

In RE: CITY zone Change 1009  
Project Number: PZX-22-00006  
February 1, 2022

Remarks submitted by Ellen Pfister  
owner of 3641 Colton Blvd., Billings, MT

1. There seems to be some confusion as to where the hearing on this zone change will be held on February 1, 2022. Your MPO Notice gives the date, but not the time of the meeting. I called your office, and they gave me the place of the hearing as well as the time. A legal notice without time, date and place is a defective notice. The city zoning commission listed the place as being in the Miller Building, but no time given. A call to the zoning office uncovered a meeting in the Public Library together with a time.
2. I did not participate in the zoom meeting, because where I live in the county, the internet does not have sufficient bandwidth to support zoom.
3. I do not think this proposal thinks through how it will work out on the ground. If the Zoning Commission staff thinks that Montana seniors are going to want to downsize to apartments and studio apartments where they have to walk to get their groceries and then pull their loaded grocery bags up hill from Grand Avenue, they do not know their quarry for tenants very well. The staff discussion puts this whole development in competition with Mission Ridge and numerous other facilities built in the general area in the last several years.
4. I really don't see any concrete discussion of where the automobiles of the area residents will be kept. The Zoning staff seems to think people will walk clear down to Grand or up to Poly to catch a bus. That might work in Massachusetts or Virginia, but hardly in Eastern Montana. I think a Met stop will have to be located somewhere within this project.
5. An assumption that there will be no young children living there is not feasible. I have seen big buses turning off GreenValley Drive onto Colton Blvd. Is the subdivision planning to admit buses or keep the loading or unloading areas on Colton?
6. How many stories high does the Planning staff consider to be "High density" housing? Will they have elevators for the residents? Where will be residents park their transportation? How much square footage per building per story will be allowed for "High Density" housing?
7. Will P1 of 1.02 acres simply be paved over the ditch banks there? Who will pay for lighting Ditch Bank Park? Will the Ditch Company release its easement on the smaller

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ditch that does not cross Colton, but stays on the south side? Part of the ditch easement in P1 (1.02 acres) is 30 feet wide in the designated park area.

8. If you allow the developers to put in duplexes with back loading parking, will we wind up facing a long plastic fence such as those on Zimmerman, which in essence will be the duplex residents back yard facing on Colton? Will the long plastic fence be the thing which will make the sidewalk on the south side of Colton a "trail"? Will most of the ditch be paved over on the South side of Colton?

9. Lot 1 is 16.67 acres of ambiguity. Will you require an alley along the west side of it against all those plastic fences. The access for emergency vehicles would be non-existent without access of some kind along that area.

10. What is rural residential zoning?

This proposal strikes me that it has no been thought out completely, and until it has a few more details, it should be put on hold.

Ellen Pfister  
PO Box 330  
Shepherd, MT 59079

Feb. 1, 2022

Dear City of Billings Planning Division,

I live at 2104 Avalon Rd and I am against changing the current designation of the lots on the south side of Colton Blvd from single family home lots to the smaller higher density duplex lots now requested for the new proposed development. (City zone change 1009 Project PZX-22-00006N3 to N2).

Here is why this change would not be good for the neighborhood:

- 1) Currently, there are 8 single family home spaces on the N side of Colton. Directly across the street from the current 8 single family living spaces the new proposal would have 24 living spaces. This is not in the best interest of the nearby neighborhoods. The 24 living spaces is not a soft buffer to the larger complexes to the south; it would be a transitioning train wreck.
- 2) The square footage of each living space would be much smaller than any of the single- family homes on the North side of the street. Any potential buyer for one of the current single-family homes would, for many reasons, have a negative perception about making a purchase there.
- 3) We should know more about the details of the buildings being proposed not just about making the lots smaller, adding more lots and changing them to duplex designations. Details should be clearly spelled out for the structural changes. For example, I am wondering how many feet above the Colton Ave pavement would these buildings reach.
  - a. I requested an answer by email to Performance Engineering as to the elevation question. The answer came back, "The maximum height will be 2 story."  
Then following my inquiry, I received a photo from Mr. Lees showing a single story structure. So I still do not know the elevation of the proposed structures to be on Colton.

In a related matter

The proposal notification for zone change sent out to those of us in the neighborhood included quotes from a study by Harvard University which is outdated by around 14-15 years. However, everyone knows information changes in way less time than 14- 15 years. Also, we don't even know the relevant or irrelevant factors included in that study.

The Harvard Study is not the only study out there. I read a more recent article which was written by Carl Oleskewicz then later reviewed by Chartered Institute for Securities and Investments dated April 2019. It is about research on the subject of having rental property nearby.

Here are two quotes from that article:

1) “..other studies have shown that a high density of rental properties can drive down home values.”

2)“A large number of renters in a given area also reduces the amount of buyer demand.”

These are only a few reasons out of many as to why the zoning on the Colton lots should not be changed to N2. The zoning along Colton should be kept the way it is now. Back loading (mentioned in the proposal) can be done for single family homes too. This requested change in density is far too drastic for the adjacent neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Chet Sharbono  
2104 Avalon Rd  
Billings, MT 59102

## Bartley, Robbin

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**From:** Chad Woodyatt <chadwoodyatt@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 1, 2022 9:58 AM  
**To:** Bartley, Robbin  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Zone Change 1009 - Zimmerman Home Place - Written Comment

While we understand the need for additional housing options on the west end of Billings, the existing zoning does not need to be changed. There is good development and bad development. Good development adds value to the surrounding areas. Bad development aims to take advantage of the local community amenities and conveniences while not offering any additional value.

Why this zoning change proposal needs not be approved.

1. Adding additional multi-unit rentals only adds additional traffic pressure to the already existing proposed apartment complex in the middle of the development. The current street layout in the proposed development encourages traffic to flow directly on to Colton Blvd.
2. Increased enrollment of students at an already approaching maximum capacity at Arrowhead Elementary School. No projections or investigations have been presented to definitely say this development will not impact the affected schools.
3. Increased potential for property crime. There is no question that crime rates are increasing in the City of Billing. Rental units by design encourage a transient population. The current layout of the development encourages crime to be focused in the north.
4. Removing a boundary of single family homes. Removing the transition from single family homes to multi-unit dwellings completely removes the identity of the single family home neighborhood. There needs to be a logical transition between building types.

Chad and Aubry Woodyatt - 3745 Colin Dr, Billings, MT 59102  
480-259-8845  
[chadwoodyatt@gmail.com](mailto:chadwoodyatt@gmail.com)

## **Bartley, Robbin**

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**From:** Bruce Carlson <bruced1975@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 1, 2022 10:00 AM  
**To:** Bartley, Robbin  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Oppose City zone change 1009

February 1, 2022

Attn: City Zoning Commission  
RE: City Zone Change 1009  
Project Number PZX-22-00006

I oppose this change for the following reasons:

Twin homes are predominantly investment properties and not owner occupied. They are essentially two living units with a common wall and are typically low-end construction built. I feel they will degrade the value and change the integrity of our single -family neighborhood as it was originally designed. I am in favor of keeping the property as N3 zoning with single family house front loaded off Colton Blvd.

This Zoning Change should NOT go forward because of the potential impact to area schools that are already reaching capacity. Changing Single-family homes to Multi-unit homes on this property are not needed at this time due to multiple projects that are already addressing this need on the westend.

Sincerely,

Bruce D. Carlson-Homeowner  
3749 Hayden Dr  
Billings, MT 59102

## **Bartley, Robbin**

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**From:** BreAnn Mecham <ladybugstar30@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 1, 2022 8:01 PM  
**To:** Bartley, Robbin  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] City Zone Change 1009

My letter is in regards to concerns over the City zone change 1009 project number PZX-22-00006. I have 3 main points. The first one being how unprofessional everything has been up to this point with the meetings and the change of meetings without letting the public know. It is also been deceiving with regards to the wording claiming that these N2 mid century properties will not bring down the value of our houses. Where is the data to prove that. We have not been shown plans. We do not know what the houses will look like. The materials they will be made out of and the aesthetics, or even what the landscaping plans will look like. These are all going to contribute to property value in the area. You have poor quality homes being built to make some money and that effects every ones prices. Also, who is going to take care and clean these new properties and park. As a Fairmeadow neighborhood we already do a couple clean up days a year because our trail behind our house gets trashed everyday. It is just unprofessional how little and lack of information has been given to the public.

Second, with the amount of people entering into the area, traffic is going to increase in an already busy spot due to two schools currently there. We like not having connecting roads because it cuts down the traffic. There have already been two accidents on 38<sup>th</sup> and Colton in the last 6 months, resulting in cars crashing in the ditch. We are bringing more people into this already over populated area. We are building more N2 residentail neighborhoods with out plans for building more schools.

Third, the existing zoning of our N3 suburban neighborhood is already a good mix of commercial and existing zones the picture below shows how far the new zone is encroaching into the space. Thanks for your time.  
Fairmeadow property owner.



## **Bartley, Robbin**

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**From:** Alexis Richards <jlrichards12@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 1, 2022 12:55 PM  
**To:** Bartley, Robbin  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] City Zone Change 1009- Zimmerman Home Place

Good morning,

I am writing in objection to city zone change 1009- Zimmerman Home Place. The initial plan- to have a barrier of suburban neighborhood homes built along Colton- is a better plan aesthetically, and practically, to assist in the quality and cohesiveness of the neighborhood. The P1 of 1.02 acres is practical, but there should still be a barrier of N3 homes behind that area as initially planned.

However, we are concerned with a few things:

1. This proposed zone change and building of rentals will decrease home values in the area. If we are trying to build a better Billings, it seems illogical to undermine the integrity of a neighborhood by inviting transients to the area, increasing theft, vandalism, noise, traffic, crime in general, and decreasing home values in the area.
2. While the idea of having the pedestrian paths extended is great in theory, we have lived in the area a long time and know that it takes a lot of work to keep them up to par. We already have a neighborhood cleanup crew that takes care of the path because, without it, the path would be so overrun with trash and dog poop it'd be unbearable to use. I fear that adding so many new residents to the area, due to high density units being built, that complacency for care of the path and other outdoor areas will really tank and the residents trying to use it will suffer. How is this going to be addressed?
3. Arrowhead Elementary is already busting at the seams and class sizes exceed what they are meant to. We realize this is the case all over town... so it's hard to understand why we are focused on increasing the number of people we can fit into the area by building high density units, rather than taking care of those who are already here and need improvements made.
4. Since 38th St. W. was connected to Colton a couple years ago, that street has become downright dangerous. Something needs to be done to slow traffic down and/or decrease traffic in that area. Adding units and increasing traffic seems like it'd make it more unsafe and dangerous than it already is.

Poly Vista Homeowner