



Cochise County

Development Services

Public Programs...Personal Service
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Cochise County Planning and Zoning Commission
FROM: Robert Kirschmann, Planner II
FOR: Daniel Coxworth, AICP, Development Director
SUBJECT: Docket SU22-33 (RV Park Expansion), Formerly SU18-12 (Supplee)
DATE: January 30, 2022, February 8, 2023 Meeting

APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL USE AUTHORIZATION

The Applicant, Ms. Rebecca Bassett requests a Special Use Authorization modification to allow a phased expansion of an existing six (6) space recreational vehicle(RV) park. The expansion includes six (6) additional RV spaces, approximately 3,000 square foot communal building, approximately 5,600 square foot horse shelter, relocation of corrals, other site, and landscape improvements.

The project is located at 3651 E. Doe Ranch Road, Pearce Arizona. The property is also identified as Assessor Parcel Number 114-01-097A consisting of approximately 20 acres.

I. DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT PARCEL AND SURROUNDING LAND USES

Parcel Size: 20.05 acres
Current Zoning: RU-4 (Rural; one dwelling per 4 acres)
Proposed Zoning: Same
Growth Area: Category D
Comprehensive Plan Designation: Rural
Area Plan: None
Existing Uses: 6 Space equestrian based RV Park
Proposed Uses: 6 additional spaces, 3,000 square foot communal building, 5,600 square foot shade structure

Zoning/Use of Surrounding Properties

Relation to Subject Parcel	Zoning District	Use of Property
North	RU-4	Rural Residential
South	RU-4	Rural Residential
East	RU-4	Rural Residential
West	RU-4	Rural Residential

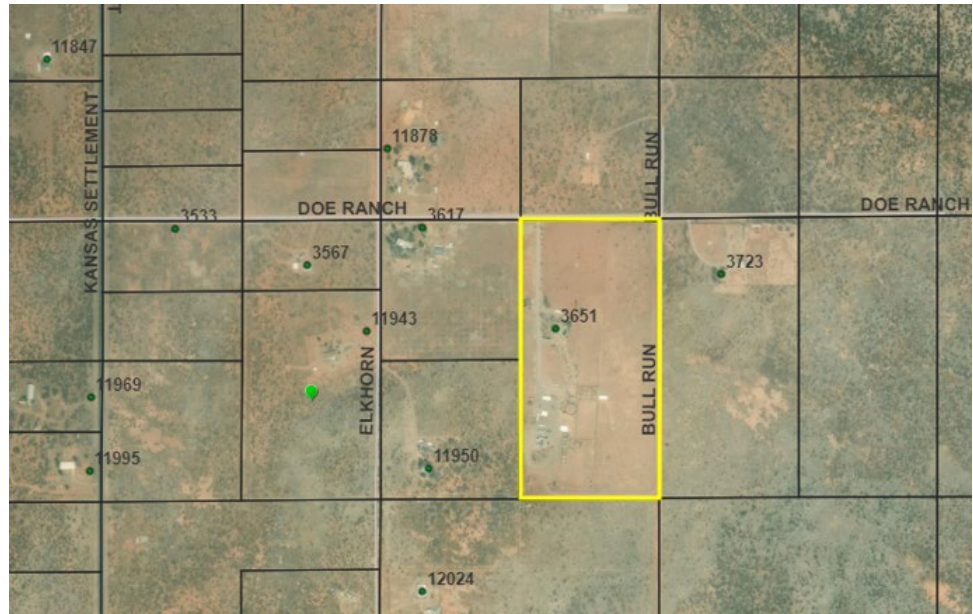
Planning, Zoning and Building Safety

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II. PARCEL HISTORY

2018- SU for 6 RV Spaces
 2017 – 256 square foot shed
 2010- Arch over driveway
 2007- 320 square foot carport and 540 square foot horse shed, in ground pool
 2006- 3,024 square foot SFR, 288 square foot shed

In 2018 there was a Code Enforcement Case on this property regarding an unpermitted RV Park. The owner at the time submitted a Special Use for an equestrian based RV Park with a total of six (6) spaces. The necessary planning and building permits were obtained and the Code Enforcement case closed.



The property has a new owner that is requesting expand the RV Park.

III. NATURE OF REQUEST



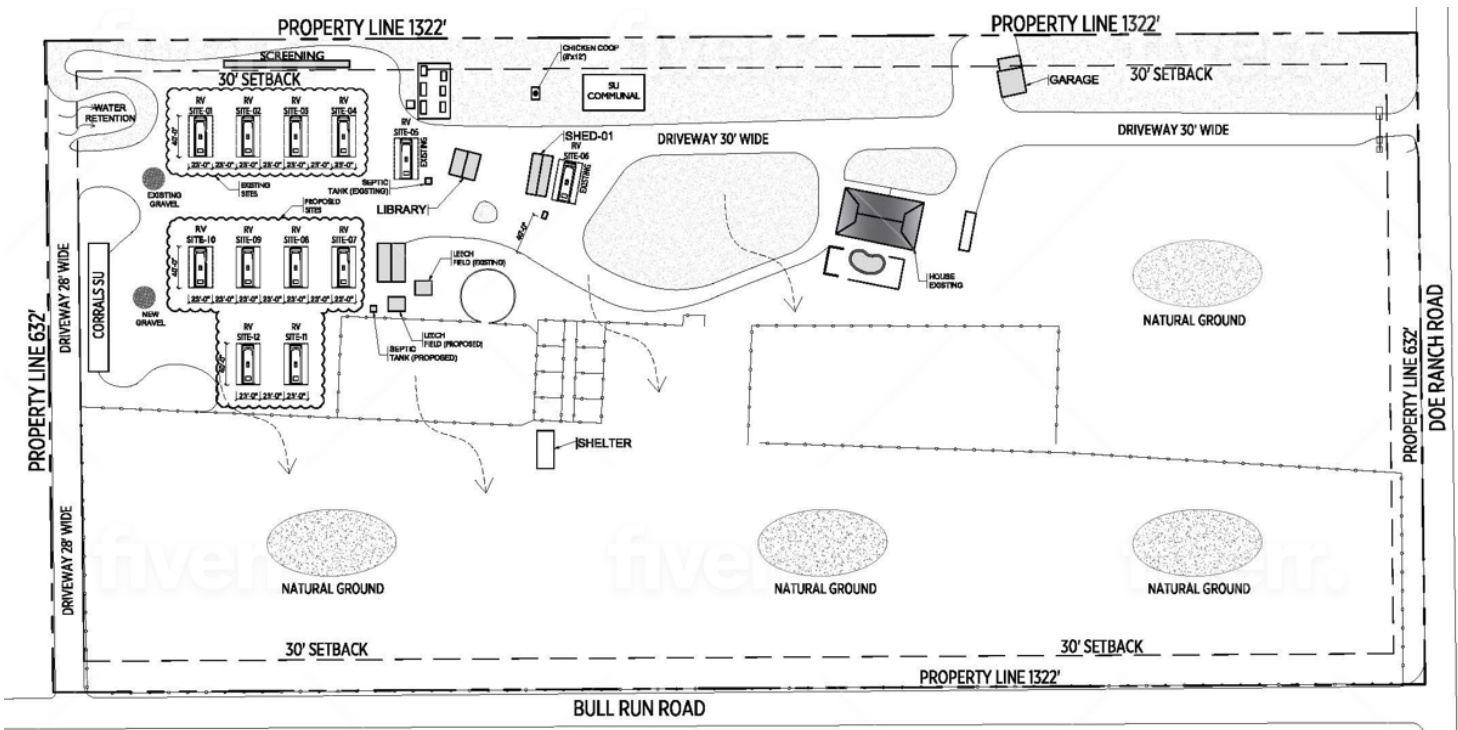
The Applicant is requesting a Special Use Authorization modification to allow a phased expansion of an existing six (6) space recreational vehicle(RV) park. The expansion includes six (6) additional RV spaces, approximately 3,000 square foot communal building, approximately 5,600 square foot horse shelter, relocation of corrals, other site, and landscape improvements. The communal building will provide a place that patrons can get out of the elements, hold classes and other events and activities. The applicant also hosts events such as craft fairs and weddings. All of which are expansions of the original approval. These add additional traffic, noise and other impacts that are not typical of a rural area.

Section 607.02, Recreational Vehicle Parks designed to ensure that the park fits into the rural landscape, such as clustering RV sites, maintaining perimeter open space, and enhancing existing vegetation using drought tolerant vegetation.

IV. ANALYSIS OF IMPACTS – COMPLIANCE WITH SPECIAL USE FACTORS

Section 1716.02 of the Zoning Regulations provides a list of ten factors with which to evaluate Special Use applications. Staff uses these factors to help determine the suitability of a given Special Use request, whether to recommend approval for a Special Use Authorization, as well as to determine what Conditions and/or Modifications may be needed.

With the information provided, eight (8) factors apply to this request. The project, as submitted, fully complies with two (2) of the factors. With the recommended conditions, the project complies with three (3) additional factors. The request partially complies with two (2) factors and does not comply with one (1).



1. Compliance with Duly Adopted Plans: Partially Complies

The project site is located in Category D, Rural. These areas are specifically not designated as rural residential because of sparse population, larger lot size, and grazing. It can also include areas that have developed or undeveloped recreational resources. This area meets all of that criteria.

The Economic Development Element states *Goal 1. Support the preservation and expansion of the Cochise County’s tourism, technology, agriculture, security, renewable energy, and transportation sectors...*

This project will continue to provide a service for equestrian travelers. The Park provides a place for guests to stay so that they can explore the Chiricahua, Dagon and other mountains and trails nearby. The Comprehensive Plan goes further with policy b which states *Encourage commercial development that enhances and complements regional tourism.*

However, with the increase up to 12 RV Spaces and special events staff has concerns about it fitting into the rural area. The Comprehensive Plan also states:

Goal 1. Provide for a continuation of traditional rural ways of life, such as farming, ranching, and other agricultural-related activities, and provide for diverse and viable economic and development opportunities that are consistent with the character of Cochise County's rural areas.

Policies

1. *With property rights considered, protect rural character from the intrusion of urban uses and recognize that resources, such as agricultural lands, open space, and scenic view sheds, provide economic, social, and environmental benefits*

2. Compliance with the Zoning District Purpose Statement: Partially Complies



RU (Rural) Zoning Districts are established to achieve the following purposes:

- 601.01 To preserve the character of areas designated as "Rural" in the Cochise County Comprehensive Plan;
- 601.02 To encourage those types of non-residential and non-agricultural activities which serve local needs or provide a service and are compatible with rural living;
- 601.03 To preserve the agricultural character of those portions of the County capable of resource production;
- 601.04 To provide space for people, minimize traffic congestion, and preserve the existing rural environment of unincorporated areas of the County situated outside of existing communities;
- 601.05 To provide recreational support services that are compatible with rural living;
- 601.06 To protect the quality of the natural environment as it relates to safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of the people in Cochise County; and
- 601.07 To allow consideration of some more intense non-residential uses as Special Uses that are inappropriate in more densely populated urban/suburban areas that may under some circumstances be appropriate in rural areas if designed to be sensitive to the general character of rural districts and natural environment and harmonious and in scale with existing development near the proposed site and in conformance with Section 601.06.



The purpose statement of the Rural Zoning District in Article 6 includes seven points. Section 601.02 encourages non-residential uses which serves local need or provides a service that are compatible with rural living. A small RV Park that is dedicated to the equestrian community would be compatible. Adding six (6) more RVs and large events such as craft fairs and weddings that are drawing people outside of the RV Park is a different matter. When you are holding an event where 100 or 150 guests may attend you have changed the rural nature of the park and now created an event center. If this parcel were to be developed with single family residences only five (5) would be permitted.



The existing use is compatible with the surrounding rural neighborhood, but the proposed modification increases the intensity of the use and the impacts to the neighbors.

The project is partially supported by Section 601.05 in that it will provide recreational support services, but with the density, lack of native vegetation and added special events not the “rural” designation of the area.

Therefore, this project partially complies with this factor.

3. Development along Major Streets: Not applicable

The proposed use is located on Doe Ranch Road. The site is approximately ¼ mile east of Kansas Settlement Road. Doe Ranch Road is a non-

County Maintained Road. The applicant states they currently maintain the road and a condition of approval is included requiring a private maintenance agreement.

4. Traffic Circulation Factors: Complies with conditions

Specifically, this factor stipulates that the Special Use Authorization request should not result in the use of any residential street for non-residential through traffic.

This site, as currently exists, includes one single family residential unit with 6 RV spaces. Combined range of traffic impact is likely to be 34.35 to 56.60 vehicle trips per day (17-28 vehicles in/out on any given day at full occupancy), per the *ITE Manual, 9th edition*. The RV Park traffic impacts, assessed separately from other land uses on this site, are likely to be in the range of 13 to 25 vehicles trips per day, when fully occupied. By adding 6 additional RV Spaces trips could increase to 26-50 per day. This does not include the traffic that would be associated with Special Events. The site plan does not show where parking would be for a special event of 100-150 guests, although there is adequate room onsite for parking.

The 20.05-acre could, if developed into 4-acre residential lots have a potential range of 38.28-87.4 vehicle trips per day, if fully built out and occupied. Aside from the special events, the site would likely have a very similar traffic impact as a full build out of the RU-4 zoning as residential units.



Doe Ranch Road connects to Kansas Settlement Road, a county-maintained, federally functionally classified rural major collector roadway with an AC pavement surface and a 26-foot cross-section to a non-county maintained, native-

surfaced private road known as Doe Ranch Road. Kansas Settlement has sufficient capacity to absorb this use with 2017 traffic counts of 680 vehicles per day south of the parcel and 344 vehicles per day north of the site.

The previous owners had signed a private maintenance agreement for Doe Ranch Road. Staff is recommending a condition that this be included as a condition on this project and expanded to include Bull Run as this will be an additional access point to the site.

To mitigate the impacts of the traffic on the surrounding neighbors staff recommends the following conditions:



1. Special Events shall be limited to no more **four (4), two-day** events in a calendar year. This includes craft fairs, art festivals, revivals, weddings, and similar events. Attendance is limited to no more than **100** people. Events that are directly tied to the commercial stables such as horse clinics are not included in this. A Temporary Special Event permit is required to be submitted to and approved by the County pursuant to Section 1720.03.
2. The site plan submitted for the special events must show where attendees will park and demonstrate it meets all requirements of the Development Code.
3. The Applicant shall sign a Private Road Maintenance Agreement (PMA) for Doe Ranch Road and Bull Run.

5. Adequate Services and Infrastructure: Complies

The site has existing electricity, septic and a well. The Applicant is advised to verify with the State Department of Water Resources and their well driller the capacity of well and whether the well was permitted for commercial use as proposed.

Initially, the new sites will be dry (no water). Prior to water being brought to the site the applicant shall have an approved septic system in place.

6. Significant Site Development Standards: Complies with conditions

Site Plan:

The revised site plan shows recreational vehicle sites, shaded horse corrals, and a future communal building. As we are only looking at a concept at this time, the non-residential permit will need to provide additional details. The site plan does not show the lawn area where weddings and other events have and can take place. This will need to be shown on the revised plan, including where parking for such events would take place.

The site is able to accommodate the development. The site plan submitted for permits will need to be detailed, fully dimensioned, showing all setbacks, structure sizes, parking, etc. Additionally, an ongoing table shall be provided and updated with each permit submittal showing over all lot coverage.

Setbacks:

Setbacks to all property lines shall be maintained at twenty feet. The applicant is showing at least 30 feet.

Lot Coverage:

The residential Land Use district restricts lot coverage to a maximum of 25%. As proposed, approximately 10% is proposed to be covered with impervious surfaces.

Height:

The RU-4 allows for a height of up to 30 feet. Fencing shall be less than eight (8) feet.

Lighting:

All lighting required shall be shown on the non-residential permit application and will be required to be fully shielded and comply with the Outdoor Lighting Regulations.

Landscaping: No landscaping or screening is required by code however; the existing RV Park is highly visible to the western properties. The Applicant has agreed to a screening a small portion of the RV Park. Staff believes that this is not adequate and is recommending screening and landscaping be planted along the west property line from approximately 20 feet north of the proposed communal building to the southern property line. Landscaping shall include drought tolerant trees such as afgan pines, mesquites, Arizona Cypress, or other trees approved by staff. Trees shall be no less than 5 feet at planting and spaced no less than 15-20 feet as recommended for the species planted.



Landscaping of the Section along the existing RV sites shall be planted before the final inspection of the 6 dry spaces. The remaining areas shall be landscaped prior to final inspection of the communal building.

In addition to the landscaping, a solid screen consisting of standard construction materials shall be proof at least six (6) feet in height shall be provided from north of the communal building to the southern property line.

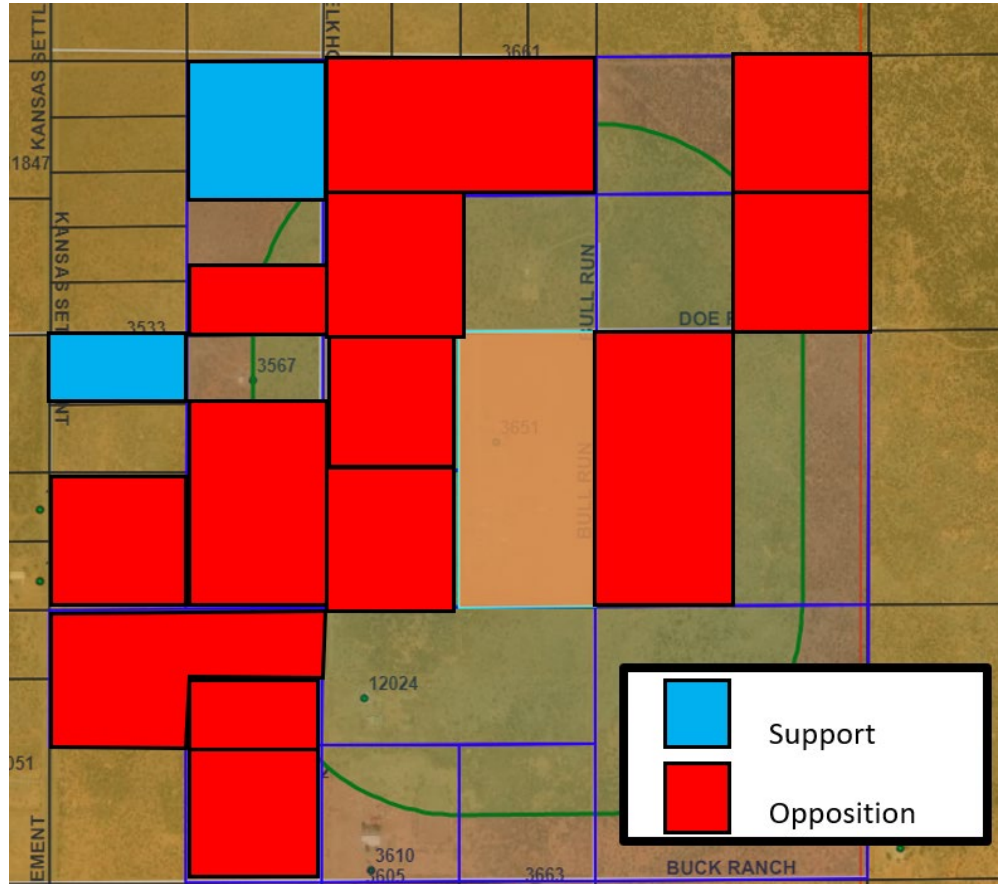
Staff recommends the following conditions:

4. With the submittal of the first non-residential permit the application shall modify the revised site plan to show where parking for Special events will be and show the lawn area where special event take place.
5. A solid screen shall be constructed from 20 feet north of the proposed communal building extending to the southern property line. The portion of the screen along the existing RV spaces shall be constructed before final inspection of six (6) dry spaces. The screening shall be completed prior to final inspection of the communal building.
6. Landscaping shall be provided from 20 feet north of the proposed communal building extending to the southern property line. The portion of the screening along the existing RV spaces shall be constructed prior to final inspection of the communal building. Landscaping shall include drought tolerant trees such as mesquite, afgan pine, arizona cypress. The trees shall be no less than five (5) feet in height at time of planting. The tress shall be spaced no less than 20 feet apart or per standard specs for the variety. A permanent drip irrigation system shall be installed.

7. Public Input: Does not Comply

1140109The applicant mailed letters to property owners within 1,000 feet of the property prior to application submittal. The owner received several letters in opposition to the request. In an effort to reduce impacts the applicant proposed screening along a portion of the RV Park. Other comments such as traffic increases could not be addressed.

The Planning Department mailed letters to the same property owners within 1,000 feet of the subject property, published a legal ad in the *Sierra Vista Herald*, and posted a legal notice on the property. To date, staff has received two (2) letters in support. One is just outside the 1,000-foot radius and the other was offering to sell the property. There were seven (8) letters in opposition, representing twelve (12) surrounding parcels to the request. This response is significant enough to warrant additional considerations. Per the Zoning Regulations Section 1716.02. G., *If public concerns have been raised, it is fair to ask if the Applicant has made a reasonable effort to address these concerns.*



The opposition discusses the following:

- **Increase in noise**
With doubling the size of the RV Park additional noise will be generated by the guests, vehicles, generators, etc.
- **Increase in traffic**
Again, with the increase in the scope of the project additional traffic will be generated. Additionally, special events draw in additional traffic that is not necessarily associated with the RV Park.



- **Violation of CC&Rs**
Though the County does not enforce CC&Rs, Section 1.03 specifically states Any commercial venture which requires a special use permit, variance, or a change in the RU-4 Zoning will not be permitted;
- **Visual impacts**
The existing RV Park is highly visible to the western properties. The additional RVs will be located behind the existing ones, and partially screened by them. The new 3,000 square foot communal building will be approximately 30 feet from property line and will also be visible. To help with the visual impacts the applicant has proposed a small area of screening and vegetation.

Should the commission choose to support the request, staff recommends that the commission include all conditions recommended by staff, which are intended to help address neighbor concerns.

To further mitigate neighbor concerns Staff recommends the following conditions:

- 7. The park shall establish quiet hours from 10PM to 6AM.
- 8. The approval of this special use, and the conditions associated with it, will become void with any transfer of ownership.

8. Hazardous Materials: Not applicable

There are no proposed hazardous materials.

9. Off-Site Impacts: Complies with conditions

Long term impacts include visual, increase in traffic, and noise increase.

Engineering and Natural Resources reviewed the request and have expressed concerns regarding the entire 20 acres being cleared of native vegetation and the additional impervious surfaces. A drainage analysis is required to be submitted in conjunction with the non-residential permit.



The recommended conditions are intended to help mitigate these concerns.

10. Water Conservation: Complies

The applicant anticipates approximately 72-174 gallons of water per day with a totally yearly usage of 5,971-7,775 gallons. Staff feels that these numbers are low as they do not include the existing residence, landscaping, or water for livestock. Horses alone use between 5-10 gallons of water per day, per horse. If each guest brings two horses and the park is half full that is 12 horses or 60-120 gallons just for livestock per day.

For wastewater discharge it is estimated that 100 gallons per RV is used if the spot is connected to water and sewer, 75 gallons per day if dry. Again, exceeding the numbers provided by the applicant.



Though not mentioned in the opposition to this request, members of the public have been expressing concern about the decline of water in existing wells. A well on this site has previously gone dry. Should this be approved, the applicant is encouraged to verify with the State of any and all requirements of such use.

The application states that drought tolerant vegetation will be selected and irrigated with drip irrigation. Staff encourages the use of rainwater harvesting to the greatest extent possible.

The site is located outside of the Sierra Vista Sub-watershed and the Douglas Basin AMA.

V. WAIVERS

None requested.

VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This request is for a Special Use authorization to allow six (6) additional RV Spaces, a 3,000 square foot communal room and 5,000 square foot shaded horse corrals.

Factors in Favor of Approving the Special Use

1. With the recommended Condition of Approval, the proposed use would fully comply with five (5) the eight (8) applicable Special Use factors used by staff to analyze this request;
2. This project will provide the diversity of business discussed within the Comprehensive Plan by providing support of entrepreneurship of a different type of business in the County.
3. The Comprehensive Plan states: *...entrepreneurship is essential and should be encouraged as part of an economy-based land use policy. Supporting small businesses will not only spur diversified income opportunities and ensure economic competitiveness but will also foster resilience in the face of economic challenges such as natural disasters.* This business adds to that diversity.
4. The Comprehensive plan also states *Support the preservation and expansion of the Cochise County's tourism...*
5. Two letters of support received.

Factors Against Allowing the Special Use

1. Though the County does not enforce CC&Rs, Section 1.03 specifically states *Any commercial venture which requires a special use permit, variance, or a change in the RU-4 Zoning will not be permitted;*
2. The Comprehensive Plan States: *with property rights considered, protect rural character from the intrusion of urban uses and recognize that resources, such as agricultural lands, open space, and scenic view sheds, provide economic, social, and environmental benefits;*
3. Seven letters in opposition, representing 10 surrounding properties wrote letters in opposition;

4. The project does not comply with one (1) factor and only partially with two (2) others;
5. The zoning allows for a maximum of five single family residences, this application is to add six (6) additional RV spaces, increasing the number to 12 plus the existing residence.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the factors in favor of approval, staff recommends **Approval** of the Special Use request.

Should the Commission approve the Applications, staff recommends the following Conditions:

1. The applicant shall be limited to no more than 12 individual sites. Only one recreational vehicle is permitted at each site.
2. Detached accessory structures are not permitted on RV parking pads or in their accompanying side yards.
3. A Firewise Plan and/or Emergency Response Plan may be required by the Development Services Department.
4. The property owner shall be responsible for maintaining the parcel in a clean and orderly state, free of any uncontrolled garbage.
5. Special Events shall be limited to no more **four (4), two-day** events in a calendar year. This includes craft fairs, art festivals, revivals, weddings, and similar events. Attendance is limited to no more than **100** people. Events that are directly tied to the commercial stables such as horse clinics are not included in this. A Temporary Special Event permit is required to be submitted to and approved by the County pursuant to Section 1720.03.
6. The site plan submitted for the special events must show where attendees will park and demonstrate it meets all requirements of the Development Code.
7. The park shall establish quiet hours from 10PM to 6AM.
8. The Applicant shall sign a Private Road Maintenance Agreement (PMA) for Doe Ranch Road and Bull Run.
9. A solid screen shall be constructed from 20 feet north of the proposed communal building extending to the southern property line. The portion of the screen along the existing RV spaces shall be constructed before final inspection of six (6) dry spaces. The screening shall be completed prior to final inspection of the communal building.
10. Landscaping shall be provided from 20 feet north of the proposed communal building extending to the southern property line. The portion of the screening along the existing RV spaces shall be constructed prior to final inspection of the communal building. Landscaping shall include drought tolerant trees such as mesquite, afghan pine, arizona cypress. The trees shall be no less than five (5) feet in height at time of planting. The trees shall be spaced no less than 20 feet apart or per standard specs for the variety. A permanent drip irrigation system shall be installed.
11. The property owner shall follow best management practices for odor and pest control at all times. Horse manure shall not be allowed to accumulate on site to create nuisance odors and flies. The property owner shall retain the services of a licensed pest control service if they are unable to control flies.
12. All onsite riding areas shall be adequately maintained to prevent the creation of nuisance dust during training and riding activities. Periodic watering of these areas is required, as necessary, to control dust.

13. The approval of this special use, and the conditions associated with it, will become void with any transfer of ownership.
14. All comments by outside agencies are included as conditions of approval, including but not limited to a drainage analysis to be required in conjunction with the non-residential permit.

Sample Motion:

Madam Chair, I move to approve Special Use Docket SU22-33 (RV Park Expansion) located on parcel, 114-01-097A with the Conditions of Approval recommended by staff; the Factors in Favor of Approval constituting the Findings of Fact.