



WASHOE COUNTY

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: August 9, 2016

CM ____
Finance N/A
Legal DWV
Risk Mgt. DE
HR JL

DATE: July 20, 2016
TO: Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Charles Moore, Fire Chief, TMFPD
Telephone: 775.326.6000 Email: cmoore@tmfpd.us
THROUGH: John Slaughter, County Manager
Telephone: 775.328.2060 Email: jslaughter@washoecounty.us
SUBJECT: Discussion and possible action to retitle the "Washoe County Fire Hazard Risk Map" to "Washoe County Fire Hazard Map for New Construction" and to amend the fire hazard rating for the Estates at Mount Rose from high to moderate. (All Commission Districts)

SUMMARY

This item is a discussion and possible action to retitle the "Washoe County Fire Hazard Risk Map" to "Washoe County Fire Hazard Map for New Construction" and to amend the fire hazard rating for the Estates at Mount Rose from high to moderate.

Strategic Objective supported by this item: Safe Secure and Healthy Communities

PREVIOUS ACTION

On March 15, 2016, Chief Moore presented information to the Board of Fire Commissioners regarding a petition for modification of the Washoe County Fire Hazard Map for the Estates at Mount Rose Community. The Board of County Commissioners directed staff to work with the Estates at Mount Rose Community to perform an evaluation of the Estates at Mount Rose Community to look into possible modification of the current Washoe County Fire Hazard Map for that area.

On June 21, 2016, the Board of Fire Commissioners directed staff to refer the recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to retitle the "Washoe County Fire Hazard Risk Map" to "Washoe County Fire Hazard Risk Map for New Construction" and to amend the fire hazard rating for the Estates at Mount Rose from high to moderate."

BACKGROUND

In 2004/2005 the Nevada Fire Safe Council contracted with Resource Concepts, Incorporated (RCI) to assemble a project team of experts in the fields of fire behavior and suppression, forest and rangeland ecology, forest health, and geographic information systems (GIS) to complete an assessment of risk and hazards for those communities within Washoe County, Nevada that were identified in the 2001 Federal

Register list of communities at risk within the vicinity of federal lands that are most vulnerable to the threat of wildland fire.

Staff cannot find a record of the updates being brought to the Board for action, nor can it find Board action on 2011/2012 revisions. It is possible that the updates may have occurred at a staff level.

On February 4, 2016 the Estates at Mount Rose Homeowners Association (E@MR HOA) submitted a document to the County Clerk, titled "Petition for Washoe County Fire Hazard Map Modification for The Estates at Mt. Rose Homeowners' Association. The petition requested modification of the hazard map to change the classification from high hazard to moderate hazard and points to differences in fuel types and concentration of vegetation, community efforts to modify and reduce fuels and its ongoing maintenance and development of a CWPP (Community Wide Fire Protection Plan). According to the petitioner, at least one insurance company stopped underwriting for the subdivision based on the high rating.

Insurance companies use different methodologies to determine risk and insurance rates in our area. Some perform individual assessments and others look at on-line mapping sources and previous fire history in the area. Though TMFPD may assign a risk factor of moderate in the area of the Estates at Mount Rose, or anywhere else in the District, insurance carriers are not obligated to use the map or any other information provided by the County or District. Several insurance carriers were questioned and they stated they make determinations based on carrier-specific criteria, not just Fire District criteria.

The primary purpose of the Fire Hazard Risk Map is to determine criteria for methods of construction for new buildings. If the map were retitled as the "Washoe County Fire Hazard Risk Map for New Construction", it may help delineate the intent of the map.

Staff assessed the Estates at Mount Rose Community using criteria from the adopted International Wildland Urban Interface Code and determined a rating of moderate was consistent with methodology.

The assessment is attached as *Exhibit "A"*.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board to retitle the "Washoe County Fire Hazard Risk Map" to "Washoe County Fire Hazard Map for New Construction" and to amend the fire hazard rating for the Estates at Mount Rose from high to moderate.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be:

"I move to retitle the "Washoe County Fire Hazard Risk Map" to "Washoe County Fire Hazard Map for New Construction" and to amend the fire hazard rating for the Estates at Mount Rose from high to moderate."

Heikka, Michael E

From: Heikka, Michael E
Sent: Wednesday, June 08, 2016 6:41 AM
To: Moore, Charles
Subject: Estates at Mt. Rose

Chief Moore,

I was able to visit the Estates at Mt Rose Subdivision and complete the Fire Hazard Severity Form. I rated the development that is south of the Mt Rose Hwy at a Moderate Hazard. Using the criteria from the 2012 International Wildland/Urban Interface Code I am submitting the following:

A. Subdivision Design Points

1. Ingress/Egress (score 1 point) – Subdivision has multiple primary access roads with emergency egress exits.
2. Width of Primary Roads (1 point) - All of the roads meet the minimum Washoe County standard and exceed the minimum requirement of 20’.
3. Accessibility (3 points) - Road grades exceed 5%
4. Secondary Road Terminus (1 point) – All of the cul-de-sacs have an outside turning radius greater than 45’
5. Street Signs (1 point) - All of the streets have street signs meeting Washoe County standards.

B. Vegetation

1. Fuel Types (10 points) – The fuels in the common areas are a combination of mountain big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, bitterbrush, with cheatgrass and perennial grass ground fuels. In these areas the fuel load was estimated at two to four tons per acre and is considered to be a **High Fuel Hazard**.
2. Defensible Space (10 points) – More than 30% of the residential structure do not meet the minimum clearance requirements.

C. Topography (10 points) – Slopes of greater than 30% exist within the development.

D. Roofing Material (1 point) – All residential structures have Class A Fire Rated roofing material.

E. Fire Protection (1 point) – The entire development has fire hydrants located within 1,000’ that flow a minimum of 500 GPM.

F. Existing Building Materials (5 points) – The residential structure all have noncombustible siding and decks but due to the combustible fencing and other flammable outbuildings increased the score to 5 points.

G. Utilities (3 points) – All residential electrical and gas utilities are underground. A large NV Energy above ground power transmission line dissects the development.

Using this criterion gives the development a score of 47 which is a **Moderate Hazard**.

APPENDIX C

FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY FORM * NEW SUBDIVISION OPTION

The provisions contained in this appendix are not mandatory unless specifically referenced in the adopting ordinance.

When adopted, this appendix is to be used in place of Table 502.1 to determine the fire hazard severity.

A. Subdivision Design Points

- 1. Ingress/Egress
 - Two or more primary roads 1
 - One road 3
 - One-way road in, one-way road out 5

- 2. Width of Primary Road
 - 20 feet or more 1
 - Less than 20 feet 3

- 3. Accessibility
 - Road grade 5% or less 1
 - Road grade more than 5% 3

- 4. Secondary Road Terminus
 - Loop roads, cul-de-sacs with an outside turning radius of 45 feet or greater 1
 - Cul-de-sac turnaround 3
 - Dead-end roads 200 feet or less in length 3
 - Dead-end roads greater than 200 feet in length 5

- 5. Street Signs
 - Present 1
 - Not present 3

B. Vegetation (IWUIC Definitions)

- 1. Fuel Types
 - Light 1
 - Medium 5
 - Heavy 10

- 2. Defensible Space
 - 70% or more of site 1
 - 30% or more, but less than 70% of site 10
 - Less than 30% of site 20

C. Topography

- 8% or less 1
- More than 8%, but less than 20% 4
- 20% or more, but less than 30% 7
- 30% or more 10

D. Roofing Material

- Class A Fire Rated 1
- Class B Fire Rated 5
- Class C Fire Rated 10
- Nonrated 20

E. Fire Protection—Water Source

- 500 GPM hydrant within 1,000 feet 1
- Hydrant farther than 1,000 feet or draft site 2
- Water source 20 min. or less, round trip 5
- Water source farther than 20 min., and 45 min. or less, round trip 7
- Water source farther than 45 min., round trip 10

F. Existing Building Construction Materials

- Noncombustible siding/deck 1
- Noncombustible siding/combustible deck 5
- Combustible siding and deck 10

G. Utilities (gas and/or electric)

- All underground utilities 1
- One underground, one aboveground 3
- All aboveground 5

Total for Subdivision 47 points
 Moderate Hazard 40-59
 High Hazard 60-74
 Extreme Hazard 75+