

Thursday July 24, 2025



Katelyn Page
Associate Planner, Town of Jackson
150 E Pearl Avenue
Jackson, WY 83001

Re: P25-007 and P25-046: Sketch Plan and Conditional Use Permit for a 3-story mixed use development at 50 S. Millward Street

Dear Ms. Page,

On behalf of Protect Our Water Jackson Hole (POWJH), I am happy to provide comments on the above-referenced development proposal. POWJH is a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving as a powerful advocate and catalyst to protect and restore Teton County's water resources. We were a key partner in the development, and now implementation, of the Teton County Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) and have long been invested in scientific research, education and outreach, advocacy, and collaborative efforts all designed to ensure that the water resources which allow our community to exist and thrive in the Snake River Headwaters watershed remain healthy in the face of persistent pressures from development, climate, and other anthropogenic activities.

In this spirit, POWJH has reviewed the application and staff packet for the above-referenced project and has the following questions and comments to help guide the upcoming development review process:

- This project is located within the Flat Creek watershed in the Town of Jackson. Flat Creek, a Class 2AB waterbody in Wyoming, is an important waterway already suffering from detrimental human impacts. Designated uses for Flat Creek's water include drinking water, game and non-game fish, fish consumption, aquatic life other than fish, recreation, agriculture, wildlife, industry, and scenic value. Flat Creek is also listed on Wyoming's 2022/2024 Integrated 305(b) and 303(d) Report. The sections between Cache Creek and High School Rd. and High School Rd. to the confluence with the Snake River have not supported designated uses for Aquatic Life Other Than Fish and Cold Water Game Fish due to Physical Substrate Habitat Alterations since 2008. The section between High School Rd. and the confluence with the Snake River also has not supported Recreation due to excess *E. coli* bacteria since 2020.
- In [Appendix C-6](#), the WQMP produced several important maps which depict areas throughout our valley where our aquifer is sensitive (an evaluation of natural hydrology) and vulnerable (natural hydrology combined with potential contamination from human activities). This project site falls within Aquifer Protection Zone 1 and Source Water Protection Zone 2. Aquifer Protection Area 1 is based on a *very high vulnerability*

delineation, based upon impacts from shallow wastewater systems, land use, and known and potential contaminant sources. Source Water Protection Zone 2 establishes an attenuation zone, meant to be protective of contact with pathogenic microorganisms which could emanate from a septic system or similar that might be located close to the well. The extent of the zone is meant to provide an emergency response time to begin or complete an active cleanup should a chemical contaminant be introduced into the aquifer near or upgradient of the wellhead. In other words, this location is part of an area which supplies drinking water to the Town of Jackson and has the least amount of buffer capacity to handle contaminants entering the groundwater.

- With the above in mind, dewatering, which will likely be necessary to construct this building at this site, is concerning. The documents we were able to review do not provide adequate information relating to the development's potential impacts to groundwater. As such, we have the following questions: How deep is the year-round groundwater in relation to the proposed basement? Would any dewatering need to occur? If so, how many gal/day? How would it be treated? Where would it be released back into the environment?
- Lastly, the staff report describes the remediation status of the past benzene contamination at this location. Despite the chance for contacting contaminated soils to be "near zero," what assurance can be provided by the applicant that an appropriate remediation process would occur if contamination was discovered?

The Town's recent decision to limit groundwater use for irrigation hints at a broader question: Is our community's water use reflective of the carrying capacity that our aquifer can support? It is critical that, with this and future development proposals, water use and potential impacts to groundwater (drinking water resources) are included as baseline considerations when evaluating proposed projects.

POWJH is grateful for the opportunity to provide comments on this project. We look forward to a dialogue with you and the rest of the staff and stakeholders involved with the evaluation of this project. Only through robust dialogue and analysis can we ensure an outcome that works for our community and our environment.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and hard work in service of our community.

Sincerely,



Matthew Bambach

Water Resources Program Manager

Protect Our Water Jackson Hole