

SU 22-13

(Chiricahua Sky Village Mod)

**Special Use Authorization for an amateur
astronomer campground (guest lodging)
in a Rural Zoning District**

Planning & Zoning Commission
July 13, 2022



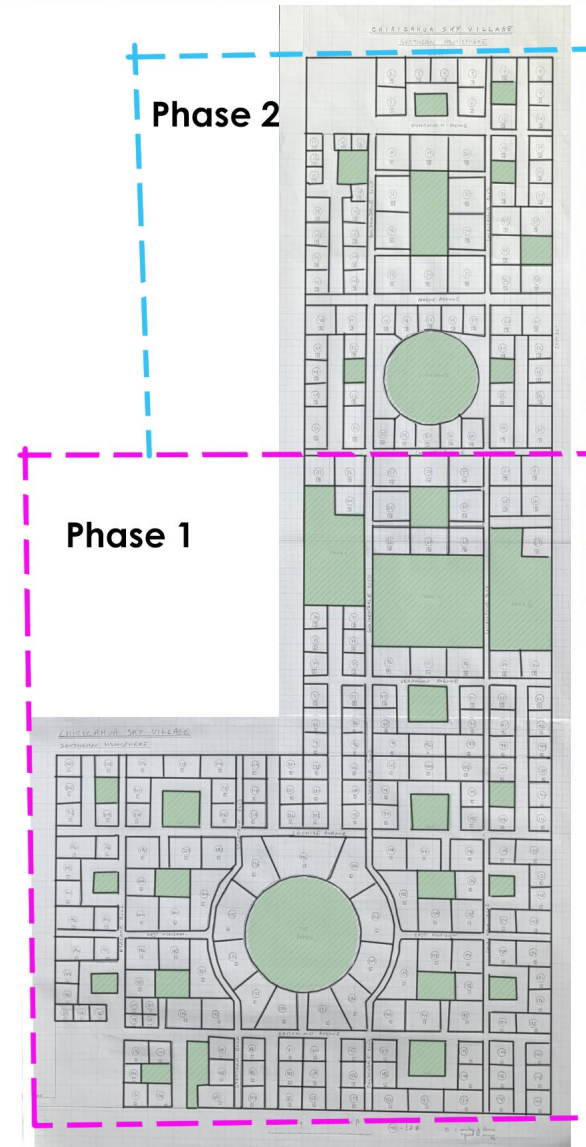
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

- This is a request to allow an astronomer campground on 72.38-acres of undeveloped land
- Modification of SU-22-04
- Parcels 401-60-009D and M
- The Applicant is Mr. Christopher Smythies



Concept Plan

- 120 campsites (phase I)
60 campsites (phase II)
- The ability for members to construct small observatories on campsites
- The ability for members to construct small storage huts on campsites
- A limited number of semi-permanent on-site tents
- Two shipping containers (conex boxes)

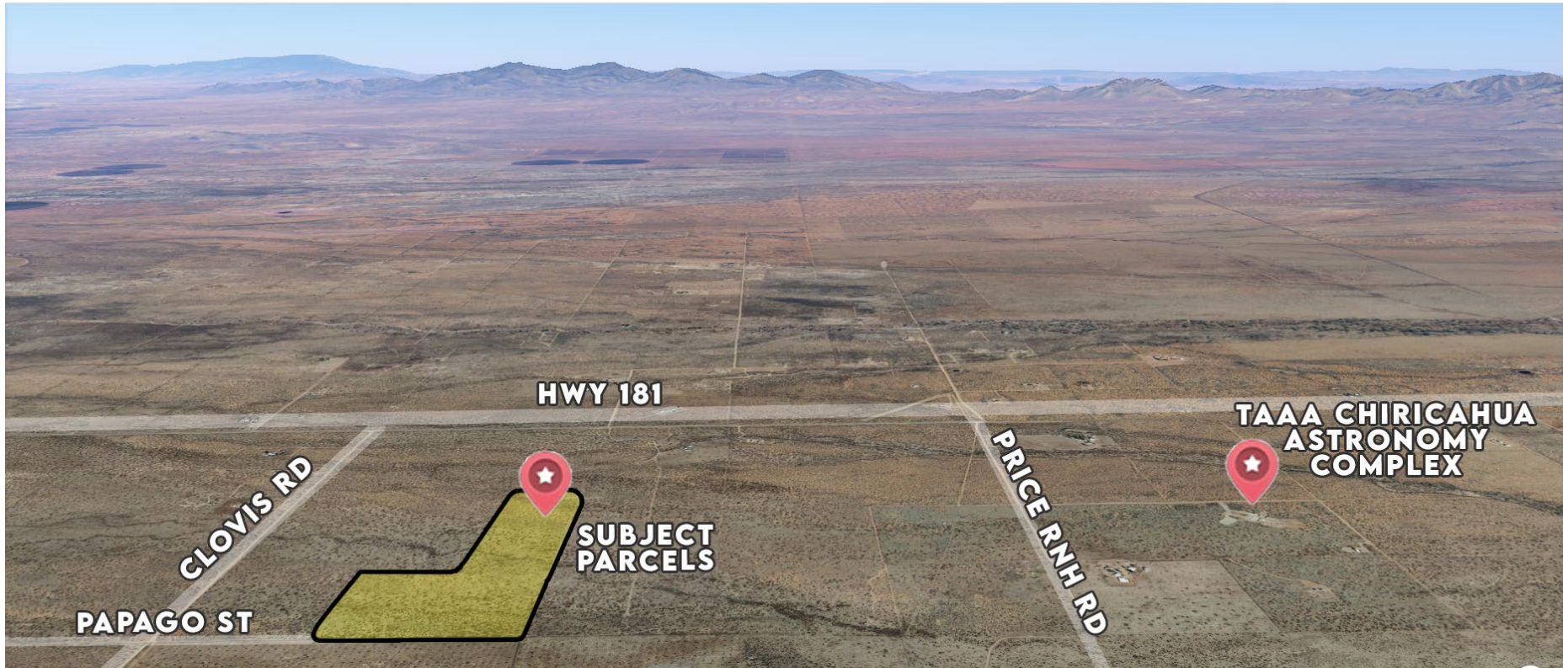


Example Accessory Observatories

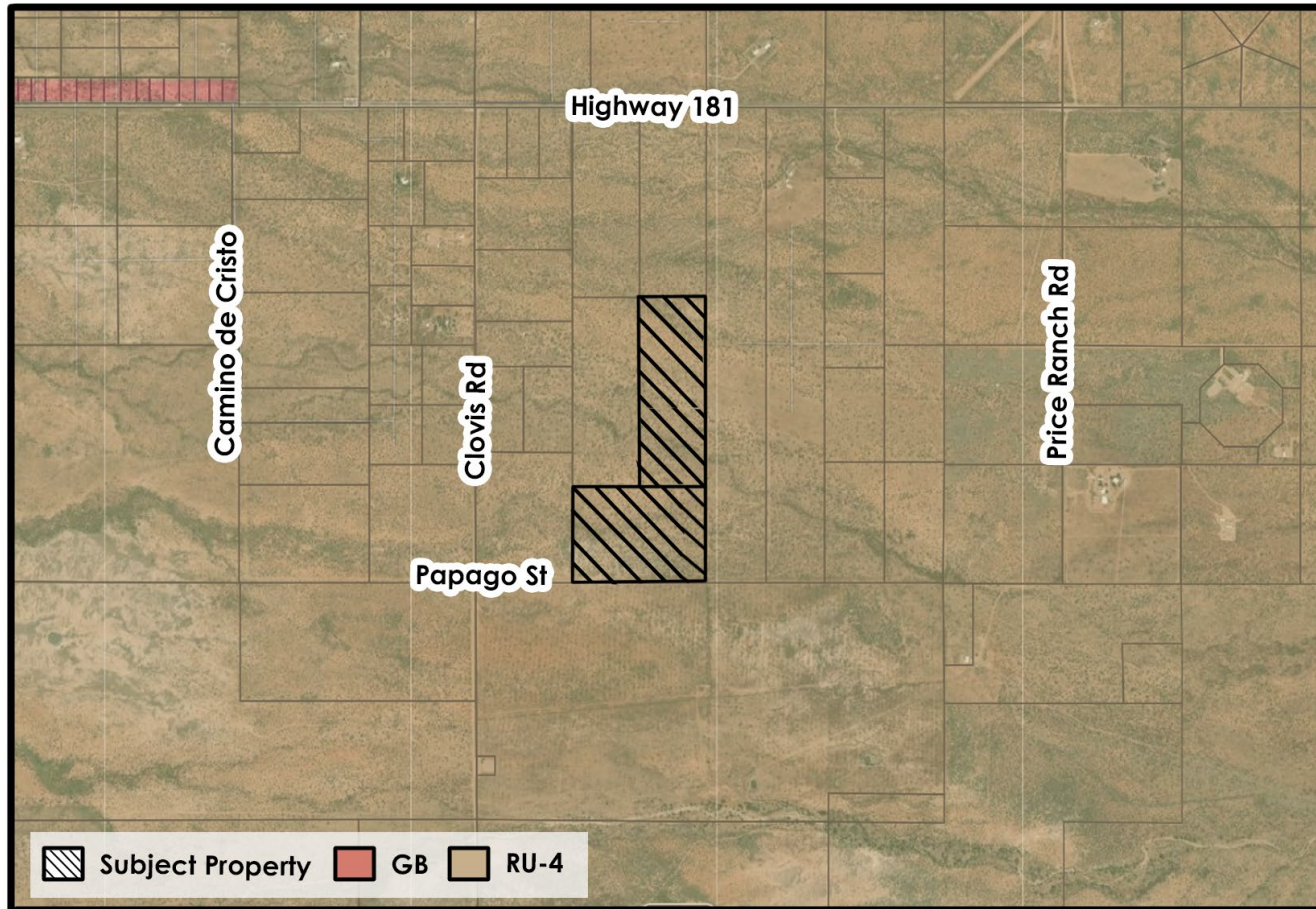


DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Site Photos



Zoning



Zoning
SU 22-13 Chiricahua Sky Village Modification

N.T.S



Relevant Zoning Regulations for RV Parks/Guest Lodging

Section 1805.05 Off-Site Parking

- One space per lot space

Section 1812 Site Standards for RV Parks

- Regulates: max density, setbacks, max height, site coverage, screening, pedestrian paths, landscape, recreational facilities, and accessory structures



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

There are 10 factors used to evaluate all special use proposals. As submitted, the application:

Complies: 8 factors

- Compliance with Duly Adopted Plans
- Compliance with the Zoning District Purpose
- Development Along Major Streets
- Traffic Circulation
- Adequate Services and Infrastructure
- Significant Site Development Standards
- Offsite Impacts

Complies with Conditions/waiver: 1 factor

- Site Development Standards

Not applicable: 1 factor

- Hazardous Materials



Factors in Favor of Request

1. The project is consistent with goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and the purpose of the Zoning District;
2. The project complies with eight of the criteria used to evaluate special use requests;
3. The proposed use would provide additional recreational use;
4. The project would help support the conservation of dark skies and promote Cochise County as an astro-tourism destination;
5. The proposed use is sensitive the rural environment and compatible with the adjacent development;
6. Proposed improvements are primarily temporary or semi-permanent, and
7. Significant use of the site will occur during significant celestial/lunar events, such as new moons, and/or on weekends/holidays.



Factors Against Approving the Request

1. This requested development is relatively dense and rare astrological events could generate off-site impacts primarily in the form of traffic;
2. Conditions are recommended to ensure this remains a recreational use, rather than permanent residential use; and
3. The area is dry, outside of growth boundaries and far from fire service. Proper control/ regulation of campfires is needed



Applicant Presentation/Discussion



Staff Recommendation

Docket SU-22-13, Staff recommends **Conditional Approval**

If the Commission wishes to grant approval, staff recommends the following conditions:



Recommended Conditions

1. Within 30-days of approval of the Special Use, the Applicant shall provide the County a signed Acceptance of Conditions form and a Waiver of Claims form arising from ARS Section 12-1134. Prior to operation of the Special Use, the Applicant shall apply for a building/use permit for the project within 18-months of approval. The building/use permit shall include a site plan in conformance with all applicable site development standards (except as modified) and with Section 1705 of the Zoning Regulations, the completed Special Use permit questionnaire and application, and appropriate fees. A permit must be issued within 18-months of the Special Use approval, otherwise the Special Use may be deemed void upon 30-day notification to the Applicant;
2. It is the Applicant's responsibility to obtain any additional permits, or meet any additional Conditions, that may be applicable to the proposed use pursuant to other federal, state, or local laws or regulations, in addition, all standards and requirements of the County Health Services District shall be met, and all permits or licenses shall be obtained prior to operation;
3. Any changes to the approved Special Use shall be subject to review by the Planning Division and may require additional modification and approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission.



Recommended Conditions (Continued)

4. The commission grants a waiver to the density site development standard. The applicant shall be limited to no more than 120 individual campsites within phase I of the development, as indicated by the concept plan. Provided the applicant can demonstrate that the occupancy rate is on, average 20% or lower over a one-year period, and at no point exceeds 50%, from the date of opening, the applicant may be administratively approved for up to an additional 60 campsites (phase 2). Only one recreational vehicle or tent is permitted at each camp site. No more than 25 semi-permanent tents are permitted;
5. Each site shall be limited to one accessory structure, not to exceed 200 SF, with no utilities;
6. A maximum of two shipping containers are permitted onsite for storage purposes only. The location of the containers shall be subject to administrative approval;



Recommended Conditions (Continued)

7. No site shall be used or occupied for permanent residential living purposes. This is defined as more than 30-days without a 14-day break;
8. Hunting or keeping of livestock is prohibited;
9. No campfires are permitted outside of a firepan, fireplace, grill, or gas ring that is established or provided for that purpose. A Firewise Plan and/or Emergency Response Plan may be required by the Development Services Department;
10. Additional landscaping may be required if current vegetation is insufficient for screening. Site development shall be sensitive to the preservation of existing vegetation. No person shall cut wood on-site for any purpose;



Recommended Conditions (Continued)

11. The property owner shall be responsible for maintaining the property in a clean and orderly state, free of any uncontrolled garbage. All solid waste shall be disposed at an authorized disposal facility; and
12. The approval of this special use, and the conditions associated with it, will become void with any transfer of ownership.



Sample Motion

Mr. Chairman, I move to approve Docket SU 22-13, Chiricahua Sky Village Modification, with the Conditions of Approval recommended by staff; the Factors of Approval constituting Findings of Fact.

