

---

Dear Reader,

As you may know, Luke Wilson is asking the Springdale Planning Commission to approve a permit to expand his parking lot after the fact, Mr. Wilson has already graded the lot, removed a significant amount of soil, paved the expanded area and installed retaining walls.

If Mr. Wilson had applied for a permit as required by Town code, it would have been necessary for Mr. Wilson to also have a geological study completed. This is because of the extreme slope of the hill and that Utah Geological Survey (UGS) previously determined the severe instability of the hill. This hill is part of the Springdale slide area as designated by the UGS. Please see attached email from Tyler R. Knudsen Senior Geologist Utah Geological Survey.

Mr. Wilson removed a significant part (approximately 50' by 80') of the toe of the hill/mountain in the Springdale slide area.

Mr. Wilson would have also had to pull a grading permit because of the amount (greater than 40 yards) of soil moved/removed.

Mr. Wilson would have also needed to have his retaining walls engineered as they are taller than 4 feet in height from the base of the footer to the top of the wall. These retaining walls would have also needed to be inspected as part of the normal permit process. In discussing the boulder type of retaining walls Mr. Wilson installed with a retired local (Springdale) Structural Engineer, the Structural Engineer said that this boulder type of retaining wall is completely insufficient for this application because of the steepness of the grade of the hill/mountain it is meant to retain. They said that the boulders would simply become part of the debris field when the hill slides. The engineer also said that cutting into the toe of a hill is the riskiest place on a hill to disturb.

In discussing Mr. Wilson's indiscriminate approach to cutting into the toe of a hill/mountain that is part of a known slide area, the impression I got from the 2 engineers was that it was almost incomprehensible that this aggressive action had occurred. Both engineers expressed extreme concern about the probable damage and safety of our residents and visitors.

I confirmed the seriousness of this situation by asking Google Artificial Intelligence. It responded with saying that any slope greater than 35 degrees should not be tampered with and results in a very dangerous and unstable

---

situation. The slope of the hill/mountain in this discussion is approximately 65 degrees.

It was recommended that a Geological Survey be conducted ASAP. It was also suggested that the Town select the engineering firm and that Mr. Wilson pay for the Survey. Then based on the survey results, the Planning Commission would determine the next steps.

The reason that the engineers are having an “off-the-charts” reaction to this situation is that in 1992, the Balanced Rock Landslide in Springdale (also known as the Springdale Slide) moved a total volume of 18 million cubic yards (roughly 27 million tons) of rock, soil and debris. The slide measured 1,600 ft. long by 3,600 ft. wide with an average depth of 110 feet. This slide was triggered by a 5.8 magnitude earthquake 44 kilometers away. This parking lot expansion is part of this slide area.

Question: If the town does not make Mr. Wilson obtain a geological survey for this site; by default, does the liability for the probable slide damage shift to the Town? (Assuming the Town approves Mr. Wilson permit.)