

SANTA FE COUNTY COMMITTEE APPROVES PRELIMINARY PHASE I PLAT FOR VILLAGE AT GALISTEO BASIN PRESERVE

County Development Review Committee favors initial phase of proposed resource-efficient, mixed-use, mixed income community

Santa Fe, NM, June 19, 2009—The Santa Fe County Development Review Committee (CDRC) voted unanimously last evening to approve Commonweal Conservancy's preliminary Phase I plat for the proposed Village at the Galisteo Basin Preserve.

"The Committee's vote is a profound and timely endorsement of inclusive, conservation-based, and resource-efficient community development—values that deeply inform the planning and design of the Village at the Galisteo Basin Preserve," said Ted Harrison, president of Commonweal Conservancy, the Santa Fe-based nonprofit organization spearheading the Galisteo Basin Preserve. "The CDRC's forward-looking approach is powerfully affirming. We are encouraged that intellectually grounded, socially progressive land-use professionals are helping to guide an increasingly thoughtful practice of development in our community."

The Village's Phase I plan anticipates development of 149 homes and 37,500 square feet of commercial and civic space. The initial phase would include 131 single-family lots and sites for 18 multi-family dwellings. Forty-five homes, or 30 percent of the Phase I development, will be available for moderate-income households. The plan also proposes development of a small café, an environmental center, and a post office, as well as classrooms, common areas, and administration facilities in the Village center for Charter School 37.

The Village's first-phase will include hundreds of acres of parks and open space, and a five-acre "memorial landscape" for green burial purposes. The residential, educational, and commercial development of Phase I will consume a 60-acre portion of the larger 300-acre proposed Village development area. In its full realization, 13,000 acres of open space and 50 miles of proposed hiking, biking, and equestrian trails will surround the proposed Village.

"This is about protecting a sacred landscape, while at the same time making it accessible to the entire community," said J.J. Milder, who with her husband, Fred Milder, was the first resident of the Preserve in the project's West Basin neighborhood. Referencing the history-celebrating mural in the Santa Fe County Courthouse chambers, Milder said that Commonweal's inclusive mixed-use/mixed-income development plan "emulates our shared interests in protecting our cultural history, pristine resources, and diverse community."

CDRC members acknowledged the Village's resource-efficient design goals and landscape sensitivity in their approval of the preliminary plat, despite five variances from the County Land Development Code. While the Santa Fe County Land Use Division staff expressed concern about

the variances, Commonweal cited them as essential to the vision, sustainable design priorities, and traditional neighborhood design plan of the Village project. The Phase I variances include:

- allowing driveways to be within 100 feet of alleys and/or intersections so as to promote compact neighborhood design;
- increasing the maximum slope at intersections from 3 percent to 5 percent, and decreasing the intersection-approach length from 100 feet to 50 feet in order to minimize excessive grading of the existing topography and to promote compact neighborhood design;
- allowing narrower road-widths to encourage slower Village traffic, safer pedestrian conditions, and more interactive, tightly connected neighborhoods;
- allowing a longer cul-de-sac in order to lessen the impact of the grading plan and stormwater runoff associated with larger road networks; and
- accommodating a 30-foot building height in certain areas to present greater opportunities for passive solar heating and daylight exposure, accommodate more affordable housing, and support the Village's compact urban design goals.

Preliminary plat approval by the CDRC is a critical step toward realizing Commonweal's path-setting conservation-development plan. On June 12, 2007, the Santa Fe Board of County Commissioners (BCC) granted the Village at the Galisteo Basin Preserve master plan approval for the development of 965 residential units; 150,000 square feet of commercial, institutional, educational, and recreational land uses; and 10,316 acres of open space, parks, and trails.

Several Santa Fe County residents attended last evening's public hearing and offered testimony in support of the Village's environmental and design goals. "For most of us in Galisteo, this project is a model for how development should happen," said sculptor Ted Fleming, a Galisteo resident and member of a Galisteo-based committee that has worked with Commonweal to ensure that the Village plan would not compromise the community's long-term water supply. "Commonweal has done an exceptional job of working with us in terms of transparency, openness, and cooperation to make us feel like we'll be protected and will remain whole," Fleming said.

About the Village at the Galisteo Basin Preserve

The Village at the Galisteo Basin Preserve is a compact, resource-efficient community plan that will help support the protection and restoration of more than 13,000 acres of open space in the Galisteo Basin Preserve in central Santa Fe County. Designed for economic and social diversity, the Village plan includes 965 homes of various types, sizes, and prices. Commercial, educational, and civic development aims to foster a dynamic, walkable urban core, while parks, trails, and open space connect neighborhoods, link to the Preserve's open space and public trails, and encourage a stewardship culture. The Village has received national recognition for its integration of large-scale land conservation, environmental sensitivity, and compact, mixed-use, mixed-income design goals. For more information, visit www.galisteobasinpreserve.com.

About Commonweal Conservancy

Commonweal Conservancy is a nonprofit conservation-based, community-development organization dedicated to forging deep and sustaining relationships among people, land, and the built environment. We acquire properties of unique cultural and ecological significance and engage in collaborative land planning that inspires the creation of whole communities. For more information about Commonweal, please visit www.commonwealconservancy.org.

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