



**CITY OF COTTONWOOD
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

826 N. Main St.
Cottonwood, AZ 86326

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 27, 2023
6:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Masten called the meeting to order at 5:58 p.m.

A. Roll Call

Commission Members Present

Commissioner Klinge, telephonic
Commissioner Gehlert
Commissioner Nelson
Vice Chairman Garrison
Chairwoman Masten

Commission Members Absent

Commissioner Glascott
Commissioner Stephens

Staff Members Present

Scott Ellis, Community Development Director
Tina Hayden, Community Development, Planner
Rudy Rodriguez, Interim City Manager
Charlotte Page, Recorder

II. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS AND UPDATES: Director Ellis mentioned the General Plan meetings scheduled this week and invited the Commission to attend.

III. CALL TO THE PUBLIC: NONE

IV. OLD BUSINESS: NONE

V. NEW BUSINESS:

1. **GP 22-006 – GENERAL PLAN MINOR AMENDMENT OF LAND USE DESIGNATION FROM VLR TO PLD** – Consideration of an application to change the General Plan Land Use designation from VLR (Very Low Density Residential) to PLD (Planned Development) on approximately 8.3 acres located at 1875 Mabery Ranch Road,



approximately 1,600 feet north of the Dead Horse Ranch State Park entrance. APN 406-36-007Q. Applicant: David Nicolella.

Summary: Planner Hayden gave a PowerPoint presentation about the history of the property and the current proposal, covering GP 22-006 and Z 22-013. The current operation, Blazin' M Ranch, operates under a Conditional Use Permit most recently updated in 2022. The proposed project will include 8.32 acres and be undertaken in two phases. The project is requesting a change in the land use designation and rezoning to PAD for the proposed development of the site.

Phase I: Proposes development of 25 'Glamping' units consisting of 10 Conestoga Wagon guest units and 15 park model units. The proposed Western Blvd. will consist of a themed building facade screening the adjacent park units. The glamping area will also contain Ye Old Dipping Pool. Landscaping has been proposed for the glamping area and the ceremonial area.

Phase II: Proposes a 40-unit hotel with lobby, bar and guest breakfast facilities.

Planner Hayden reviewed the General Plan objectives relative to the project, the need for an easement for access to additional parking to be developed, and the proposed septic that would be permitted through Yavapai County. If approved, the project will have a number of stipulations imposed.

Commissioner Gehlert brought up the limited access to the property and Planner Hayden confirmed the property is surrounded by Dead Horse State Park. Commissioner Gehlert asked for clarification if the Planned Area Development (PAD) will replace the current Conditional Use Permit (CUP), what agreements are made for parking, and what input the State Park has had with the project. He asked if there will be additional Design Review by the Planning & Zoning Commission.

Planner Hayden agreed that parking will require an easement agreement if additional parking is to be designated on State Park land. The PAD will replace the current CUP. A PAD is recommended for approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission then reviewed and approved by City Council. No further Design Review is required. Planner Hayden stated that State Parks was invited to participate in the neighborhood meeting and had given input.

Commissioner Gehlert asked about the State Park's interaction as to lighting on the site, and about comments given in Code Review Meetings regarding traffic control for large events. He expressed concern for the intersection at 10th St. and Main St. where busy softball nights currently can cause traffic backup. Commissioner Gehlert asked if there



was a traffic study required and if there is any capital improvement planned for traffic improvement at the 10th St. and Main St. intersection.

Vice Chair Garrison stated he likes the thematic development and agreed that the lighting needs to be compliant with the City's Dark Sky Ordinance, he stated that the property is close to the State Park and neighboring properties. Vice Chair Garrison noted the proposed septic development appears to be in the 500-year flood plain.

Chairwoman Masten asked if the area is flooded at this time. Commissioner Nelson said he had been in the area today and it is not flooded.

Commissioner Nelson also commented about impact of additional traffic at the intersection of 10th St. and Main St. and suggested the applicant may consider sharing cost with the City for any changes necessary to minimize traffic congestion.

Planner Hayden addressed these concerns; State Parks representatives were aware of the neighborhood meetings and she said they had given comments to the applicant. She commented on their Dark Sky compliance and while some unshielded lighting is allowed calculations will ensure the project is compliant with the City's Dark Sky Lighting Ordinance. Lighting and access to the creek had been reviewed in the neighborhood meetings. Planner Hayden said the applicant is planning to have additional traffic control during large events and will coordinate with staff and local police by submitting for the required Special Event Permit for large events.

Director Ellis said the State Parks had been contacted for Code Review. Director Ellis gave an update on the City's Main Street design that will involve changes to the intersection at 10th St. and Main St. He said that Public Works may do a traffic study in this process to determine current and future needs. He noted the City does not regulate septic installation and there is no access for City sewer at this site.

Planner Hayden reviewed the stipulations in the proposal. Representatives of the State Parks have been involved in the review of the proposal. Lighting and regulating noise had been discussed.

The applicant, David Nicolella of Sefton Engineering said the applicant and his firm have already done some work with Arizona Wastewater Design to perk test and estimate capacity needed for the proposed septic. He indicated the testing shows their plan will work. If developed, the applicant plans to implement strategies to balance the guest stays and events. Representatives of State Parks have been involved and attended a technical review meeting.



Commissioner Gehlert asked about the exact number of large events and if a traffic engineer is involved in the planning for the anticipated increased traffic. Commissioner Gehlert asked about event signage and if there is a concern of increased pedestrian traffic between the site and Old Town. Are the applicants planning any pedestrian route to be developed? He asked for clarification if the additional hotel rooms would be available.

Ryan Glass, the property owner commented on the number of events and what plans they have for scheduling. He reported they have leased the lot for additional parking in the past. He also stated that room will be available for overnight stays as well as event reservations. They are working with State Park officials, the property currently has about 100 parking spaces and will add 26 additional spaces.

Mr. Glass gave a breakdown of the numbers of visitors they currently host with the current CUP and an estimate of increase of new guests with the opportunity for overnight guests arriving from destinations further away. The applicant has plans to have several large weekend events and will host private events as well as continue with the current entertainment events allowed by the CUP.

Commissioner Nelson commented he likes the concept and has concerns about the traffic flow. The development has limited access with one road in and no additional planned access for this project. He asked about Fire Department review, the overflow parking agreement, lights, and signage for directing arriving guests, and how additional guests and overnight guests may affect security and safety of the guests and neighboring uses. Commissioner Nelson asked if the development will include green energy.

Mr. Glass commented on the available and planned parking spaces and that they have been reviewed for circulation and adequate traffic flow by the City Fire Department. They are working with APS and want to bring some power sources for new development to the site underground. The applicant does intend to develop in compliance with the City's Dark Sky Ordinance. In regard to lighting and signage on the access road the applicant notes they do not have ownership to develop lighting on the roadway. The property owner stated that he supports the City's Dark Sky Ordinance and is prioritizing the guest experience. They plan to develop a 'nature based outdoor attraction'. They do not have a current plan to include any solar and will explore if that might be cost feasible in the future. The applicant said they plan to work with the local Police Department for managing traffic at large events.

Vice Chair Garrison stated that he didn't think the proposed path lighting was Dark Sky compliant. Chairwoman Masten asked if they have any back-up lighting plans and if the applicant is working in coordination with Friends of the Verde River.



The applicant feels the site is 'poorly lit' presently but intends to comply with the Dark Sky Ordinance. He stated that their guest experience is very important and having night sky views will be important to guests as well.

Commissioner Gehlert asked if they are more than one mile to Old Town and if any signage is planned off-premises for events and if yes, how many events.

Mr. Glass said he believes it is more than one mile to Old Town and he is exploring options to have off-site signage to promote large events. He expects to have About 4 weekend-long events per year and would only have off-site signs to promote this type of public event.

Planner Hayden noted that special events will be reviewed through the Special Event permitting process, and signs would not be allowed on City right of way property.

Joe Filesetta, who lives nearby expressed concern that larger events may be louder and wants to be sure the applicant will have to comply with City's Dark Sky Ordinance.

Director Ellis said the project will be required to be compliant with the City's Dark Sky Ordinance. Chairwoman Masten mentioned the Stipulation #7 does address use of amplified sound.

Commissioner Nelson liked the idea of the proposal and said events can have a positive impact for the community. He stated the proposed development will require additional parking, he said the traffic circulation and access is not what he would want if there was an emergency at the site, and he wanted to be sure the river would not be impacted negatively by the septic development.

Commissioner Gehlert also was supportive of the project but was concerned about a proliferation of signage in association with events. He recommended limiting the number of events and having clear direction from the State Park Officials in response to the proposed development.

Commissioner Klinge agreed with the other Commissioners that the expanded operation may have negative impacts on the area; light pollution, increased traffic, and possible environmental impact near the river corridor. She said she trusts the City to aid the applicant in making the best decisions.

Vice Chair Garrison likes the glamping and the idea of more family friendly development being planned. He said he believes the theme will be popular with international visitors. Vice Chair Garrison mentioned some concerns for the proposed development: increased lights, additional noise with possible disturbance, and increased traffic without knowing how redevelopment of the Main Street corridor would alleviate future traffic problems.



Director Ellis and Rudy Rodriguez, Interim City Manager, reported the City is working on a plan for Main St., it is expected to start at 10th St. and work in both directions. A roundabout at 10th St. and Main St. is being proposed.

The Commission is supportive of the concept with recommendations to limit the amplified noise in consideration of surrounding uses. Other concerns were the traffic impact and the proximity of the septic development to the river corridor.

Chairwoman Masten asked if the applicant would consider a stipulation for periodic testing of groundwater and/or soil health in the area of the planned septic system.

The applicant was willing to agree to a stipulation regarding periodic testing due to the septic systems that are proposed in the development.

Further discussion ensued as to how the City and County Health could work together on any future testing at the proposed development.

Motion: I move to recommend approval to the City Council for GP 22-006 to change the land use designation from VLR (Very Low Density Residential) to PLD (Planned Development) for approximately 8.3 acres located at 1875 Mabery Ranch Road.

***Made By: Vice Chair Garrison
Second: Commissioner Nelson***

Roll Call Vote:

*Commissioner Klinge - Aye
Commissioner Nelson - Aye
Commissioner Gehlert - Aye
Vice Chairman Garrison - Aye
Chairwoman Masten – Aye*

Unanimously Carries

- Z 22-013 – ZONE CHANGE FROM AR-20 TO PAD** – Consideration of an application for Zone Change from AR-20 (Agricultural Residential) zone to PAD (Planned Area Development) zone to allow for the expanded development of Blazin' M Ranch and Dream West on approximately 8.3 acres located at 1875 Mabery Ranch Road, approximately 1,600 feet north of the Dead Horse Ranch State Park entrance. APN 406-36-007Q.

Summary: Planner Hayden's PowerPoint presentation covered GP 22-006 and Z 22-013.



Motion: I move to recommend approval to the City Council for Z 22-013 to change the zoning classification from AR-20 (Agricultural Residential) to PAD (Planned Area Development) zone for approximately 8.3 acres located at 1875 Mabery Ranch Road.

1. The development shall be consistent with the Master Development Plan reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, dated March 27, 2023.
2. The development shall be consistent with Code Review comments dated May 3, 2022, September 30, 2022, December 2, 2022, and December 13, 2022, where applicable and not superseded by the Master Development Plan.
3. Building permit applications for at least the first phase of the project shall be submitted to the City no later than 24 months from the date of Zone Change ordinance adoption. If this stipulation is not met, the City may act to revert the site to its previous AR-20 zoning or extend the time by which building permit applications must be submitted.
4. If designs differ significantly from those shown in the Master Development Plan, additional Design Review approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission shall be required.
5. The parking lot shall be resurfaced during Phase One of the project, per the surfacing standards set in Section 406.C.2.d of the Zoning Ordinance.
6. The applicant shall provide a parking agreement/lease, with State Parks, to staff prior to the issuance of building permits.
7. Any amplified sound outdoors shall cease at 10:00 P.M and any amplified sound inside the event buildings shall cease at midnight.
8. The applicant shall provide evidence of water soil testing to City Staff.
9. This project shall conform with City of Cottonwood Dark Sky Ordinance. No other stipulations were brought forward.

Made By: Vice Chair Garrison

Second: Commissioner Nelson

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Klinge - Aye

Commissioner Nelson - Aye

Commissioner Gehlert - Aye

Vice Chairman Garrison - Aye



Chairwoman Masten – Aye

Unanimously Carried

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS: NONE

VII. SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS: NONE

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: 7:10 p.m.

Motion: To Adjourn.

Made By: Chairwoman Masten

Second: Vice Chair Garrison

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to A.R.S. subject to certain specified statutory exceptions, parents have a right to consent before the State or any of its political subdivisions make a video or audio recording of a minor child. Meetings of the City Council are audio and/or video recorded, and, as a result, proceedings in which children are present may be subject to such recording. Parents in order to exercise their rights may either file written consent with the City Clerk to such recording, or take personal action to ensure that their child or children are not present when a recording may be made. If a child is present at the time a recording is made, the City will assume that the rights afforded parents pursuant to A.R.S. have been waived.

Information on the above agenda items may be obtained in person from the Community Development Department, 111 N. Main Street in Cottonwood, or by calling (928) 634-5505.

A verbal comment period will be provided during each hearing item. The Chair may impose a time limit on each speaker. The Commission will not consider written materials submitted less than three working days before the meeting.

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02(B) the Commission may vote to go into executive session on any agenda item pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) and (4) for discussion and consultation for legal advice with the City Attorney.

The Cottonwood Council Chambers and Cottonwood Recreation Center are accessible to the handicapped in accordance with Federal "504" and "ADA" laws. Those with needs for special typeface print or hearing devices may request these from the Planning Technician at 634-5505 (TDD 634-5526). All requests must be made at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Members of the Planning Commission will attend either in person or by telephone conference call.