

THE STANDARD

Dave Hawkins
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CERTIFICATE APPROVED FOR UTILITIES TO SERVE WHITE HILLS PROJECT WATER AND WASTEWATER FOR MASTER PLANNED COMMUNITY

A Las Vegas couple has obtained a key approval in Phoenix to keep their proposed master planned community in northwest Arizona on track for development strategically timed for the 2010 completion of the Hoover Dam bypass bridge that will speed the commute from southern Nevada . The Arizona Corporation Commission is issuing a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CC&N) allowing Leonard and Susan Mardian to build and operate Double Diamond Utilities, Inc. to provide water and wastewater service to the Ranch at White Hills, about 40 miles northwest of Kingman.

The utilities would serve some 1,800 single family residential units and 700 multi family units planned in phase one of the development. About 80 acres of commercial development, a school and two parks are also planned on the first 640 acres.

The Ranch at White Hills is projected at 25,000 residential units over 25,167 acres at full build-out. Faith in an economic rebound and confidence in the end product inspires progress at a time when other homebuilding projects are stifled across the country.

When testifying before Arizona regulatory officials late last year, Mr. Mardian gushed about the 2-million Joshua trees that cover a desert landscape that he plans will host a bedroom community to Las Vegas . Double Diamond Utilities (DDU) Vice President Kathy Tackett-Hicks said the Mardians are proud to incorporate sustainability components into the Ranch at White Hills and a slower tracking development in its vicinity.

“The projects include numerous environmentally sound proposals including ground water recharge efforts, rainwater harvesting proposals, use of water and energy efficient hot water systems in all houses, use of reclaimed water for irrigation and watering purposes, energy efficient construction methods, solar power, etc.” Tackett-Hicks said.

Development of the first proposed golf course would not begin until enough homes are occupied to generate the effluent needed for irrigation. As many as six golf courses could be built as the project evolves.

Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Yvette Kinsey, in her recommendation that the Commission approve the CC&N, indicated that state officials believe there's enough water for the master planned community.

“Staff reviewed the ADWR’s Analysis of Adequate Water Supply letter dated April 11, 2006 which showed that 7,573 acre-feet per year of groundwater and 2,374 acre-feet per year of treated effluent projected at build-out will be physically available for the White Hills development,” Kinsey stated. “Staff concluded that the combined 9,947 acre-feet is more than DDU’s projected build-out demands for the White Hills Development.”

Kinsey’s recommendation noted that a price tag of more than \$11-million is placed on the water system that will feature five wells pumping up to 890 gallons per minute with 1.5-million gallons in storage and distribution mains stretching 112,000 lineal feet. Construction of a wastewater system capable of processing up to 1.5-million gallons per day within five years is estimated at \$17.7-million.

Tackett-Hicks said subdivision platting will run through Mohave County Planning and Zoning channels as the utilities are developed over the next six to twelve months. She said the Mardians have no plans at present to market lots ahead of home construction.

Jim Rhodes, also of Las Vegas , has five master planned communities on the drawing board in Mohave County . Rhodes Homes Arizona plans to first develop Pravada in Golden Valley , west of Kingman.

Another ALJ has completed hearings and will prepare a recommendation later this summer that could give an Illinois-based company the certificate it needs to develop water and wastewater systems to serve Pravada.

Courtesy of The Standard