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County weighs ritzy Fort Shaw subdivision

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A subdivision proposed in the Fort Shaw area will feature high-end homes and will be bordered by about 500 acres to fish and hunt on.

The Sun River Springs development is in the Sun River Valley, west of Fort Shaw, on land owned by Jim Savoy. On Tuesday, Cascade County Commissioners vote on the subdivision, which includes about 20 homes proposed on 103 acres.

While no one has objected to the project during planning board meetings, Commissioner Lance Olson said he has heard concerns about the five-acre lot size from some nearby property owners.

"I'm hearing from people whose personal philosophy is that five-acre lots are a concern," he said.

Some in the county advocate larger lots and more space. The real estate market, however, is strong for five-acre plots, according to the county.

Other concerns were raised about the project being built on land that has historical and archeological significance. Savoy hired a consultant to complete a cultural resource inventory.

The project will not interfere with land that has archeological significance, including a spot that was once a buffalo kill site. The Great Northern Railway grade also will be avoided. The Fort Shaw Irrigation system, which is considered eligible for listing on the National Register by the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, also will not be interrupted.

"We will work around the cultural sites," Savoy said.

Savoy, who grew up in the valley and spends time there and in Dallas, is selling the land to real-estate moguls Tom and Kelly Perdew of Florida, who will develop the subdivision. Kelly Perdew was the winner of the second season of the TV show, "The Apprentice."

The subdivision will consist of homes that cost \$400,000 to \$1 million, Savoy said. About 500-acres of land behind the developed area will be open to subdivision residents, he said. The homeowner's association will establish guidelines for hunting and fishing on that land.

"Most of these people will probably live there about 30 days a year," Savoy said. "We would love to get some full-time residents, but we think this will kind of be an escape home for people."

The Savoy's will continue to farm and ranch on their other properties.

"This was just an opportunity to expand our bases," he said.

Commissioners are only voting on the subdivision, not plans for the 500-acres that will be open to homeowners wishing to hunt and fish.

In April the county gave the subdivision preliminary approval.
