

Edgemont Phase II - Variance Request



November 15, 2019

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

RE: Variance Request – Retaining Walls
Edgemont Phase II, Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the Steamboat Ski-In Ski-Out, LLC (Applicant), we are submitting a variance request for the 'Edgemont Phase 2' project on the Expansion Property as depicted on the Edgemont Condominiums-Building A, Steamboat Springs, Colorado as described below. This narrative has been developed to address the criteria specific for approval as described in Section 719 of the Community Development Code (CDC). This information is intended to accompany the Conceptual Development Plan and Engineering Variance submittal.

The specific request is to vary **Section 418 – Retaining walls**:

Table 418-1 of the CDC describes the maximum retaining wall heights and Section 418.C.3 which specifies:

Retaining walls over six feet in height shall be designed and constructed in a manner of two stepped vertical wall segments. Stepped wall segments shall:

- a. Not exceed six feet in height; and
- b. Have a horizontal offset of at least three feet from the face of each wall segment.

Project Background:

The Edgemont project was previously reviewed and approved under the City's file DPF-07-05. There were other related applications and approvals including final plats, improvement agreements and construction drawings.

Only Phase 1 (Building A) was constructed. The area previously designated as Phase II and III is the subject property being reconsidered by the new Owner. The buildings are being redesigned, however, the existing topography and legal constraints are still driving the general site layout and the access road is substantially similar to the original Edgemont project.

We have prepared an Engineering Variance for the proposed access road to request increasing the road centerline grade to 10% (vs. 7% per Standards) and reducing the horizontal curvature. That variance, if denied, will exasperate this retaining wall request as the wall heights will only increase.



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.*

- The retaining walls are necessary to protect adjacent properties and restrict the site improvements to the legal limits of the parcel ownership. The design, construction and maintenance of the retaining walls will need to be performed with the adjacent property owners in mind to ensure that their properties are not restricted or impacted.
- The walls have been stepped to reflect the intent of Section 418, however, the elevation difference exceeds the practical ability to implement the geometries that are prescribed by the CDC.

Please note that due to the inherent schematic level of design, the specific wall materials, color, location and limits have not been finalized. Additional modifications will be made to reduce the magnitude of the variance if economical and reasonable.

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

The proposed project and this Variance Request will not interfere with the following goals, policies and strategies of the Steamboat Springs Area Community Plan:

- Goal LU-2: Our community supports infill and redevelopment in core areas
- Policy LU-2.1: Infill and redevelopment will occur in appropriate locations, as designated by the city
- Strategy LU-2.1(a): Identify Infill Opportunities
- Policy LU-2.2: Residential infill will be compatible in character and scale with the surrounding neighborhood
- Policy LU-3.1: New development will maintain and enhance the character and identity of existing residential neighborhoods
- Goal LU-5: Our community will plan and implement land use patterns that support an efficient transportation system
- Policy GM-1.3: Infill development and redevelopment will be promoted in targeted areas
- Policy GM-2.4: New development should not cause a reduction in the level or quality of service to taxpayers and residents
- Policy CD-1.5: Infill and redevelopment projects shall be compatible with the context of existing neighborhoods and development





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

a. Unnecessary Hardship or Practical Difficulty

- i. **Major Variance:** The special circumstances of the subject property make the strict application of the standard an unnecessary hardship to the applicant, and the special circumstances are not the result of actions of the property owner or applicant.

It is our belief that the project request meets the **Unnecessary Hardship or Practical Difficulty** criteria.

The legal access to the Expansion Property is via Gondola Lane, a platted, 50-foot wide right-of-way. This right-of-way does not meet current standards for width. The fixed right-of-way and the developed adjacent properties does not allow horizontal roadway alternatives, only vertical. The absence of options for modifying the access road extends to the site – the road is establishing the elevations that set the heights of the retaining walls.

The horizontal (depth) limitations of the parcel does not afford the space necessary to continuously terrace the retaining walls to meet the requirements of Section 418. The integrity of the proposed retaining walls is important to the developer, the future residents and the adjacent properties.

The strict application of the standard is an unnecessary hardship to the applicant and the special circumstances are not the result of actions of the property owner or Applicant and exist with or without this Application.

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

On behalf of the Owners, Bear Claw II Homeowners Association,

Sincerely,
Landmark Consultants, Inc.

Erik Griepentrog, PE
Vice-President

