building foundation, utility etc. Such a situation can have adverse affects that are difficult to control. Water infiltrated by one property may damage another party downstream. It is possible that some geotechnical recommendation will specifically recommend such practices. Therefore, The Trails recommends that these required rainwater management practice be made optional and used where appropriate.

Sincerely,



Rick Beltramo
Galway Construction Inc.
For The Trails, LLC

Cc John Murtagh, President, The Trails, LLC
James Strozier, Consensus Planning
Andrew Webb, COA Planning Department