

August 6, 2003

Vicki Lucero
Development Review Specialist
Santa Fe County
PO Box 276
Santa Fe, NM 87504

CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT
REQUESTED

Re: Master Plan for Ten Thousand Waves Spa and Guest Ranch

Dear Ms. Lucero,

The proposal dated July 2003 that has been submitted for review is a request for the approval of a master plan for the expansion of existing facilities at the Ten Thousand Waves Spa and construction of 15 new dwelling units in the Rancho Elisa condominium project. The expansion plan will be implemented over a period of 10 years. This proposal was reviewed pursuant to the Santa Fe County Land Development Code and Santa Fe Extraterritorial Zoning Ordinance.

The Sangre de Cristo Water Company (SDCWC) currently provides all water for the Ten Thousand Waves Spa with the exception of the hot tubs that are supplied by water pumped from a domestic well permitted under Section 72-12-1 NMSA. Records indicate that SDCWC delivers an average of 9.42 acre-feet per year to the Spa. The developer anticipates that patronage at the Spa will increase 2% per year for 10 years. At the end of 10 years, the Spa will be unable to accommodate more customers. Thus, the amount of water that would have to be delivered to the Spa by SDCWC will increase from 9.42 acre-feet per year in 2002 to 11.48 acre-feet per year in 2012, an increase of 2.06 acre-feet per year. However, because the developer intends to discontinue doing laundry at the Spa and have it done by a commercial laundry service in the City of Santa Fe, the proposed increased in SDCWC water deliveries will be offset by a decrease in on-site water use of 3.5 acre-feet per year.

Meter records for the Spa well (RG-31580) indicate that the average annual diversion is 2.12 acre-feet. With the addition of one new hot tub to the Spa, the total annual diversion from the well is expected to increase by a small amount, but will still be less than the three acre-feet diversion allowed from a domestic well in one calendar year.

Water for the existing seven dwelling units and landscaping in the Rancho Elisa condominium project is currently provided from another domestic well. Meter records for the condominium well (RG-22588) indicate that the average annual diversion is 2.22 acre-feet. The developer has estimated the annual water requirement for the additional 15 dwelling units at 2.25 acre-feet (0.15 acre-feet per dwelling unit). It is proposed that this water would be provided by SDCWC.

The total increase in the amount of water that SDCWC would have to deliver to the Spa and Rancho Elisa condominium project would increase from 9.42 acre-feet per year in 2002 to 10.23 acre-feet per year in 2012, an increase of 0.81 acre-feet per year. However, overall, the demand on the SDCWC will increase by approximately 4.31 acre-feet per year (2.06 + 2.25 acre-feet).

The developer has not provided any evidence that the SDCWC is ready, willing, and able to provide sufficient water to meet the projected increase in demand for the Ten Thousand Waves Spa and Rancho Elisa condominium as required by Article VII, Section 6.4.4 of the Santa Fe County Land Development Code. Thus, it is the opinion of this office that a favorable opinion should be withheld until this issue is resolved.

Sincerely,

Brian C. Wilson, P.E.
Bureau Chief,
Water Use and Conservation