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Heated Discussion Over New Development

Residents who live on Vail Circle, just East of Columbia Road are concerned excess snow from a new development's parking lot will impede on their property, among other things. A multi-family apartment building is planned for that area and city leaders say the new building may cause some of the drainage issues instead of adding to it.

By: **Melanie Orlins**, WDAZ



Residents who live on Vail Circle, just East of Columbia Road are concerned excess snow from a new development's parking lot will impede on their property, among other things. A multi-family apartment building is planned for that area and city leaders say the new building may cause some of the drainage issues instead of adding to it.

Vail Circle is one of the lowest parts of town and residents say there's actually a five foot drop-off where water runs onto their property. And it's not just the runoff, but a liability concerning children playing in open lots, too.

Joe Belcourt, Prairie Town Home Association: "Right now they already pile snow along that shoulder."

They say the snow pile is creeping onto their property and they're worried with a new development it could get worse. Regina Robertson: "Where are they going to stock pile their snow?"

City leaders say the developer should be planning to prevent such from happening. Al Grasser, City Engineer: "That's one of the things we pay attention to when we look at site plans is dumping water onto somebody else so essentially you capture the water eternally."

It's not just the runoff but the liability that comes with a multi-family complex. Joe Belcourt with the Prairie Town Homes Association doesn't want residents to be responsible for kids playing in empty lots. Belcourt: "So that our vacant lots which would be off of that shoulder doesn't end up being their playground."

City leaders say fair housing practices state you can't discriminate against people with families or require people with families to go to a certain playground. Doug Christensen, City Councilman: "We just don't have the power to put as part of the approval process what you're requesting."

City Planner Ryan Brooks says the developer is targeting people in the medical field, building a complex with high-end finishes and an underground garage. Brooks: "I really think that this is not intended for families."

The Planning and Zoning committee moved the project forward and committee members requested the developer sit down with those who live around the building to communicate concerns.

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