

the books since 1981. Any other landowner that seeks to subdivide their property is going to have to go through the same process as anybody else would.”

Commissioner Longinos Gonzalez moved to approve the appeal to overturn the decision made by the Planning Department, and District 1 Commissioner Darryl Glenn seconded it. Commissioners Stan VanderWerf and Peggy Littleton were opposed.

On March 21, having listened to the testimony from the previous week, Waller voted no, meaning that the motion failed and the appeal was denied. The Planning Department’s administrative determination therefore stands.

Waller said that there was no doubt in his mind that when the deal was originally made, it was designed to provide the parcel of land for a fire station. He said that the appellants in the case looked to the resolution made by the BOCC at the time as evidence that the BOCC approved this based on the idea that this parcel would be used only as a fire station. Waller said that as he read the resolution from that time, “DWFPD intends to utilize

this parcel solely for an emergency facility [fire station],” and the resolution does not say the BOCC is approving this special use solely for a fire station. The BOCC just recognized the deal that had been made. He further stated that the BOCC cannot determine single uses for a parcel of land in perpetuity because this would violate contract law.

The BOCC’s denial of the appeal means that the property can be sold for another use allowed within the RR-5 zoning.

See related Donald Wescott Fire Protection District article on page 10.

Fire chief warns of wildland fire danger

During public comments at the March 2 BOCC meeting, Carl Tatum, Hanover fire chief, updated the commissioners on the grassfire burning in southeastern El Paso County. Tatum warned that the wildland fire season is here and asked that the commissioners help to get the word out about the need for fire mitigation.

He said, “If homeowners can’t help us get a safe space and help us protect their homes with fire mitiga-

tion, we’re going to lose some homes this year.” Creating defensible space includes clearing away flammable materials and debris from around your home or business, cutting down weeds and grasses, trimming trees near buildings, and using fire-resistant materials in construction. The commissioners thanked Tatum and all the firefighters for their brave work in saving homes.

Minor subdivision approved for Happy Landing Estates

On March 2, the BOCC unanimously approved a request for approval of a minor subdivision to create two single-family residential lots at Happy Landing Estates, located on the east side of Happy Landing Drive and Higby Road. The 35.57-acre parcel is zoned RR-5 (Residential Rural). It will be divided to create a 17-acre lot and an 18-acre lot. The application was heard and recommended for approval by the El Paso County Planning Commission at its Feb. 7 meeting.

Helen Walklett can be reached at helenwalklett@ocn.me.

El Paso County Planning Commission, March 21

Gleneagle golf course project application considered

By Helen Walklett

At its March 21 meeting, the El Paso County Planning Commission considered a preliminary plan and final plat approval requests relating to the development of the golf course land in Gleneagle. After three hours of discussion, the commission voted to continue the items to its April 18 meeting to allow time for the applicant to secure missing drainage easements and for county staff to approve the preliminary and final drainage and erosion control plan and reports.

The Gleneagle golf course property is located north of Northgate Road along Gleneagle Drive. In 2009, the driving range portion was converted to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning district so that 47 patio homes could be built. It included an agreement limiting land use changes within the remaining golf course.

However, the applicant, Westbrook Capital Holdings LLC, is now applying to build 56 single-family homes on a 28-acre portion of the land, including three new cul-de-sacs, instead of the patio homes that were planned for the driving range area. The remaining land, 73 percent of the old golf course, would remain as open space, maintained by the Gleneagle Civic Association for the use of the Gleneagle community, and as drainage and buffer tracts.

Multiple concurrent land use requests are being processed for this development. At its Oct. 18, 2016 meeting, the Planning Commission approved the map amendment (rezone). The sketch plan amendment request, which establishes broad land uses and compatibility, and the rezone request (from the RR-5 to the RS-6000 zoning district) for a portion of the overall sketch plan amendment were both approved at the Planning Commission meeting on Dec. 6.

See links here to an October OCN article and the December El Paso County Planning Commission website: www.ocn.me/v16n11.htm#epcpc1018, or <http://adm.elpasoco.com/Development%20Services/Pages/PlanningCommission2016.aspx> for the Dec. 6 Planning Commission minutes.

The developer has requested that all five requests relating to the project be heard concurrently at a future BOCC meeting.

Two waivers requested

Westbrook Capital Holdings has requested a waiver of the requirement that a maximum of 25 lots on a cul-de-sac in this case, in relation to Mission Hill Way. Staff had no objections to this waiver request.

Senior Assistant County Attorney Cole Emmons explained that the applicant and Donala Water and Sanitation District have also requested a waiver of the county requirement that the water supply be sufficient for 300 years (known as the 300 Year Rule) and using the state’s 100-year water supply rule instead. The staff report stated that the water supply for the subdivision comes from two distinguishable sources: the district bedrock non-renewable groundwater sources that are considered to have a 100-year aquifer life, and Donala’s Willow Creek Ranch surface water supply, which is considered annually renewable and which does meet the 300-year water supply requirement. It is some years since such a waiver has been requested, but such waivers have been granted for several projects served by Donala due to its excellent operating record, its sound practices in water management and operation, and its successful water conservation measures.

Donala District Manager Kip Petersen also addressed the commissioners’ questions about the applica-

tion for a waiver of the 300-year water rule

Bill Guman spoke on behalf of the applicant, Westbrook Capital Holdings. He was asked about the lack of drainage study material and concerns with one particular area of the golf course where there were no drainage easements linking the golf course to the drainage infrastructure on Westchester Drive. Guman said there was a design proposal in place that would resolve this issue, but negotiations had not yet been successfully concluded.

Speaking after all testimony had been heard, Commissioner Jerry Hannigan said, “I think the application is getting ahead of itself.” He said he felt there was enough information to deal with the water waiver and preliminary plan but not enough to deal with the final plat request. He also said that it bothered him that the application did not yet have BOCC approval of the zoning requests. Commissioner Jim Egbert agreed, saying, “We need to have a solution in place for drainage and that doesn’t currently exist. I agree we are in good shape in terms of a water waiver.”

Commissioner Timothy Trowbridge, chair of the Planning Commission, disagreed that the commission could go forward with the preliminary plan because the issues raised concerned both the preliminary plan and the final plat. He did say that the water waiver did not concern him, stating that Donala has reduced demand and has an excellent record.

The commissioners voted unanimously to continue the items to the April 18 meeting, by which time final drainage details would hopefully have been completed by the applicant and approved by the staff.

Helen Walklett can be reached at helenwalklett@ocn.me.

Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations, March 11

NEPCO hosts local fire chiefs’ forum

By Jennifer Kaylor

The Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO) met on March 11, hosting a forum featuring Fire Chief Chris Truty and Fire Marshal/Battalion Chief Jamey Bumgarner of Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) and Chief Vinny Burns of Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD). They provided information about their respective district’s history, response times, funding and oversight, and community outreach. NEPCO Secretary Bob Swedenburg moderated the forum.

All board members were present and 31 of the 39 member homeowners associations (HOAs) were represented.

Fire Protection District demographics

Truty explained that Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District and Woodmoor-Monument Fire Protection District merged in 2004 to create the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Rescue Authority, which voters then approved to form TLMFPD in 2007. TLMFPD comprises about 52 square miles that extend from the mountains to Black Forest Road, and from County Line Road to roughly Baptist Road/Hodgen on the southern border. www.ocn.me/v7n10.htm#tlmfra, www.ocn.me/v8n2.htm#tlmfpd

Note: Woodmoor-Monument Fire Protection District,

was formed in 1975 and the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District was formed in 1977. On Jan. 1, 2008, the Woodmoor-Monument district was dissolved and incorporated into a merged district under a new name, Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District. www.ocn.me/v8n1.htm#tlmfra

TLMFPD covers a population of about 33,000 people, 9,652 households, and 418 businesses. Physical resources include three fire stations, one ladder truck with a pump, two fire engines, and two ambulances. The staff includes 42 firefighters and four administrators. Average response time is seven minutes, 16 seconds, which is significantly affected by the large geographic area. The district receives about 2,500 calls per year, 70 percent of which are medical. A budget of \$6.02 million supports TLMFPD for 2017.

Burns reported that DWFPD was established in 1981. Originally, the district ran from Dublin Boulevard through Briargate between I-25 and State Highway 83, to Baptist Road/Hodgen Road on the north. Progressive annexation by Colorado Springs steadily reduced the district’s geographic area, establishing Northgate Boulevard as the current southern boundary. Burns referred to Montezuma Estates as the “island,” a section not annexed by Colorado Springs, which also falls within the

district’s borders. wescottfire.org/about-wescott-fire/history-of-wescott-fire/

DWFPD serves about 10,000 residents (down from 30,000), 3,100 households, and 50 businesses; operates two active fire stations and uses a third primarily for training and storage; employs 17 career firefighters and officers and one administrative assistant; and receives support from 17 volunteers. Burns described the equipment “at our disposal” as three engines, one combination engine-aerial device, one brush truck, a brush squad (utility truck), and a water tender. DWFPD partners with American Medical Response (AMR) for the district’s one ambulance operating out of Gleneagle Station 1. He said Wescott tries to respond to dispatches within eight minutes at least 90 percent of the time, and did so 96 percent of the time. DWFPD responded to 2,709 calls in 2016, but Burns expects fewer calls and a much smaller budget—down from the 2017 annual budget of \$2.1 million—due to the Colorado Springs annexation and DWFPD’s subsequent shrinking geographic area.

Mutual aid and automatic aid defined

Burns explained that mutual aid is a signed agreement between two or more fire districts to assist one another when the initially dispatched station verbally requests aid. Truty emphasized that the fire districts reciprocate