

Business

Home: Lack of impact described by neighbor

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8A

Others are in Metzler Ranch. In Littleton, there are 12 homes for Alzheimer’s or dementia patients, according to the May 2006 Senior Resource Guide.

Placing such establishments, which are private businesses as well as private homes, in neighborhoods is an idea that has not always been enthusiastically accepted by neighbors.

Since 2002, the public has had voice in the process in the form of public hearings and formal votes of town council. In planning terms, the town’s zoning ordinance requires homes for the physically and mentally handicapped, including elderly assisted-living, to apply for a use by special review.

But disabled and mentally handicapped by law must be treated the same as families and individuals, according to a planning department memo. Town officials have concluded that holding hearings on Alzheimer’s homes is an illusion since Alzheimer’s homes are entitled to exist under the Fair Housing Act, as long as they meet state licensing requirements.

Impact on traffic, property values

In previous public hearings, residents of neighborhoods where future Alzheimer’s homes are planned frequently mention the impact on traffic. Parents fear an Alzheimer’s patient presents a threat to children and pedestrians.



VICKY GITS / VGITS@CCNEWSPAPERS.COM

A delivery person for a home health care company delivers an oxygen supply to the assisted-living home on Wild Rye Court in Red Hawk.

The reality is the incident count is not that alarming. According to a June 2006 planning department report, the number of emergency medical calls in an 18-month period at three local group homes was between four and 10 each, according to Gary Kranse, development manager.

Impact on property values also is a concern. It’s hard to reach any conclusions based on the results of a few homes in Castle Rock over a few years.

But the American Planning Association has done more than 50 studies regarding group homes, according to a planning department memo.

“All research indicates that group homes do not affect property values and have no effect on how long it takes to sell neighboring property,” the memo says. “Most neighbors don’t even know there is a

group home or halfway house nearby,” because the homes function so much like conventional family dwellings.

Almost zero impact

Nearly total lack of impact is how neighbor David Owens sums up his experience living next to an Alzheimer’s home on Paonia Court in Red Hawk for 18 months.

“I really haven’t noticed any negative consequences. This is the only thing and this is probably a stretch: We see the ambulance a little more,” said Owens, who works out of his home and lives with his wife and six children. Owens was contacted at random on the basis of his address.

Two of his daughters regularly go over to the house and visit with the residents, Owens said. “They might go over for a couple of weeks and then not

go for a couple of weeks.”

He has never seen a resident escape from the home and have a confrontation with anyone. The lawn is well maintained.

“They are doing a great job. Their yard looks better than mine,” Owens said. “To tell you the truth, having them here has been such a nonfactor that when I talked to the neighbors it has never come up.”

Another neighbor, who also was contacted at random based on street address, said she didn’t notice the Alzheimer’s home much, except that staff members tend to park on the street and drive too fast.

“It’s not the family members, which is sad, but honestly it’s more the staff coming and going and the staff vehicles,” said Patricia Kakenmaster, an eight-year resident of Paonia Court, of the impact of the home. “When they got the approval from town council, they agreed to park in the driveway or in the garage.”

She doesn’t see property values as an issue. “You would never know that’s what the home is. There’s no signage. There is a wheel chair ramp, but there are other homes with ramps.”

Ambulances make a run to the Alzheimer’s home about once every two weeks, Kakenmaster said. “But that’s about what you’d expect.”

Except for the parking and the speeding, Kakenmaster concluded she would be fine with the Alzheimer’s home on her street.

Contact Vicky Gits at
vgits@ccnewspapers.com

Douglas County Guide

Information for the 2007 Douglas County Guide is being compiled in the coming weeks. To make changes, or to get your organization listed, please e-mail information to HHarden@ccnewspapers.com. Information must be received by Nov. 10. For advertising information, call 303-663-7163.

AVIS RENTAL COMPANY
NEW LOCATION-MAIN;
5.000x2.00BW;
R0010000631.PDF

DC HOUSE ACCOUNT
SHOP THE ROCK-MAIN;
5.000x2.00BW;
R0010000788.PDF

CASTLE ROCK BANK
-MAIN;
10.000x3.00BW;
R0010000605.PDF

AIR ACADEMY FEDERAL CREDI
AUTO LOAN-MAIN;
8.000x3.00BW;
R0010000892.PDF

Cars: ‘Trybrid’ runs on gas, electricity, ethanol alcohol

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8A

The Smart Car, manufactured by Mercedes-Benz, is a city and highway car with a top speed of 85 mph, uses unleaded gas and drives economically at 60 mpg.

The vehicle seats two and has a 3 cylinder, rear-mounted turbo engine with a 6-speed transmission that runs in automatic or manual mode.

“You can switch back and forth between automatic or manual mode without a clutch just by pushing a button while you’re driving,” Tripathi said.

Smart Cars start around \$27,000 and come with a 3-year 36,000-mile warranty, anti-lock brakes, rack and pinion steering, electronic stabilization program and there are two

unusual features — one is cosmetic and one is a safety feature.

“If your car is blue and you want to change it to red, for \$1,600 you can buy new body panels and change them out in about two hours,” Tripathi said. “The frames of the car are one piece steel cages, just like an Indy 500 race car, that’s why they’re so safe.

Two other off-road items for sale are the Zappy Pro line of electric scooters and the Buzz, an electric all-terrain vehicle that is kid- and environment-friendly.

The next line of vehicle coming up is the “trybrid” car that runs on gas, electricity or ethanol alcohol. The vehicle seats three, has a top speed of

115 mph and gets 60 to 65 mpg highway and 40 to 45 city mileage.

“Every time they test one, it comes back with a better gas mileage,” Tripathi said.

More than 45 Smart Cars have been sold at the Elizabeth dealership.

He plans to add two new models of low-emission cars. The first is the Ovvio that will be available in about six months. This vehicle has zero air pollution and the target price is \$15,000 to \$16,000 for the coupe and a roadster model target price is \$22,000 to \$24,000. The second is another 100 percent electric car that ranges in price from \$50,000 to \$60,000 and has a driving range of 350 miles on one full charge.

No infrastructure for recharging the vehicles exists right now.

But Tripathi suggests if owners need a charge, they can ask the manager at a local store to let them plug in for a buck. Each of the electric vehicles runs on 110-volt electric power and you could plug in for 10 to 15 minutes for a boost.