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LEGISLATIVE ITEMS

4. Consideration and Approval of a Conditional Use Application for a HipCamp to be Located near Looking Glass Rock for Where the Wild Things Camp, Steven Alba

Time stamp 1:09:30 (audio)

Administrator Bushnell gave an overview of the Conditional Use Application for a HipCamp consisting of sixteen (16) primitive camping sites, four (4) bathrooms and two (2) parking areas. Existing roads and fire rings would be utilized. The property is currently under the Agriculture (A-1) Zone.

The Planning Commissioners discussed the conditions of this permit to include:

- Must coordinate with the Division of Drinking Water to avoid a public water system or the creation of a Public Water System and pass that off through the County Administrator
- Must comply with any state or federal fire restrictions
- Must comply with all building permit requirements
- Must comply with San Juan County Health Department requirements and Utah State water system requirements. Including having an engineer design the appropriate septic systems for the uses.
- Must comply with San Juan County business license requirements.

Bryan Torgenson, SITLA representative, had public comment on the establishment of this new HipCamp adjacent to the Under Canvas Development. He has concerns for the legitimacy of the operations that are already happening at this site, hosts on the site, emergency, restroom operations, occupancy and parking regulations per site, power supplies, structures permanency, trash logistics, gas line easements, signage, and water supply. He is concerned for the harmonious relationship with Under Canvas and maintaining a level of proper permitting and business licensing.

Commissioner Nielson commented on the policing of having such strict guidelines and the specificity of defining when, how often, who and how to ensure trash removal, toilet pumping, etc. He would like to see another establishment have the ability to also use their property, despite the breadth of the level of development. He also clarified that the county is receiving the appropriate taxes for these types of overnight rentals.

Commissioner Walker asked questions to the applicant regarding some of the logistics of directions getting to the camp and the rules that they ask the public to follow on primitive camping. Alba was able to clarify that this camp was created last year, and they have decided to really develop this idea and try to get things established and conforming this season. He explained that tent sites, fire rings, some tables, port-a-potties, non-potable water supply for fire protection, host availability, and parking areas are provided for guests.

Signage and fencing is a critical element to separating the two establishments in such close proximity. SITLA would be willing to work with the applicant to ensure that visitors are getting to the correct locations with appropriate signage.

Commissioner Wilson informed the applicant that if transitioning this parcel into a commercial use that the greenbelt exemption would be dissolved and that the landowner would then have to pay rollback taxes on the property. The process of Greenbelt designations was discussed and more information will have to be gathered by the applicant of the estimates of taxes that would be due if rollback was applied.

Commission Walker asked for clarification on the conditional uses of maintaining building permits, etc. Administrator Bushnell clarified that those conditions would apply if this establishment wanted to expand in the future. Such conditions as fire suppression do not necessarily need to be specifically clarified at this point in time but that this general statement means that staff will continue to work with the applicant to find solutions to what those specific guidelines would be with fire/emergency services, health department, and others ensuring the safety and welfare of the public.

Commissioner Rigg asked about the possibility of putting this decision on hold and the ramifications of that to the applicant if we wait. Administrator Bushnell clarified that there are many businesses in this position and that they are “not compliant” and therefore may not operate until getting an approved Conditional Use Permit and business license. She further clarified for Commissioner Nielson that even if a business is not compliant and may also not have a business permit, that as a part of the HipCamp umbrella they are still paying taxes.

Attorney Nielson commented for the commission to consider the full spectrum of this type of operation. He suggested not to get hung up on the specific logistics of the operations, as those will be worked through staff as we move forward. The greenbelt consequences may be substantial enough to turn away from this project. Administrator McDonald suggested the applicant table this decision due to the Greenbelt rollback.

Motion made by Commissioner Nielson to table the application until more information was gathered by the applicant. Seconded by Commissioner Rigg.

Voting Yea: All in favor.

Motion carries.

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