

Variance Request

June 30, 2023

City of Steamboat Springs
Planning Department
PO Box 775088
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

RE: Variance Request
Central Park Hotel
Steamboat Village Commercial Center, Replat F (PIN 217100003), Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of Serac Pine Grove Steamboat Land Owner, LLC. (Applicant, "Serac"), we are submitting this variance request to accompany a Development Plan and Conditional Use application for a new hotel development on a vacant 4.2 acre parcel of land (PIN 217100003) located between Central Park Drive, Snapdragon Way and Pine Grove Road and south of the Alpine Bank/State Farm buildings.

This narrative has been developed to address the criteria specific for approval as described in Section 719 of the Community Development Code (CDC).

Variance request #1 - Section 223.B – Building Placement Front Setback 20' max:

This development has public streets on three sides which creates a front setback on three sides of the development. The building has been designed in an "L" shaped configuration and placed to conform with the setback as much as possible given the existing site constraints which includes a large grade change in topography, the curvature of Snapdragon, and the existing utilities and easement along Pine Grove. These constraints informed the building design and location; however, the maximum setback exceeds that as described per the zoning standards in some locations. The hotel location frames the Pine Grove Road and Snapdragon corner as well as the corner of Central Park Drive and Snapdragon. The meandering Snapdragon right-of-way near Pine Grove Road pulls away from the centroid of the property which is the predominate location where the maximum setback is exceeded. A dogleg in the building is included in the design to minimize this variance. The other location where the setback is exceeded is farther north on Pine Grove Road. The building symmetry balances the 3-sided frontage, but since the road network is not rectangular, the building could not be parallel to all sides. Where the setback is increased, the vertical grade differential was softened for additional landscaping.

Criteria for Review and Approval:

The following has been provided to assist Staff's review of the Criteria for Review and Approval per CDC Section 719.D General Criteria For Approval:

- 1. The Variance will not injure or adversely impact legal conforming uses of adjacent property, or the applicant has accurately assessed the impacts of the proposed Variance and has agreed to mitigate those impacts.***

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While not a Setback 20' Max factor, the proposed building is placed to allow maximum distance between it and the adjacent properties and the parking lots were separated to prevent any spillover effects, at the request of the adjacent property owners. The adjacent properties (Alpine Bank, and First Financial Center buildings hosting Vectra Bank, Three Peaks Grill and Ski Corp, et al) are not up against Pine Grove Road, similar to the proposed Hotel. On the contrary, the proposed hotel will be substantially in conformance with the zone-district dimensional setback standards than these adjacent properties and should not create any adverse effects.

2. *The Variance is compatible with the preferred direction and policies outlined in the Community Plan and other applicable adopted plans.*

The proposed building placement will not interfere with the goals, policies, and strategies of the Steamboat Springs Area Community Plan, and is in harmony with the land use goals of the community commercial zone and community plan for commercial properties and will provide an attractive streetscape and help to emphasize a pedestrian-friendly design which are goals and policies in the community plan.

3. *The Variance application meets either the criteria for unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty, as applicable, or the criteria for an acceptable alternative:*

This variance request is based on the existing site constraints which create a hardship with the existing site topography, existing utilities and easements along Pine Grove and the existing road curvature of Snapdragon.

Snapdragon: The building meets the requirement along Snapdragon for the first 156 feet until it comes to the significant curve in the road. The curve portion of the road has been used to place the pool/patio area to gain a south facing orientation.

Pine Grove: The building is placed along Pine Grove as close as possible while providing an 8'-0" sidewalk per the master plan and accommodating the existing site topography.

Variance request #2 - Section 438.D – Access:

The design standards note entries are to be oriented to predominant public streets. This development has public streets on three sides of the development. The building has been designed with its main entrance on Central Park and a second entrance on Snapdragon, which will allow patrons to easily access retail and restaurants to the south of the building. Due to a large grade change in topography, existing utilities and easement, and no designated drop off area along Pine Grove, no Pine Grove entrance is provided. We also do not want to encourage vehicles stopping and dropping off hotel guests along Pine Grove. The restaurant will have its entrance facing Central Park.

Criteria for Review and Approval:

The following has been provided to assist Staff's review of the Criteria for Review and Approval per CDC Section 719.D General Criteria For Approval:

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1. ***The Variance will not injure or adversely impact legal conforming uses of adjacent property, or the applicant has accurately assessed the impacts of the proposed Variance and has agreed to mitigate those impacts.***

The proposed building entries will not adversely impact the use of the adjacent properties. The proposed building entries will be a benefit to the adjacent properties to the south and west as it will help provide pedestrian connection with the adjacent properties across the streets on Snapdragon and Central Park.

2. ***The Variance is compatible with the preferred direction and policies outlined in the Community Plan and other applicable adopted plans.***

The proposed building entrances will not interfere with the goals, policies, and strategies of the Steamboat Springs Area Community Plan, and is in harmony with the land use goals of the community commercial zone and community plan for commercial properties and will provide an attractive streetscape and help to emphasize a pedestrian-friendly design which are goals and policies in the community plan.

3. ***The Variance application meets either the criteria for unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty, as applicable, or the criteria for an acceptable alternative:***

This variance request is based on existing site constraints which create a hardship with the existing site topography, and existing utilities and easement along Pine Grove.

Variance request #3 - Section 438.G – Surface Parking Screening:

The design standards note surface parking is to be screened from the public streets. This development has public streets on three sides of the development, which makes screening more difficult. The majority of the parking lot has been screened by placing it between the proposed building and the back side of State Farm/Alpine Bank buildings. The proposed building has been designed in an “L” shaped configuration and placed along Pine Grove and Snapdragon which will screen the parking from these streets. The parking lot is only open to Central Park, which is the only entrance to the parking lot. To lessen the parking lots exposure to Central Park, the parking lot has been set back further than the 30-foot minimum and two landscaped stormwater retention ponds are placed between the parking lot and Central Park. Further landscaping is not possible to accommodate required snow storage.

Criteria for Review and Approval:

The following has been provided to assist Staff’s review of the Criteria for Review and Approval per CDC Section 719.D General Criteria For Approval:

1. ***The Variance will not injure or adversely impact legal conforming uses of adjacent property, or the applicant has accurately assessed the impacts of the proposed Variance and has agreed to mitigate those impacts.***

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The proposed surface parking will not adversely impact on the use of the adjacent properties. The proposed surface parking along Central Park is pushed further back to help mitigate and buffer the surface parking along Central Park from adjacent properties. At the request of the adjacent property owner, the parking lot of the proposed building does not connect to the parking lot of State Farm/Alpine Bank.

2. *The Variance is compatible with the preferred direction and policies outlined in the Community Plan and other applicable adopted plans.*

The proposed surface parking along Central Park will not interfere with the goals, policies, and strategies of the Steamboat Springs Area Community Plan and meet or exceed the zoning requirements with the exception of screening on Central Park. It also creates more open space/green space along the street and within the proposed development which is in harmony with the goals and policies of the community plan.

3. *The Variance application meets either the criteria for unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty, as applicable, or the criteria for an acceptable alternative:*

This variance request is based on existing site constraints creating a hardship or practical difficulty is meeting all the design standards while maintaining required on-site stormwater retention and snow storage. The parking lot along Central Park has been set 49'-6" further back from the street to accommodate on-site stormwater retention and to give a good larger than required 30'-0" separation from the street.

Variance request #4 - Section 438.H 3 – Glazing Percentages:

The design standards note minimum glazing percentages along public streets at the ground level and upper levels. The building has been designed to optimize the amount of building glazing while maintaining an energy efficient building design and minimizing the heat loss / heat gain of the building while still providing adequate glazing to provide functional use to the hotel guests as well as providing a mixed used pedestrian friendly look and feel at the main level. Please see drawing sheets DP-200, DP-201 & DP-202 for glazing calculations and percentages.

We feel the amount of proposed glazing is appropriate for this development and provides typically sized windows for the hotel guestrooms. The proposed building has been designed to maximum the amount of glazing in the hotel public areas and proposed restaurant on the ground level while maintaining appropriately sized windows for the guestrooms on the ground level to provide needed security and privacy to the hotel guest. We also feel the proposed glazing percentages are in line with the intent of the zoning code and create a visually interesting building design that incorporates different forms and materials to maintain a well-balanced overall design.

Criteria for Review and Approval:

The following has been provided to assist Staff's review of the Criteria for Review and Approval per CDC Section 719.D General Criteria For Approval:

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1. ***The Variance will not injure or adversely impact legal conforming uses of adjacent property, or the applicant has accurately assessed the impacts of the proposed Variance and has agreed to mitigate those impacts.***

The proposed building glazing will not adversely impact on the use of the adjacent properties. The reduced glazing will help to minimize any potential light glare and reflection to the adjacent properties, and still provide guests with appropriate glazing to take in all the surrounding area and beautiful natural scenery that Steamboat has to offer.

2. ***The Variance is compatible with the preferred direction and policies outlined in the Community Plan and other applicable adopted plans.***

The proposed building glazing will not interfere with the goals, policies, and strategies of the Steamboat Springs Area Community Plan and will help to provide a more energy efficient building design and development. The project has been designed to maximize the glazing on the ground level in the hotel public areas and proposed restaurant and is in harmony with the land use goals of the community commercial zone and community plan for commercial properties and will provide an attractive streetscape and help to emphasize a pedestrian-friendly design which are goals and polices in the community plan.

3. ***The Variance application meets either the criteria for unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty, as applicable, or the criteria for an acceptable alternative:***

It is our belief that this variance request provides an acceptable alternative that will help to provide a more energy efficient building design while still providing an aesthetically pleasing building with adequate glazing meeting the intent of the zoning design standards. It will also provide a mixed use look and feel on the main level with glazing and transparency at the proposed restaurant and hotel public areas to promote pedestrian activity and connection to emphasize a pedestrian-friendly design.

If you have any additional questions or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to call.