

September 19, 2007

Dear Deschutes County Planning Commission,

I am writing in response to the application for the Sunriver Town Center District by SilverStar Destinations, LLC. I would like to go on record as saying I am strongly opposed to this proposal and urge the planning commission to reject it, or at the very least to shelve it while additional information and support is obtained.

While I have many objections to the proposal itself I want to start by stating that although the Sunriver Owners Association (SROA) has entered into an agreement on December 20, 2006 to support the **complete redevelopment of the mall** (emphasis from the SROA letter dated September 12, 2007). What needs to be stated is that this agreement was reached via a four person committee appointed by the board with no input from owners. There were no hearings on the proposed agreement nor was there any input sought on the actual feelings of owners over the sweeping **complete redevelopment of the mall** – this is not just revamping the existing shops. It entails adding approximately 15% more residences to Sunriver in a space less than 1% of the total space for all of Sunriver. I am still amazed that the board could, and indeed did, enter into such a dramatic change to the very nature of Sunriver without as much as a mailing to owners. In fact the recent September 12, 2007 letter was the first direct mailing from the SROA on the mall issue, over a year after negotiations with SilverStar were begun.

With that stated I would like to address the specific issues and objections I have with the Town Center district proposal:

- ❑ **Documented Support for No Development**
- ❑ **No Overwhelming Reason for Drastic Change**
- ❑ **Detrimental Impacts Too Great**

Documented Support for No Development. The SROA has stated, as a way to support the mall redevelopment, that one out of three respondents to a 2004 Sunriver owners survey expressed concern about the village mall when asked “What would you like to change about Sunriver?” This would alternately mean that two out of three respondents did **NOT** see the village mall as the number one concern. As I do not have the full 2004 survey, nor do I see it posted on the SROA website, I cannot draw more conclusions from the results. However I can only rely upon the survey results summarized within the SROA Long-Range Plan published in June 2000. The results were based upon two comprehensive (the term used by the SROA) surveys and to quote directly from the Executive Summary “The high response rate -- in excess of 47%

-- from both surveys was considered excellent for statistical purposes. The generally positive responses, enthusiastic participation, and excellent return rates suggest that SROA members not only like Sunriver, but care deeply about its future as well." Clearly this is an excellent resource from which we can determine owner opinions and desires regarding Sunriver – which is why the two survey were commissioned in the first place. They are also quite timely.

Exhibit E - Owner Opinion Survey Summary, page 30 of the SROA Long-Range Plan, states that the "Results of a survey of SROA members show that most Sunriver property owners are content with Sunriver the way it is." It goes on to state that "99% agreed that Sunriver 'should remain basically as is'". The report within Exhibit G Sunriver – Potential Opportunities and Threats has listed as the first two threats "Overuse of the outdoor facilities, natural and man made." and "Overbuilding and loss of peaceful atmosphere."

With all of this data wouldn't any prudent person arrive at the conclusion that the Sunriver Owner's do **NOT** want this kind of development (I know it is called a redevelopment but that is a stretch of the word redevelop)? What benefits will the SROA gain from this development that have caused it to go forward irrespective of owner's input, demonstrated opinions through surveys, and to the very detriment of two of the three foundations of the SROA (those of protecting and enhancing Sunriver's quality of life and natural environment)?

As to why this has not caused an uproar among Sunriver owners as one might expect I must state that the SROA and SilverStar have done such a poor job of communicating all of the info regarding this actual proposal. As examples even to this date there has been no publication, either on the SROA website or in the Sunriver Scene, of an actual project elevation so owners can actually see the impact of the proposal. Also at the SROA annual board of directors meeting, which was focused on the mall redevelopment, there was no presentation by SilverStar nor were there any representatives present to take questions. This is while they have had regular presentations, most recently in mid-August at the time of the annual meeting, to the Sunriver Chamber of Commerce (a very receptive audience). It must also be stated that at this August meeting SilverStar presented a new proposed layout for the village. This new layout is still not presented on the SROA website (it still has the old, original layout) and the SilverStar website is still just a home page saying to check back in the next few months for updates – this is the same thing it has said since it was posted many months ago. There has also been a much skewed reporting of what the proposal is. The SROA has consistently touted that 50% of the village will be dedicated open space. But even as your own staff has noted this "open space" includes parking lots. The actual application from SilverStar goes even further and wants to include underground parking within the "open space" definition. This is not only ridiculous it is also very misleading and something that I would think very few owners actually understand.

As I am sure you are starting to see there is a very large opposition to this proposal, as is indicated by the published survey results. Even the lack of clear, complete and available information regarding the actual village proposal cannot stop this.

No Overwhelming Reason for Drastic Change – specifically the addition of high-density high-rise residential development within the village area. Although the September 12, 2007 letter and Barbara Wade from the SROA at the annual board of directors meeting stated that “staying competitive” was the reason for needing the mall redevelopment (the letter actually stated “Staying competitive is essential for maintaining property values.”) this is not specifically identified as a major issue in the Long-Range Plan. The issue of economic forces entering into Sunriver decisions is specifically addressed within SROA's Community Development Department introduction page on the SROA website (see complete page as separate attachment). This introduction page summarizes what Sunriver is and what its standards and ideals are. It states that “Giving priority to conservation of our environment over economic considerations is worth every struggle.” I could not agree more, which is why the statements of keeping Sunriver “competitive”, which seems to be a wholly economically motivated objective, seems to be in such opposition to what Sunriver stands for (and for what Sunriver says it stands for right on its own website!).

I have urged all of the SROA board members, many of whom are new and were not a part of the less than unanimous vote to support the SilverStar agreement, to please read this statement from their own website. It would appear that this statement and the sentiment which it advocates, which is also why most of us worked so hard to finally realize our dreams of owning a home in Sunriver did so, has been forgotten by those that have been appointed to defend it.

To further the economically focused decision we can look to the fact that SilverStar wants the change to make more money. This statement is supported by a Bend Bulletin article (August 15, 2007) that quotes John Goodman of SilverStar as saying “It is impossible to make this work without the residential part of it. The more (housing) units we have, it eases the pain of paying a whole lot more for the property than we should have.” What I, and numerous others like me, fail to understand is why we have to sacrifice on the very foundations of Sunriver, which can be found in the SROA's own mission statement - that of protecting and enhancing Sunriver's natural environment – because SilverStar made a poor business decision. Under the current proposal for the Town Center District this purchase by SilverStar is a very good business decision. The average property price per new residence would be under \$45,000. Just 15% of the average lot price in Sunriver over the past approx. 12 months. Is it really our responsibility to make SilverStar's stated overpayment for the property a virtual windfall? Clearly we do not think so. And the sacrifice that we are being asked to make in the increased use of our already overused facilities (just try to find a space at

the South Pool after 600 new, mainly temporary stay, residences are added), increased traffic, and total erosion of the skyline and open areas that we work so hard to protect, is far too great just so this company can make more money. This should have been part of the equation before they ever entered into their agreements to buy the various mall related properties. Coming in after the fact and asking for changes, very drastic changes, is not only poor judgment; it doesn't make any business sense.

Even if the "staying competitive" argument were somehow valid I am still puzzled as to how the new village will keep Sunriver competitive. Are there other developments that are contemplating such a large scale densely populated village? None of the identified competitors that Barbara Wade listed at the annual meeting, which included Caldera Springs, Tetherow, and Pronghorn, have a mall concept. Not to mention a dense Whistler type village, and no one has anywhere near the 600 residences in 26 acres (actually none of the listed competitors even have 600 residences in total for the entire development). These communities are also significantly smaller than Sunriver, more expensive, and do not have the 40 years of history that Sunriver has built. This is the competitive edge that Sunriver has, not that we are going to have the tallest buildings in all of Deschutes County and adding 15% more residences in an area that is less than 1% of the total area of Sunriver. It is that Sunriver has a history of stewardship for the land and recognition of the value for open spaces. That is why all of us as Sunriver owners made the decision to pay a premium to join Sunriver. It was not that we would keep our fingers crossed and hope for a huge development on a grander scale than even Bend has, or I would add would probably approve.

I would also debate whether this will ultimately increase property values. As the increased traffic and utilization of already overtaxed facilities begins due to the added residences it could be argued that property values, and especially house rentals, will actually drop. It should also be asked why there is the concern over property values? Sunriver has always, and continues, to perform at or near the top of property value appreciation within Oregon. I would like to know what reports or studies the SROA has conducted that support the assertion that property values will rise (I have formally asked them for these studies/reports). Also what reports or studies does the SROA have that demonstrates that Sunriver house values are suffering at the present time in the absence of this huge development. Shouldn't that be the hurdle they would have to pass before a proposal bringing about such drastic change should even be considered?

Detrimental Impacts Too Great. I do not have a lot to say here – the impacts on the environment and the nature of Sunriver are self-evident. Buildings from 45-75 feet high (the 75 foot building can also have an additional 15 foot decorative structure for 90 total feet!), higher than the average tree line within the mall area, with very limited set backs (the proposal actually calls for side and rear setbacks to be eliminated). Combined with the addition of buildings within existing common areas, would have an enormous impact on Sunriver. Why is there a need, beyond a purely economic one, to build so densely and so high, well beyond the current commercial height limit of 30'.

Further SilverStar is proposing exempting buildings within the Town Center from the existing view protection requirements as well as exempting mixed-use and attached housing (which I would think covers everything they are considering building) from the solar setback requirements. To actually identify all of the impacts SilverStar will cause based upon their current proposal it would actually be helpful to have a list of all of the exemptions and changes they are calling for.

The other very large impact has to do with traffic, parking and facilities use. Traffic around the current mall area is already extremely heavy during the summer periods and any holidays. And this is with an admittedly sub-par mall. By adding 100's of homes, with very high summer and holiday use as they will be mostly rental/short-term stays, will greatly impact the south side of Sunriver. It would be assumed that this would also greatly increase the use of the north side (Cottonwood) entrance which I have seen no mention of. SROA's own consultants have called the review by Kittelson & Associates, Inc., SilverStar's consultants, "not sufficient" in their July 30, 2007 report. This is an extremely important issue and one that to date appears to not have been properly addressed. In SilverStar's application they are calling for reduced parking and other changes to reduce the parking requirements. This makes no sense within the current Sunriver scheme. If anything there should be requirements for more parking than required by current code – just as the SROA is imposing on new residential construction. As there is no allowance for parking along roads in Sunriver all parking must be provided off-street. Currently the mall overflows during events and during busy weekends, adding 100's of new residences and asking for a relaxation of parking requirements (with arguments like that if visitors bring more than one car they will have to park it elsewhere) is irresponsible.

As for increased facilities usage, the SROA has already been discussing the heavy use and strains on the existing aquatic facilities as well as bike paths. This was before the addition of these proposed residences. Past condominium developments, such as Stoneridge, have their own facilities and do not get owner access to the aquatic or tennis facilities. I see no such requirement for this development – which would be much larger than any condominium development presently within Sunriver (this might very well be larger than all existing condominiums combined).

We urge the Commission to please reject the Town Center district proposal as presented. It is far too wide sweeping, unnecessary, not in keeping with the desires of the owners, and goes against the very principles of Sunriver.

We appreciate your time and consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,
Don Hutchison
Fox 7