

### **What a tangled web we weave (Dec. 30, 2005)**

We're trying to figure out how the old Pine Ridge PUD, which is now reincarnated as the Tanglewood Reserve, could have gone so long into the planning process without two rather pesky issues having been clarified.

The fact that the project was renamed after last week's citizen public hearing and before the Board of County Commissioner's hearing is interesting. Apparently the Park County Planning Department didn't do its homework and only recently found out there's already a subdivision with the same name in Park County.

We have to wonder if the name "Tanglewood" is going to take. The project, with all its colorful history, is indeed a tangle.

Maybe the name will add some humor to a rather serious situation. Maybe not. What is more disturbing, however, is the fact that water issues simply haven't been resolved. We have heard for a number of years there is adequate water to service the development, although specifics have never been discussed.

It's easy for an applicant to say adequate water rights exist without offering concrete details. According to Park County's Land Use Regulations (see Section 7-704-(1)(A)(1) (d)): "If the district must expand, improve, enlarge or modify its current infrastructure and/or physical improvements in order to serve the proposed development, the district shall apply for and obtain a permit if applicable in accordance with the county 1041 permit process prior to final approval of the development by the county." The Will-O-Wisp Metropolitan District submitted its documentation to the Planning Department on Dec. 9. This was hardly enough time for an adequate review for the Dec. 15 meeting. If the application were deemed to be complete and no further information was needed, the 1041 process would typically take three months to complete.

Shakespeare's character, Hamlet, said "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark," and we wonder if the same can't be said about Park County. Alan Fishman said it best: the applicant will take its chances and deal with water issues after approval of the final plat.

They want to push forward.

This is the wrong attitude.

One lawsuit has been filed challenging the Will-O-Wisp Metropolitan District's right to build a reservoir in the Woodside subdivision. Water Court has yet to issue a ruling saying adequate water rights exist to service the project.

Claims are being made, but where is the support? The red flag has already been raised. If the applicant wants to be a good community partner, it should slow down and get outstanding issues resolved properly. The approval process should trump the developer's financial interests.

In the same way, our commissioners should uphold the spirit and letter of our LURs. The 1041 permit process should go forward before and not after approval of the final plat. They shouldn't put the cart before the horse.

-- Lora Abcarian