

December 10, 2024

To the Gunnison County Planning Commission:

The Crested Butte South Property Owners Association (CBS POA) Board of Directors would like to formally express our concerns regarding the proposed Starview development, located off Highway 135 with access via Cement Creek Road.

We, the members of the CBS POA, would like to express our concerns regarding the recent plans for the Starview development, specifically the proposed commercial area situated close to the highway. Our primary concern centers on the potential negative impacts this development would have on the viewshed and the rural character of the area, particularly if large-scale commercial enterprises—such as a gas station—are included in the plans. Further, the proposed approach directly contradicts the third stated goal of the Land Use Resolution, which aims to "Protect the Heritage of Our Rural Character."

1. Impacts to the Viewshed:

The dense lots and commercial spaces proposed along the highway could significantly affect the visual corridor along Highway 135. As part of the preservation of the region's scenic and rural landscape, we strongly question the appropriateness of adding a gas station or other large commercial developments in this area. Such developments could severely alter the viewshed and undermine the natural beauty that makes this area attractive to residents and visitors alike.

2. Impact on the Existing Commercial District in CB South:

CB South currently has a small but vital commercial district that includes a gas station, convenience store, liquor store, several restaurants, and other local businesses. We are concerned that introducing another large-scale commercial area in the Starview development could divert potential customers and create competition that could harm the businesses already established in CB South. This would not only affect the economic vitality of the existing district but could also lead to the fragmentation of services and a loss of the sense of community for which CB South has worked hard to develop and carefully plan.

Further, we urge the planning commission to review data or studies supporting the need for another commercial district. Without clear evidence of demand, we fear that the new commercial area could saturate the market and lead to underutilized spaces, ultimately harming both new and existing businesses. The question must be raised: is there sufficient demand for additional commercial space in the area to justify this development?

3. Traffic Safety Concerns at Highway 135 and Cement Creek Intersection:

An additional major concern is the already dangerous intersection where Highway 135 meets Cement Creek. This intersection is known for frequent accidents and is considered hazardous by locals and traffic safety experts. Adding significantly more traffic from a new residential and commercial district in the Starview development will only exacerbate the risks of accidents. We understand that through the Safe Streets for All Grant, a roundabout has been proposed to address safety concerns, but the timeline for its construction remains unclear. In the meantime, increasing traffic volume at this intersection would be disastrous and could lead to even more accidents, injuries, and potentially fatalities. We urge the planning commission to factor in these safety risks when considering the proposed development.

4. Impact on Existing Water and Sewage System:

We urge the Planning Commission to look into the increased strain the proposed development will have on the existing infrastructure of CB South water and sewage and communicate that clearly to the public.

In summary, the CBS POA respectfully requests that the following concerns be addressed during the planning process:

- **Impact on the viewshed** along the 135 Corridor, especially in relation to a gas station or other high-density commercial structures.
- **Preservation of the historic priorities** of limiting commercial development in the 135 Corridor in order to protect the region's rural character.
- **Potential negative impacts** on the existing commercial district in CB South, including the risk of competition and the diversion of customers.
 - Clarification of the need for additional commercial space in the area, supported by data or market analysis.
- **Traffic safety risks** at the Highway 135 and Cement Creek intersection, exacerbated by increased traffic from the proposed development.
- **Increased impact** on strain on existing CB South water and sewage systems.

We look forward to continued, open communication throughout the planning process and hope that these concerns will be carefully considered to avoid a potentially contentious public hearing regarding the proposed commercial area within the Starview development.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

CB South Property Owners Association (CBS POA) Board of Directors

Andrew Sandstrom (Board President), Lindsay Houston, Theresa Truettner, Sue Schappert, Hannah Lang, Rachael Gardner, Scott Clarkson