
PLUMAS COUNTY
ZONING ADMINISTRATOR
Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 9, 2022

The Plumas County Zoning Administrator convened in a meeting on March 9, 2022, at 10:02 a.m. in the Permit Center Conference Room, Quincy. Zoning Administrator, Tracey Ferguson, presiding. Senior Planner, Tim Evans, is in attendance. The agenda is approved as submitted.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

No public comment is presented.

II. SPECIAL USE PERMIT: FRIENDS OF PLUMAS COUNTY ANIMALS; APN 116-030-008; T.24N/R.9E/S.13 MDM

The request to establish a public service facility consisting of an animal rescue and adoption center for cats and dogs, located at 1093 Lee Road, East Quincy, is presented. Tim Evans, Senior Planner, gives a presentation as reflected in the staff report. Tracey Ferguson, Zoning Administrator, questions if the representative for the applicant is present. Rose Buzzetta, Executive Director of Friends of Plumas County Animals (Friends), is present and gives a brief history of Friends. Buzzetta received a copy of the proposed conditions and states that if the permit is contingent upon all nine conditions it will cripple Friends and they wouldn't be able to function as a rescue. Buzzetta explains that the whole idea of an animal rescue and adoption center is contingent on fluctuation, so they can't be tied to a certain number of animals. Animals are taken in as they are able to be cared for based on volunteer staff and as they have room for them using their knowledge, expertise, and good sense. Buzzetta feels Friends can handle that aspect of the operations themselves. Continuing, Buzzetta states the County did not regulate the number of animals allowed at their former location under the previous special use permit. Buzzetta feels some regulations are common sense and shouldn't have to be conditioned as part of the special use permit. Also, Buzzetta states limiting Friends to two years (24 months) to obtain building permits is unfair due to their financial situation and the fact they may want to make modifications or additions to the building at some future time.

The public hearing is opened at 10:13 a.m.

Several members of the public and Friends volunteers are present and speak in favor of the facility, commenting specifically about how well the facility is run in terms of organization, professionalism, cleanliness, concern about the animals' welfare, and determining how many animals they can accommodate at any one time. Comments are also made about the need for the facility due to the number of animals needing rescuing, noting that during the time Friends was closed, the other animal rescue in Quincy, PAWS, was overwhelmed with animals. Also pointed out by one of the volunteers is the benefit to the County by taking animals off the streets and getting them spayed or neutered. Those present request that the organization be allowed to decide how many animals are safe and appropriate to have at any one time, because it can be regulated well by the group.

Continuing, Buzzetta states her biggest fear is the stipulation that if any of the conditions are violated, their special use permit can be pulled. She doesn't want to take the chance of agreeing to the conditions and then losing the permit because they have too many animals. It's too important to the organization and the animals. Buzzetta asks that they not be limited in the number of animals they have and their ability to expand the facility because they are not going to be able to adhere to those conditions. It's the nature of rescue to have too many animals, and then none at all, Buzzetta comments.

There being no further comments, the public hearing is closed at 10:42 a.m.

Zoning Administrator Ferguson states she appreciates everybody's comments and anecdotes because in the special use permit application there is a section that requires a "Description of Proposed Use" and in the Friends application there was only a very brief one sentence description, so all of the content shared during the public hearing today would have helped inform staff when preparing the proposed conditions of approval. Ferguson goes on to say that in the application information, the Planning Department needs the full project description to understand the use.

Continuing, Ferguson states it has come to her attention that in the State Health and Safety Code and Penal Code there are rules and requirements for animal rescue and adoption centers and that the County's responsibility is public health and safety. There are no conditions currently proposed, but she'll be adding a condition that states the Friends will need to adhere to all state law requirements just as any other animal rescue and adoption center. Ferguson understands that when an animal rescue and adoption center receives an animal, state law requires the animal to be taken immediately to a government animal shelter, such as Plumas County Animal Services, for an impound process. After the impound process, Ferguson understands the animal would be released back to the animal rescue group.

Friends hours of operation are discussed as well as parking requirements. Ferguson states there needs to be one space for every volunteer staff working at any given time and one space for each 500 sq. ft. of the facility for visitors/clients, plus one ADA van accessible parking spot because it's a commercial use. The number of volunteer staff is discussed. The building is 816 sq. ft. Ferguson goes on to state the parking requirement would be two spaces for volunteer staff, plus two spaces for visitors/clients, plus one ADA van accessible space, which totals five parking spaces.

Regarding Condition #1, Ferguson states the public hearing was helpful to expand on the application narrative regarding the "Description of Proposed Use" in order to understand the full operation procedures and processes of the Friends facility.

Regarding Condition #2, Ferguson states the County looks at the social, economic, and environmental compatibility of the use. After the public hearing testimony, Ferguson questions the need to limit the number of animals in order to determine the extent to which there is compatibility with the surrounding uses, environment, and economy of the County. The condition is amended to read, "The number of cats and dogs kept on site at any given time shall be determined by the Executive Director with the consideration of the welfare of the cats and dogs and to include the consideration of staffing."

Condition #3 is amended to read, "When dogs and cats are using the fenced area, they shall be supervised at all times and kept within the fenced area."

There is no change to Condition #5. However, Ferguson notes Friends has two large signs they'd like to hang on the chain link fence, but she doesn't know if they're permitted per the sign ordinance. Signs are limited to a certain percentage of the overall building frontage. There is also space for a Friends sign on the sign monument for the industrial park.

Condition #6 is amended to read, "A parking plan shall be submitted that clearly delineates the parking spaces within the parking lot including an ADA van accessible space and signage. Parking spaces shall meet the applicable requirements of Plumas County Code Sec. 9-2.414, *Parking and loading*." Ferguson adds that a narrative that describes the maximum number of employees working at any given time should be included with the parking plan submittal, and that the parking plan needs to be drawn to scale, show the delineated parking stalls, and ADA spaces in addition to illustrating areas where no parking is allowed, if applicable.

New Condition #9 that reads, "Prior to operations being open to the public, the Building Department shall conduct a site visit with the Executive Director to determine elements that require a building permit."

New Condition #10 (former Condition #9) amended to read, "Prior to operations being open to the public, applicant shall submit all necessary building permits for the structure to the Plumas County Building Department and receive a passing final inspection."

New Condition #11 to read, "Removal and disposal of animal waste shall be in an approved manner at least three times per week, or more frequently if ordered by the Health Officer, to prevent a private or public nuisance or health threat, such as fly breeding conditions and offensive odors per Plumas County Code Section 6-10.117 Animal Waste."

New Condition #12 to read, "The animal rescue and adoption center shall comply with any and all federal and state law requirements."

DECISION

Tracey Ferguson, Zoning Administrator, finds the project exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), making Findings A and B; and approves the special use permit subject to the conditions of approval outlined in Exhibit 14 of the staff report, as amended, making Findings A through D as follows:

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

- A. There is no substantial evidence in the whole record supporting a fair argument that the proposed project, as conditioned, might have any significant adverse impact on the environment; and
- B. The custodian and location of the documents which constitute the record of these proceedings is Plumas County Planning and Building Services, 555 Main Street, Quincy, California.

CONDITIONS

Plumas County Planning Department

- 1. The special use permit for the public service facility is approved in conformance with the special use permit application and site plan submitted on December 30, 2021.
- 2. The number of cats and dogs kept on site at any given time shall be determined by the Executive Director with consideration of the welfare of the cats and dogs and to include the consideration of staffing.
- 3. When cats and dogs are using the fenced area, they shall be supervised at all times and kept within the fenced area.
- 4. Any gates leading into and out of the fenced area shall be closed and locked at all times so as not to allow animals to escape.
- 5. All signage shall adhere to the applicable requirements of Plumas County Code Sec. 9-2.2607, *Signs (I-2)*, and Plumas County Code Sec. 9-2.416, *Signs*, and a sign permit shall be obtained from the Planning Department prior to installation of any business signs.
- 6. A parking plan shall be submitted that clearly delineates the parking spaces within the parking lot, including an ADA van accessible space and signage. Parking spaces shall meet the applicable requirements of Plumas County Code Sec. 9-2.414, *Parking and loading*.
- 7. The violation of any condition of a special use permit shall be a violation of the provisions of this chapter and shall be punishable as set forth in Article 12 of Chapter 2 of Title 9 of the Plumas County Code.
- 8. The special use permit is to be signed by the property owners and applicants and returned within forty (40) days of the date of approval or the permit will be voided.

Plumas County Building Department

9. Prior to operations being opened to the public, the Building Department shall conduct a site visit with the Executive Director to determine elements that require a building permit.
10. Prior to operations being opened to the public, applicant shall submit all necessary building permits for the structure to the Plumas County Building Department and receive a passing final inspection.

Plumas County Environmental Health

11. Removal and disposal of animal waste shall be in an approved manner at least three times per week, or more frequently if ordered by the Health Officer, to prevent a private or public nuisance or health threat, such as fly breeding conditions and offensive odors per Plumas County Code Section 6-10.117 Animal Waste.

State and Federal Law

12. The animal rescue and adoption center shall comply with any and all federal and state law requirements.

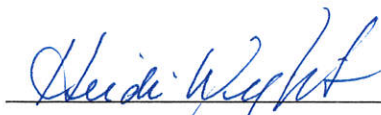
FINDINGS

- A. The project, as conditioned, is environmentally compatible with the surrounding area because the proposed project conforms to applicable State and County codes.
- B. The project is socially compatible with the surrounding area because the conditions are designed to ensure that the project will not create any nuisances or interfere with the surrounding community. The project is in conformance with all other regulations pertaining to the use.
- C. The project is economically compatible with the surrounding area because the use will not interfere with the economic use of properties in the vicinity in conformance with zoning requirements adopted for the promotion of the public health, safety, and, general welfare.
- D. The project is consistent with the General Plan and zoning subject to the conditions imposed by the issuance of a special use permit.

Zoning Administrator Notation: Any decision made as a result of this meeting may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors within ten (10) days of the decision. If the tenth day lands on the weekend, the end of the appeal period will be the next working day. The appeal will need to be based on relevant information stated or submitted at or prior to this meeting by a commenting public member or representative, or certain County department heads as stated by County Code. There is a filing fee for the appeal. Fee information is available from Planning and Building Services. The end of the appeal period is March 21, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourns at 11:41 a.m. The next regularly scheduled Zoning Administrator meeting is set for April 13, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. at the Planning & Building Services Conference Room located at 555 Main Street in Quincy.



Heidi Wightman, Dept. Fiscal Officer II



Tracey Ferguson, AICP, Zoning Administrator