

Planning Commission Meeting
February 22, 2012

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dwight Freeman called the meeting to order at 1:30pm; other members present were, Vernon McCallister, Pam Bricker, Mike Mitchell, Leonard Brown and Rose Vanderpool, Secretary.

Members absent: Grover Hathorn

Others Present: See attached list.

II. Acceptance of Agenda: Vern McCallister moves to approve amended agenda; Pam Bricker seconds motion; motion carried unanimously.

III. Accept Minutes: A motion to approve the January 17th, 2012 minutes as corrected was offered by Mike Mitchell and seconded by Leonard Brown; motion carried unanimously.

IV. NEW BUSINESS: First item on the agenda; James Cooley of Cooley & Sons Excavating, Inc. /Van & Jeanene Pepper conditional use for mineral extraction. Chairman Freeman read the application and attachments thereto. This property is located in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$; Section 11; Township 40N; Range 7E. Mr. James Cooley explained that he would be constructing a recharge pond for the Pepper's in the NW Corner along the Rio Grande Canal. Mr. Cooley will use the extracted materials for his business (off-premise). Mr. Cooley has submitted the necessary paperwork to the State for approval along with the county. The recharge pit will be no more than five foot deep with a berm four to five feet high. The Land Use Office did not receive a response from property owners for or against this application. The applicant did receive comments and a sign off from the Rio Grande Canal Waters Users Assoc. Chairman Freeman entertains a motion; Pam Bricker moves to recommend approval; Mike Mitchell seconds motion; motion carried unanimously. 5 ayes; 0 nays; 1 absent

Second item on the agenda: Rudy Bauer/Family Adventure and Recreational Ministry (FARM) Conditional Use application for a parcel of land located in the S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 6, Township 39N, Range 7E. Chairman Freeman opened the floor for discussion; Mr. Bauer stated that this plan is family oriented "Forging Faithfull Families" teaching parents to be parents. Mr. Bauer is a representative of the Lutheran Church and was awarded this project to develop this as a family retreat. Mr. Jer Zyburu Willed the property to the Lutheran Church with very strict and precise instructions of what he wanted done. Mr. Zyburu stipulated in his Will that the Lutheran Church could put a Nursing Home or a place for conducting retreats for youth and adults and the property can never be subdivided, or divided. The Lutheran Church – Rev. Don Stults was present and stated that the entire Lutheran Community in the San Luis Valley is very supportive of this endeavor. Mr. Bauer went over the submittal; the projection is a five year maximum build-out. A total of 15 yurts within the five year span is projected , five RV's spaces with 30-amp and sewer hook-up, primary (limited) lodging, tent area, outside gazebo's for cooking, amphitheater, swimming pool, hot tubs. A zip line is already in place, but it needs to be replaced.

This entire plan is dependent on funding. We will apply for grants and/or private groups to sponsor individual items or an entire phase. The FARM will offer different types of day trips for hiking or skiing or other activities and this would be the HUB. There will be winter activities in the house; youth groups may stay here for a night or weekend and go skiing at Wolf Creek. The yurts will not have water or septic. A septic system will be engineered and installed to accommodate the entire facility. There will be bathroom and shower facilities on the site. (A house well and a septic system is already installed but not adequate.) The well will need to be re-augmented for this type of use. The types of vehicles coming in and out would be cars/pick-ups, RV's, and possibly extended van type vehicles. In the beginning stages of this project, there will be no staff. Mr. Bauer will be the primary contact of this development/activities but will not be on site all the time. The shooting Range has been struck from the plan. Chairman Freeman opened discussion from the audience; Mr. and Mrs. Webb are concerned neighbors, they live to west of this parcel and will be the most impacted by this use. Mr. & Mrs. Webb are concerned that this is not conducive to the area. This use will devalue our property. People will be coming in and out, camp out, RV's pulling in and out, how does anyone know who is authorized to be there or not. Who is going to manage this operation? We are retired police officers, we moved here to get away from people. This will also affect wildlife – bear, coyotes, deer and elk graze this area. Mr. & Mrs. Webb believe that this should require a feasibility study. This use will change the way of life for them; we will be able see and hear everything going on. It was noted that the Division of Wildlife and the Corps of Engineers were notified. The Division of Wildlife did not respond and Mr. Bauer has spoken with the Corps and at this time the Corps has determined that there would be no impact. (Verbally) Mr. Bernie Monter supports this venture. Mr. Monter explained that there won't be renegades, hoodlums, wino's, it's a Christian facility for youth/families fellowship. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Beaver Youth Camp in South Fork has been an asset to the community and stated that people are not a deterrent to wildlife; the wildlife will still come around. Anteaus LLC has concerns and concurs with Mr. & Mrs. Webb. If this facility should fail, who will clean it up? This isn't the highest and best use, there has to be better places than this location. A KOA Campground would at least provide a tax base for the county. Mr. Bauer stated that this area will not become dilapidated or sold off; everything will be constructed per the requirements of Rio Grande County Codes. There are restrictions in place "I have to operate a retreat" This can't be sold for profit-it has to go to another non-profit if this doesn't work out. Gayle Lujan and her mother Josephine and siblings are in support of this project. It's a way for families and youth to get back into a cohesive family unit in a safe and healthy manner for growth and enhancement. Ms. Lujan hopes that this is done in mind of preservation for everyone and everything that surrounds this area. Mr. Leonard Brown asked what happens if this doesn't get approved. Mr. Bauer stated that the Lutheran Foundation would seek another bid. This has to succeed over time. Mr. Bauer is open to mitigating sound/visual effects to the north to maybe help with Mr. & Mrs. Webb's concerns. Chairman Freeman suggested installing cameras/locked gate fencing. Mr. Bauer stated there would be cameras installed, which can be monitored when gone. This facility will operate in lieu of donations. Zoning was discussed and per the Rio Grande County List of Uses this requires a conditional use not an amendment of zoning. Mrs. Wanda Stolp lives about a half mile away, and has concerns with noise, she stated that because of the hill and this area being low, there is an echo. When coyotes howl or dogs bark down in this location they can hear it very clear. There is a plan for a solar field, but that is down the road and would require a separate conditional use review. Chairman Freeman asked what would be the first phase; Mr. Bauer stated that if approved they

will start with 5 yurts; 5 RV sites; tent area; bathroom and shower facility; gazebos and cooking area and all this depends on grants/donations but the timeline is five years. Chairman Freeman entertains a motion; Vernon McCallister moves to table their decision until their next meeting (March 20th, 2012) for further study; Mr. Mike Mitchell seconds; motion carried unanimously. .5 ayes; 0 nays; 1 absent.

Third item on the agenda; Appointment of Officers; Pam Bricker moves to retain Dwight Freeman as Chair and Vernon McCallister as Vice-Chair; Leonard Brown seconds motion; motion carried unanimously.

V. Old Business: None

VI. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 3:45pm.

Secretary

Chairman