

March 3, 2010

Cache County Planning and Zoning Commission
179 North Main St.
Logan, UT 84321

Dear Commissioners,

We, the undersigned, are residents of Richmond City, and we have serious concerns about the proposed ski resort in Cherry Creek Canyon. We live here because we value what Richmond offers us: friendly neighbors, a safe environment in which to raise our children, expansive views, a responsive city government, and all the other traditional qualities of a small farming community.

We do not want a ski resort in our backyard. The impacts of even a small resort on water quality, public safety, and taxes will destroy the scenic, civic, and natural resources we depend on in our daily lives.

City Resource Issues:

- How will water quality be assured? If the project uses 5,000 gallons of water per day, most of that undoubtedly returns to the drain fields as wastewater, impacting the aquifer and local and city wells. (This has occurred in Mendon, where too many drain fields were allowed, and wells were shut down due to the increase in contaminants.) Without absolute certainty of the safety of our water supply, we cannot allow this project to threaten the future of our families and community.
- Has documentation been provided to establish water rights for the amount of water needed to operate the proposed resort?
- What effects accrue to the city in a drought year?
- If emergency services are provided by Richmond City, an agreement should be in place for reimbursement before the permit is approved. If the city refuses to provide services, can development proceed?
- The proposal includes closing access to the county road during the winter months. This would impact access to the Richmond water system for emergency repairs and non-motorized winter recreation to Forest Service lands.
- One minor point concerns the displacement of wintering mule deer. If deer are displaced toward town, their main predator, cougar, is also displaced. Shouldn't this be a safety concern?
- Night skiing is not compatible with the scenic beauty of Richmond, and a strict adherence to night-sky lighting must be mitigated.

Traffic and Public Safety Issues:

- Traffic within Richmond City limits will increase, especially on weekends; all resort traffic will funnel through the heart of Richmond.

- Impacts to road surfaces will increase.
- Local residents pay for the city's road repairs through higher local taxes.
- The traffic increase will decrease our residents' safety, as there are no sidewalks on the main route to the development, placing our children at risk.
- A road and traffic study should be performed and an agreement with the city negotiated on how to mitigate these impacts.

As you are aware, the current properties within the proposal are zoned Forest Recreation Zoning District (FR40). We believe that a recreational resort doesn't comply with FR40's intent to allow activities to occur to the "extent compatible with the protection of the natural and scenic resources of the forests for the benefit of present and future generations."

This type of full-scale commercial development should be deliberated under the county's Resort Recreation Zoning District (RR) that considers "mountain resort and recreation development." This would allow additional requirements, such as soil and vegetation studies, that the commission or council would deem necessary.

Additionally, the proposal does not meet the standards and criteria for a conditional use permit. First, the proposed ski resort does not contribute to the well being of the community, owing to local public outcry and Richmond City's objections. This criterion has not been established, and the permit should be denied.

Second, the proposed ski resort is not compatible with the site's unique character and the importance it holds for the county's wildlife resources (i.e., a Forest Service wilderness area and the Division of Wildlife Resources winter wildlife habitat). This criterion can't be met, and the permit should be denied.

Third, this proposal includes a large drain field poised above the aquifer that supplies clean water to the entire city of Richmond and nearby residents. This drain field has the potential to be harmful to public health and safety and fulfills the criteria for the permit to be denied.

Reasonable mitigation measures will not allow the resort to meet the zoning district's standards and criteria. These issues, and those regarding the city's resources and public safety, are serious enough for the commission to deny the request of the permit.

With sincere respect,
Citizens of Richmond City

With limited time, it was decided to present this letter to the commission before the signatures have been collected. They will follow in future correspondences.

Thank you for your understanding.