



Ph: 970-871-6772 · Fax: 970-879-8023 · P.O. Box 775966 · Steamboat Springs, Colorado 80477

July 7, 2025

City of Steamboat Springs Planning and Community Development
137 10th Street
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477
Phone: (970)-871-8207, Fax: (970)-879-8851

RE: Village Drive Townhomes
Variance Request – Retaining Walls

Dear City of Steamboat Springs Planning Department,

Please accept this letter as a variance request from the City of Steamboat Springs Community Development Code (CDC) for the Village Drive Townhome project. The Village Drive Townhomes project was approved for seven townhomes in 2022. The project is located on the northeast corner of Village Drive and Walton Creek Road. Four Points Surveying and Engineering and Steamboat Springs Architectural, are requesting a variance to the Community Development Code (CDC) standards for the **Section 418 – Retaining Walls**

As stated in the Community Development Code Section 719 Variance, the CDC sets forth a united regulatory program for development but it is understood that no standard can anticipate all possible circumstances, alternative approaches and unanticipated consequences of its application.

The Village Drive Townhomes site is north of Village Drive which is a pedestrian and transportation corridor for other multi-family projects along the roadway. Based on the surrounding projects and lack of any commercial development area the owners are requesting to eliminate the stairway access for security and practicality. The remainder of the project will continue to meet the approval conditions and CDC standards. **The variance is being proposed as an acceptable alternative per Section 719 D. 3b(iii). The application of other code standards, purposes, or intents will be improved by varying the standard.**

Variance #1 – Section 418 – Retaining Walls.

The purpose of the retaining wall standard state the following.

1. Minimize the impact of retaining walls on adjacent properties.

The variance request is to allow for the retaining wall on the east property to be a maximum of 9 feet without being stepped wall segments with a three foot horizontal feet. Currently, the constructed height exceeds the four foot limit of the 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. *The proposed multi-family development complements the surrounding uses of a multi-family and condominiums in the neighborhood. No legal conforming uses of adjacent property will be injured or adversely impacted due the*

Retaining Wall narrative: Is this description written for this project? please revise for clarity.

retaining wall on the east property line. The retaining wall is in the rear of the buildings and not visible to the building on the east line.

2. The Variance is compatible with the preferred direction and policies outlined in the Community Plan and other applicable adopted plans. *The Steamboat Springs Area Community plan promotes high density development and work force housing. The Village Drive Apartments site is prime spot for redevelopment due to the proximity of the Steamboat Ski Area and transit. The development as proposed is aligned with goals and policies of the Steamboat Springs Area Community Plan as noted in the following goals and policies.*
- a. Goal LU-5: Our community will plan and implement land use patterns that support an efficient transportation system and alternative transportation nodes*
 - b. Policy LU-5.1: Develop appropriate land use densities to support transit*
 - c. Strategy LU-5.1(b): Coordinate Land Use and Transportation decisions*
 - d. Policy LU-5.2: New neighborhoods will be well connected by streets, sidewalks, trails, walkways and bicycle lanes.*
 - e. Policy CD-1.4: Encourage high quality site planning and design*
 - f. Policy CD-2.2: Create a functional mix of uses in new neighborhoods and development areas*

The Variance application meets either the criteria for unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty, as applicable, or the criteria for an acceptable alternative. *We are requesting a variance pursuant to **Section 719.D.3.b(ii) of the Community Development Code, which allows for relief when the purpose and intent of the standard would not be achieved through strict application in a specific circumstance.** The approved construction drawings prepared by Landmark Consultants and approved by the City of Steamboat Springs included a note indicating “wall by others.” In August 2023, Geowall Designs provided a complete engineering plan set for a two-tier Redi-Rock retaining wall system, including construction drawings, a design report, and material quantity estimates. Four Points Surveying and Engineering (FPSE) incorporated the Geowall design into the civil construction plan set and completed staking of the wall in October 2024. The as-designed wall is wider than the originally proposed layout to accommodate the necessary structural height and tie into existing grades at the adjacent Pine Ridge Townhomes. While a two-tier system as shown in the Landmark Consultants plans was considered, there was insufficient space to safely perform the necessary excavation and maintain stable cut slopes behind the wall. The constructed Redi-Rock system includes a 2-foot, 4-inch tier between wall segments, effectively breaking up the visual mass of the wall. The intent of the code—to minimize visual impacts of retaining structures on adjacent properties is achieved through the strategic location of the walls and the incorporation of the tiered design. The limited horizontal separation further reduces the perceived height and impact, while fitting within the constraints of the site. The contractor has implemented a sound and context-sensitive solution in a constrained construction area.*

In conclusion, we request the City of Steamboat Springs Planning Department approve the variance as outlined herein acceptable for the development plan of the Mountain Village Townhomes.

Thank you for your review of the variance and we look forward to continued discussion.

Sincerely;

Walter Magill, P.E.
Four Points Surveying and Engineering