



North Lakes Community Council

3060 Lazy Eight Ct #2 PMB 449
Wasilla, AK 99654

July 1, 2024

Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Platting Division
350 East Dahlia Avenue
Palmer, AK 99645

Attn: Chris Curlin, MSB Platting Technician

Re: Springs West Subdivision - Response to Preliminary Plat RFC

A top priority of the North Lakes Community Council is to advocate for funding and timely improvements to address the inadequate transportation infrastructure in our area. As such, further development and the resulting increased traffic impacts are of major concern for our members and area residents.

The North Lakes Community Council (NLCC) received the Preliminary Plat Request for Comments for the proposed Springs West Subdivision from the Mat-Su Borough on June 5, 2024. Comments were requested by June 17, 2024.

The NLCC requested and received approval to extend the deadline from June 17, 2024 to July 2, 2024. This extension allowed the NLCC time to share information with area residents, gather feedback, and place this topic on the agenda for the previously scheduled monthly NLCC Membership Meeting on June 27, 2024. Thank you for your prior assurance that our comments would be included in the meeting packet and considered in the staff recommendations to the Platting Board during the Public Hearing scheduled for July 18, 2024.

A. NLCC Review Process:

The NLCC used a structured process to provide our response:

1. We sent out summary information on the proposed subdivision, including a link to the MSB RFC to area residents. This was done through Mailchimp emails to our subscribers and through posts to the following Facebook Groups / Pages:
 - a. Wolf Lake Airport Neighborhood
 - b. Hart Lake Estates

- c. Shaw's Tri Lakes Alaska
 - d. Shorewood Subdivision
 - e. Palmer & Wasilla Fishhook Homeowners
 - f. Families for Improvement of Safety & Health (Williwaw)
 - g. Friends of Cottonwood Lake
 - h. Mat-Su Valley News
2. Residents were asked to provide the NLCC with input. We provided a reminder that this subject would be on the Agenda for the June 27, 2024 Membership Meeting.
 3. The NLCC monitored all responses, verbal and written, and reviewed the nature of the comments with attendees at our June 27, 2024 Membership Meeting. Present at the June 27th meeting were the NLCC Board; a number of other Members; several area residents; representatives from the Alaska State Department of Transportation; and representatives from the Mat-Su Borough Planning and Public Works Departments. State Senator David Wilson was also in attendance via Zoom.
 4. NLCC Membership unanimously approved a motion authorizing the NLCC Board to prepare and submit comments to the MSB consistent with the nature of comments received prior to and during the June 27, 2024 meeting.

B. Comments, Concerns & Questions from the NLCC Members and Residents:

1. We take note the following factual information regarding the Springs West Subdivision:
 - a. 100 Acres / 40 lots and 1 large tract. Lots are unrestricted - (no zoning).
 - b. Located South of Wolf Lake and Hart Lake.
 - c. Road connections will bring significant new traffic through residential streets in Hart Lake Estates onto Rutan Drive and to East Hart Lake Loop via Beverly Ann Drive.
 - d. This traffic will also add to the current significant over capacity situation on Engstrom Road and the existing unsafe intersection at Engstrom and Bogard.
 - e. Connections to North Spring Creek Drive and Sun Creek will see minor traffic impacts because they serve a minimal number of new lots / tracts.
 - f. No construction work has begun.
 - g. Traffic studies and predicted increases have been completed, but do not include estimated impacts to Pamela Drive, Engstrom Road or Bogard Road.
 - h. Soils analysis and conceptual engineering for protection of wetlands and waterways has been conducted. Buildable areas and areas suitable for septic systems have been identified for each proposed piece of property.

2. Our Concerns, Questions & Requests:

- a. Concern: As documented in the Sub Area Solution Studies (SASS) prepared for the new Municipal Planning Organization (MVP.MPO), in spite of prior Mat-Su Borough long range planning recommendations, the existing transportation infrastructure in the North Lakes Community remains woefully inadequate. In particular, Rutan Drive, Engstrom Road and the Engstrom / Bogard intersection are inadequate for current traffic loads, let alone increased traffic loads due to continuing and ongoing development.
- b. Concern: Many area residents express extreme frustration with this lack of follow-through and feel strongly that continued development should be put on hold until the MSB and State of Alaska follow through on those plans.
- c. Request: Some residents on Sandburg Drive are under the impression that the new Subdivision Road will not be connected to Sandburg Drive, pointing out a potential ROW conflict with the location of structure(s) on Block 2, Lot 21 of Hart Lake Estates Phase 1. This should be clarified and communicated to those residents as soon as possible.
- d. Request: Residents are requesting clarity on the plans for Beverly Ann Drive. Will the existing road require any changes and will it be paved?
- e. Request: NLCC members and residents request the current traffic study be expanded to identify the impacts, not just to neighborhood connecting streets, but all the way from the proposed development to Wasilla Fishhook and Bogard Road. While the property owner isn't accountable for improvements to those roads, they should provide the data that can then be passed on to the MSB Planning Commission and Assembly (transparency and accountability).
- f. Request: As a condition of approval, the developer and the MSB planning department should jointly provide at least two briefings of planned construction activity and traffic management plans during the construction phase. Briefings should be held prior to construction activity and again one-third of the way through construction. These briefings could be conducted in conjunction with an NLCC Membership meeting. Materials should be provided that are suitable for sharing electronically with NLCC area residents who are unable to attend the briefings.
- g. Request: NLCC area members and residents would like the Mat-Su Borough to communicate the impact to area schools as a result of the expected population increase in the North Lakes area. There is significant concern that schools are already overcrowded and a desire for transparency on the expected population increase.

The NLCC looks forward to a response from the Mat-Su Borough on our input to this Request for Comments.

Regards,

Rod D. Hanson

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CC: Kim Sollien, MVP/MPO MPO Coordinator
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Dee McKee, Mat-Su Borough Assembly Member - District 3
Rob Yundt, Mat-Su Borough Assembly Member - District 4
Tim Hale, Mat-Su Borough Assembly Member - District 1
Michael Shower, Alaska State Senator, District O
David Wilson, Alaska State Senator, District N
George Raucher, Alaska State Representative, District 29
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