

# ***MINUTES OF THE SOLANO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION***

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## **Meeting of December 5, 2019**

The regular meeting of the Solano County Planning Commission was held in the Solano County Administration Center, Board of Supervisors' Chambers (1<sup>st</sup> floor), 675 Texas Street, Fairfield, California.

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Rhoads-Poston, Cayler, Hollingsworth, Bauer, and Chairman Walker

**EXCUSED:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Bill Emlen, Director Resource Management, Matt Walsh, Principal Planner, Nedzlene Ferrario, Senior Planner Paris Stovell, Planning commission Clerk, and Teresa Schow, Administrative Assistant II

Chairman Walker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with a salute to the flag. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

### Approval of the Agenda

The Agenda was approved with no additions or deletions.

### Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from the October 3, 2019 meeting were not available for approval.

### Items from the Public

There was no one from the public wishing to speak.

### Regular Calendar

#### Item No. 1

**PUBLIC HEARING** to consider Amendment No. 1 to Use Permit no. U-99-04 to allow 40 additional temporary horse stalls, a horse walker, commercial coach and storage building for the existing public horse stable and Variance to allow horse stalls within the 200-foot setback from the property line. The property is located at 6954 Lewis Road, in the unincorporated portion of Vacaville and zoned Exclusive Agriculture 40 acre minimum "A - 40", APN.: 0141-020-140. Staff recommendation: Approval

Nedzlene Ferrario, project planner, provided an overview of staff's written report. She noted that this is a public hearing to consider Amendment No. 1 to Use Permit no. U-99-04 to allow 10 additional temporary horse stalls, a horse walker, commercial coach and storage building

for the existing public horse stable and Variance to allow horse stalls within the 200-foot setback from the property line. Approval of the application will legalize the expansion of the Christiane Noelting Dressage Center. Several structures were constructed without permits and the requested Variance allows the Planning Commission to consider the special circumstances applicable to a subject property, including size, shape, topography, location or surroundings when applying the strict application of development standards in the Zoning Ordinance. The applicant is requesting a Variance to deviate from the required 200-foot setback for structures that provide shelter for 10 or more horses. The subject site is constrained by the long and narrow shape of the parcel, and due to a 100-foot wide Gibson Creek Canyon and 40-foot wide Kilkenney Canal located on the front portion of the property; thereby, restricting areas for circulation, parking and structures. The other required finding, according to state law, is that granting of the Variance shall not constitute a special privilege that is inconsistent with limitations upon other properties in the vicinity and zoning district in which the property is located. In this case, the planning staff finds that the grant is not a special privilege and that the physical circumstances are unique to the property.

The Use Permit is conditioned to limit the number of people and events, which is listed under condition number 2. If Ms. Noelting would like to expand these activities, a Use Permit amendment and an additional CEQA analysis would be required.

Staff recommends that the project qualify for a class 1 categorical exemption per CEQA and recommends that the resolution is adopted to approve the Use Permit Amendment and a Variance subject to the findings and conditions of approval.

Since there were no further questions, Chairman Walker opened the public hearing.

The applicant, Christiane Noelting, stated that she has been the proud owner of the Dressage Center for twenty years. She has invested a lot of heart and soul into the business and is an asset to the community. She stated that she works closely with the City of Vacaville and offers popular horsemanship classes and summer camps for children. She would like to continue these activities. She requested that the commission approve the staff's recommendation.

Several people spoke in favor of the project. Their names are as follows: Cynthia Lang, Sacramento, Richard and Toni Maddox, Vacaville, Janet Wyllie, Vallejo, and Tim Chizauskie, Vacaville. The speakers stated that Ms. Noelting is an asset to the community and an amazing person. They noted that the property is well run and maintained. Richard Maddox noted that he is Christiane's neighbor with and that the center has no impact on him and that the center has increased his property value. He really appreciates how exquisite the property is maintained. He noted that it is a nationally renowned equestrian center and it is fabulous to have it in the neighborhood. Ms. Wyllie noted that she has been with the center for 14 years and it is the best place that she has ever boarded a horse. Mr. Chizauskie noted the temporary barns, that are in question, have been used to house horses, that were displaced due to recent wildland fires. The shelters are important for the safety of horses in the area.

Dave Mariano of 3915 Denver Road, Hwy 12, stated that he was concerned about buildings that are being built without proper permits. He wondered about the process to remedy the situation. Commissioner Roads-Posten recommended that staff address the issue

after the meeting, since the buildings that he referred to are not related to the application. Bill Emlen noted, that the buildings on the Noelting property came to the attention of the planning department during a regular 5 year compliance review process. He stated that the department receives complaints about illegal buildings. The planning department investigates the complaints and typically can resolve the issues and. Mr. Emlen will investigate the buildings that concern Mr. Marino.

Since there were no further speakers, Chairman Walker closed the public hearing

Commissioner Hollinsworth would like to agree with everyone that spoke about the property. He noted that the property is an asset to the community. He reached out to members of the community who are in his district and noted that everyone had wonderful things to say about the exceptionally maintained property.

Chairman Walker noted that he drove past the property and recognized how narrow parts of the property are. He thanked Ms. Noelting for her service to the community.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hollinsworth and seconded by Commissioner Cayler to adopt the resolution with respect to the mandatory and suggested findings and approve Use Permit Application No. U-99-04 and Variance No. V-19-03 subject to the recommended conditions of approval as amended by staff. The motion passed unanimously. (Resolution No. 4680)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS and REPORTS**

Bill Emlen informed the commission that Mike Yankovich, the planning program manager retired. He noted that Terry Schmidtbauer, the assistant director of the department is the acting planning manager, until the vacancy is filled. Mr. Emlen noted that either he, Terry Schmidtbauer, Matt Walsh, or Jim Leland will attend the meetings.

Since there was no further business, the meeting was **adjourned**.