

City of Whitefish
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August 18, 2022

To: Flathead County Planning Board

RE: FZC 22-05, Montarise Development Zone Change

Planning Board members and County Commissioners:

The City of Whitefish opposes the proposed zoning change of the 156 acres of KM Ranch Road frontage from SAG 5 to R-1 Suburban Residential.

While this property is outside of our former planning jurisdiction, the density of this proposed development will have impacts to the City of Whitefish and its residents. The increase in density from 31 potential units to 268 potential units might be appropriate in an urban setting with access to municipal water and sewer services, but it is out of character with an area that the 1996 Whitefish City-County Master Plan called to remain as Limited Rural Residential. While the applicants are considering a community septic system instead of individual drain fields, community septic systems can still impact water quality and contaminate aquifers, especially with that many new units contributing to the effluent.

Adding increased traffic to KM Ranch Road, which is predominantly unpaved, is problematic. Increasing traffic onto Highway 93 without a controlled intersection is even more problematic. Those issues should be addressed before any major increases in density.

Due to the proposal's density, increased traffic, access from unpaved roads, and potential environmental issues that much untreated septic could create, we ask the Board to strongly consider our comments and recommend denial of this zone change request.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours respectfully,

John Muhlfeld
Mayor