

My letter to the mayor of Colorado Springs

Written by Brian Einsweiler

Thursday, 02 August 2012 22:05 -

Mr. Bach,

I am a resident and homeowner in the Parkside subdivision of Mountain Shadows. My house was lost in the Waldo Canyon Fire. Dealing with the initial loss of my home and personal property was difficult, but I have moved beyond that. I'm ready to begin the next phase of this process which is rebuilding. However, my hope of completing this in a reasonable amount of time is fading with each day that passes.

Please understand that I was able to work quickly and efficiently with my homeowner's insurance company to receive a reasonable settlement in a reasonable amount of time. I've picked out some ideas for floor plans and exterior design for the rebuild, have begun talking with a local homebuilder, and have worked out most of the financing details. So, what's remaining to hold up the rest of the process? There is a seemingly unending number of roadblocks put up by my neighborhood's HOA and the City of Colorado Springs.

A few weeks ago, I had assumed that since I owned the property outright and it had been previously built on, that I would be able to build a house soon as long as I passed the architectural control committee review from our neighborhood.

Since then, I've learned that I was a bit naive to think it would be that simple. Seemingly, each day I hear something either via the local media or from updates from our HOA president that make the possibility of rebuilding more and more distant.

The first roadblock is our Parkside HOA. Up until this incident, I've been a very happy member of the HOA, but my opinion on it is changing quickly. The latest update from the HOA president indicates there are thoughts of limiting the selection of builders and allowed floor plans in the neighborhood. I'm no lawyer, but my reading of the incorporation articles leads me to believe there can be no such restrictions placed on those of us who are rebuilding on our existing lots. I agree that the exterior architecture can be controlled to be harmonious with the rest of the neighborhood, and I'm more than willing to cooperate on that point, but I'd like to have my choice of builder and interior design of my house.

The Denver Post recently reported that ideas are being thrown around to include a governing body over Mountain Shadows that has the ability to enforce covenants and levy taxes. I'm absolutely against such an idea, and I expect most of my neighbors are as well. First of all, the covenants within Parkside are already strong enough, I do not see any need for another layer of bureaucracy to review rebuilding plans or any future changes to the property. Second, there just is not time to institute something like this. Those of us that want to rebuild would like to do so as soon as possible (Likewise, our insurance companies which are paying for our current temporary living arrangements would agree).

