

July 2022

To Department of Community Services
Attn Tracy Gonzalez, Assistant Planner
292 West Beamer St
Woodland , CA 95695

Re: Request for Approval of project submitted by Applicants Ryan & Michelle Campbell
File Number ZF #2021-0026
APN 030-280-005

Thank you for the courtesy notice and opportunity to comment on the above proposal to legalize unpermitted construction. While we support the applicant's interest in continuing to farm walnuts on their recently purchased "family farm", we don't believe that should supersede the county's fair and consistent land use planning. An interest in agriculture also doesn't supersede a flagrant disregard for proper permit applications, and the required review process for property development.

We support the county ordinance of two dwellings per parcel, especially a parcel of only 22 acres. The County's zoning ordinance was put in place to promote agricultural use and sustain farming as the best and most profitable use of ag land. We do not support a decision that invalidates good zoning, ignores the approval process, and creates inappropriate high density in agricultural areas.

The Horseshoe is a narrow rural road which in many places only allows one vehicle at a time to pass. The existing family farms on the Horseshoe are exclusively used for agricultural purposes and none allow four dwelling units per parcel, even those parcels 4 or 5 times the size. Four dwelling units on a 22 acre parcel is not necessary "and appurtenant" to support the property's current agricultural use and not consistent with the current land use on the Horseshoe. Plainly speaking, it doesn't take four families to farm 20 acres of walnuts.

Allowing four dwelling or greater density on a 22 acre parcel will negatively affect the rural area by:

- Increasing the traffic, noise and general activity by doubling the amount of personal vehicle, delivery vehicle, service vehicle and guest vehicle traffic on a small rural road.
- doubling the amount and need for dwelling unit specific onsite storage of cars, trucks, trailers, RV's, boats and other dwelling related appurtenances.
- setting the precedent for the area and the county that zoning ordinances can be subverted if approached in a strategic manner and that higher density is acceptable.
- creating conflict of production agricultural activities, (noise, dust, chemical application, late night and early morning farming and harvest activities), with a greater number of neighboring occupants. (Four dwellings could house 16 people or more).
- and in the worst case, if the applicant is successful in getting four or more individual dwelling units approved, the applicant, or any subsequent property owner, could find greater

profit for the 22 acre property in renting out the housing units, rental storage buildings and yard space storage, resulting in a direct contradiction to the county's agricultural land use zoning ordinance.

The Zillow listing on the property from 2019 clearly states : "Zoning allows you to increase the sizes of the homes. This property is also in the Williamson Act so reduced property taxes." The clear and appropriate path to having additional family members live on the property is to adhere to the allowed zoning and increase the size of the two existing homes. To create four dwelling units in the manner proposed is a subversion of both the county's planning process and good zoning practices.

The County has an excellent history of promoting and supporting agriculture and the zoning specific for Agricultural Intensive Parcels. Allowing the construction of four dwelling units on a small 22 acre parcel is a major deviation of county policy and not consistent with the agricultural zoning and the well-established agricultural land use for the area.

Martin and Theresa Mariani
30532 The Horseshoe

Sally Paul
30215 The Horseshoe

Gus and Erina Mariani
30170 The Horseshoe

Matt and Laura Mariani
30112 The Horseshoe

Jack and Marjie Mariani
30004 the Horseshoe

Linda Mariani
29492 The Horseshoe

From: [Sarah Jewel & Stephen Newman](#)
To: [Stephanie Cormier](#)
Subject: File No 2021-0026
Date: Thursday, July 28, 2022 2:31:28 PM

Dear Ms. Cormier,

It was disheartening to receive the county notice from you. During my 38 years of living on The Horseshoe at least seven homes have been built. While I was aware of construction at 30633 The Horseshoe, it never occurred to me that it was being done without the plans, approvals, inspection, and fees that all our other neighbors have obtained. Having raised my children here, I know how important the school fees are to our community and find their attempt to evade them egregious.

My neighbor, Tony Avellar, began farming 20 acres of almonds on the northwest corner of The Horseshoe when he was 68 years old. He did it for 15 years, single handedly, on a part-time basis, with extra help for 3-4 days of harvest.

I have to wonder if separate dwellings was a strategy to increase the value of the property, creating the opportunity for non-farm, passive income. (It would have been perfectly legal to apply for permits to expand the two existing homes to accommodate family members.)

Zillow estimates my house at \$320/sq ft. At that rate, 1600 square feet of new dwelling space would increase the property value by more than half a million dollars. Zillow also estimates the monthly rent on 30633 at \$2,125 per month per dwelling, potentially generating over \$50,000/year. AirBnB's site offers a "Farm Stay" outside of Woodland for \$186/night and in Winters for \$579/night.

If the dwellings are legalized, would there be any restriction on how they are used? Or by whom? Or for how long? When the property is sold would the new owners have any restrictions on the use of these dwellings?

This prime ag land protected by the Williamson Act would be asked to sustain more people, more noise, more traffic (we are already dealing with potholes on that arm of The Horseshoe), more waste, and increased demand on our shared aquifer. Farmland lost to structures is rarely reclaimed.

During my decades on The Horseshoe a windfall referred to a bumper crop of apricots or good prices for almonds, not the legalization of illegal dwelling units.

Thank you,

Stephen Newman

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PLEASE CONTACT THE HELPDESK (x5000) FOR ASSISTANCE]

To: County of Yolo Department of Community Services and Planning Commission

From: A Horseshoe Resident

Subject: Comment to Notification of the following proposal:

File number ZF #2021-0026

Assessor parcel number 030-2 80-005

Applicant name - Campbell

I was notified through the mail of the Campbell's application for a Minor Use Permit to legalize buildings on their property on The Horseshoe in Winters, California. The notice states that "the proposal or project impacts may affect my property or services/district or jurisdiction". This request for approval of two additional dwelling units that were illegally built is a serious matter with many implications for Yolo County agriculture, The Horseshoe and the Yolo County Planning Commission. Since you have requested feedback on the issue, these are some of my concerns ...

1. Clarity

In reading the mailed notification, there is a need to be clear as to what has actually been built and what is being considered. The applicant is asking for an allowance to keep a duplex that they built on the property. A duplex is a house divided into two apartments with a separate entrance for each and shares a central wall. What the landowner built is not a duplex. The landowner built a 2400 square-foot building, that is now called Ag Storage. This is not Ag Storage. An Ag Storage building must be 10 feet from a dwelling, so how can this be Ag Storage? The owner then built a dwelling in front of the 2400 square foot building that is separated by 4 inches, not 10 feet. The applicant also built an additional dwelling behind the 2400 square foot building, also 4 inches away. What do we really have here? Is it clear? I don't think so. One possibility is that if the landowner connects the large building with the two dwellings on either end, that are only 4 inches away, he would have a 4000 square-foot duplex, not a 1,601 sq. ft duplex as stated in the notification. That would make it a very large duplex with conceivably, 2000 sq. ft per dwelling. The lack of clarity is concerning. A request for a Minor Use Permit for "an existing duplex with an attached garage" is incorrect and misleading. There is no duplex. They are separate units. In addition, I can't help but wonder if the word "duplex" is being used erroneously to lessen the perceived impact and noncompliance with building regulations. The land owner is asking for legalization of not one but two dwellings.

2. Density

The Yolo County ordinance clearly states that only two homes are allowed per parcel on the small 22-acre farm. Four homes are a gross over development of the property and not the desired density for the area. Ag land parcels much larger are also only allowed two dwellings. Four families with four homes is not appurtenant with farming 22 acres of walnuts. In addition, there is no guarantee that the dwellings will be used by family members who help farm. Once the units are approved, there is no restriction on who can live there. There is no supervisory agency that will keep these dwellings from becoming rental units on The Horseshoe.

3. Unlawfulness

The landowner has been strategic in the building on his property. I think a permit request to build two dwellings would surely have been denied by Yolo County. The landowner went ahead and illegally built the structures without permission, without paying fees, and without following safety all codes. If the Yolo County Planning Commission approves this application, they will be aiding an attitude of disregard of the law.

4. Setting a Precedent

I don't think Yolo County wants landowners to take prime agricultural land, build unpermitted dwelling units and then ask for forgiveness/permission. I would be careful as to what message is sent or precedence is set. If the Minor Use Permit is granted, I have been told the landowner will need to pay fines. What will the fees and penalties amount to? The increase in value of this 22-acre parcel on The Horseshoe with four approved homes or dwellings will far exceeds any dollar amount the county would impose. The landowner has been strategic in their illegal building.

5. Impact on life on The Horseshoe

The Horseshoe is a single lane road that is always in need of repair. It is bumpy, narrow and in need of pothole repair most of the year. Two additional families living on the applicant's parcel will add to road wear and tear. It will increase traffic created but the families themselves, service people, deliveries etc. There have been many days and nights when we have had to drive around vehicles that were parked on the road in front of this property. I am also concerned about the interface between agricultural activities and two more families living in this area. Complaints could arise with more people living next-door to agricultural activities such as tractor noise, tractor made dust and spraying. Farming on family owned parcels is the main activity and business conducted on The Horseshoe, not housing rentals, which could easily be the future for these structures.

To conclude, I encourage the Planning Commission to enforce the zoning ordinance of two dwelling units per parcel. I do not support the approval of the Campbell's application file number ZF #2021-0026.

Resident of The Horseshoe
July 27, 2022

July 20th, 2022

To whom it may concern,

I received a letter in the mail regarding an application for a Minor Use Permit. The application is for assessor parcel number 030-280-005.

I am a current owner and resident of The Horseshoe.

It is my understanding that this permit request is after-the-fact, and the buildings have already been built without any permit.

What the owner is requesting is significantly over what is currently permissible as far as number of residents on a parcel.

The owner has already demonstrated that he/she does not follow or respect current rules and regulations of Yolo County.

Therefore, it is easy to assume that, in the future, such an owner could take such structures that were intended for "multi generational" use, and/or "agricultural use" and then proceed to ignore county codes and regulations.

The owner could proceed to rent out the (currently illegal) units to an unlimited number of people who are not necessarily part of their family, nor are involved in agricultural activities. Future use of said units would be difficult, if not impossible, for the county to monitor.

I find it unacceptable for Yolo County to help this owner in any way build and/or use any units that are not adhering to county codes.

The Horseshoe is primarily agricultural, and is a quiet area not designed for multi-units of housing.

I do not recommend approval of the application.

Thank you for your consideration,

Current resident and owner on The Horseshoe

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, sweeping loop on the left side, followed by two vertical strokes, and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right.

July 22, 2022

Tracy Gonzalez
Assistant Planner
County of Yolo
Tracy.Gonzalez@yolocounty.com
292 West Beamer Street
Woodland, CA 95695

Re: Yolo County Planning File # ZF 2021-0026
Applicant: Ryan/Michele Campbell
Site: 30633 The Horseshoe, near Winters, California

I received your notice of the Application for a Minor Use Permit at 30633 The Horseshoe. I've been on the Horseshoe a long time, and I've made it a point to be as little bother to my neighbors as possible. It's really quiet here most of the time. I find myself responding, anonymously, to your notice.

As for the Application for a Minor Use permit, I understand the second residence on the property. It qualifies as an ADU, at 1155 square feet. I looked for, but did not find, a Junior ADU, at around 500 square feet. I don't understand the necessity for another duplex (2 separate family residences built without a permit I am told) to take care of an orchard on 22 acres. Unfortunately, "Better to ask forgiveness than permission" is not uncommon in Yolo County. Correct me if I am wrong, but a structure built without a permit is a nuisance, to be abated. This includes tearing it down, That's a better solution than 5 family units (when you include the Junior ADU which can still be built) on 22 acres.

I am familiar with orchards. In terms of labor we're talking about pruning, oil spraying in the winter, and mowing between rows. Water is automatic. There's usually one person involved, except for harvest, and you're talking about a total of 30 days or so a year. Harvest is 3-4 days. That doesn't make a 2 unit duplex "appurtenant" to agriculture. You don't let two families on your property year-round for 30 days' work. To sum up, having an ADU and a Junior ADU is legal and sufficient. Two unnecessary additional family units are not an appurtenant use. By that reasoning, more can follow.

Some alternate explanations come to mind. One, parents just want their children close. I understand that completely. Family is number one. If neighbors other than the applicant thought that, I probably wouldn't be writing this. Two, children are transients. We're talking here about 5 family units on 22 acres. That is multi-family residential use in an ag zone. Strange stuff can follow in Yolo County as we know. Fruit Stand? Farm to Table Restaurant? A weekend retreat for potential farmers? Want to get married on a farm?

One possible explanation is much more simple: rental income on the proposed permit, approved after the fact, on the un-permitted construction.

There are negative things that happen, and that have happened, on the Horseshoe - burglaries, erosion from dirt bikes, orchard parties, drug dealing, cars and dead animals abandoned, garbage dropped off to save trips to the landfill. All are fairly conspicuous given the single family nature of the Horseshoe, and thus a rarity. Rentals bring noise, traffic, and occasional violence. When these rentals meet orchard spraying and Roundup, early morning tractor noise, and hunting, nothing good will result. Last time I checked, there was one Yolo County Sheriff's officer around for the vast area west of Winters.

I'm going to reach an age, or experience some medical event, which stops me living on the Horseshoe. I'll need a revenue stream. If I can build a 1200 square foot granny flat, and 2 duplexes, now's the time to tell me.

I am sympathetic to the limitations placed on cities and counties by the state legislation in dealing with the need for housing. Where the state legislation impacts farming, however, I do believe Yolo County has authority to restrict or limit hob nob growth that affects farmers. I also know that California's population is decreasing, a pattern expected to continue.

I note the property is under the Williamson Act, which bars construction unless directly agricultural related. One more reason to demolish these 2 units.

I would request a public hearing, with input sought from the Yolo County Farm Bureau. If it takes 4 families to farm 22 acres, I'd like that confirmed by the Farm Bureau.

I'm "On the Horseshoe".

30690 The Horseshoe

Winters, CA 95694

August 28, 2022

Yolo County Planning Commission

Re: Campbell Permit Hearing

Dear Commissioners:

We are the direct across the road neighbors of the Campbell's. As such, we have watched them improve and farm the property we sold to them in September 2019.

The family moved to the Horseshoe, with no experience farming, but a wealth of expertise in construction. Almost immediately they began improvements; a new ag well, a shop building and two small dwellings at either end of the shop building for their two youngest children.

Not only were they busy building they were busy learning how to care for their walnut orchard. Despite walnut prices dropping to historically low levels, the care and attention they give to their trees is almost without parallel. It is clearly a family affair. All five immediate family members, Ryan, and Michelle and their three grown children have regular full-time jobs outside of agriculture. However, evenings and weekends we watch as they all pitch in to take care of their orchard.

From our perspective, the dwellings are certainly not offensive, or an eyesore. They are hidden from the road by the orchard, and the second dwelling is behind the shop building. The dwellings blend with the shop building in color, all painted in earth tones, and appear well constructed.

As we understand it, additional traffic created by having separate living space for two of their children is a neighborhood concern. However, when we owned the property there was a time when five adults lived in the Primary Residence, the one that will hopefully be occupied solely by Ryan and Michelle. At that time, our foreman, his wife and five children lived in the smaller home. Our foreman and family lived there until their youngest graduated from high school, so they were all driving! At present that home is occupied by the Campbell's oldest son, Bryce, his wife and two small children.

We understand that the Campbell's built the homes without first getting County permission. But to punish them by demolishing the homes seems extreme particularly in an era of such a housing shortage.

The Campbell's are a very strong family unit. The dwellings in question were built to allow everyone some private space, while still all able to live on the ranch. This arrangement allows everyone to easily help-out in day-to-day ranch work. Also, it is very clear they just want to be neighbors! We constantly see them walking back and forth and visiting with each other. The three generations really do work and play together. Not all families have the opportunity or desire to develop a family farm to this extent. Please don't stand in the way of them fulfilling this dream.

Thanks so much for considering this perspective as you move to review their permit application.

Respectfully,

 Thomas R. Jacobs

 Vicki T. Jacobs