

## Town of Big Flats Plan Commission

**Regarding request for Rezone at 1329 County Rd C Land Use Application For Permit submitted Dec 2023 Request for Rezone from R2 to Commercial. Public Hearing held Jan 9th, 2024. Additional meetings held in January 2024 with public comments.**

A request has been made to put in a campground with a bar/restaurant and event center, eventually having a play area, outdoor pool, pond and potentially propane exchange service and a small gas/fuel station open to the public. The family looking to develop the campground plans to have it be a family oriented place that maintains the natural beauty of the area. They would leave up as many mature trees as possible and have larger camp sites than is usual. They also plan to leave a 75 ft buffer around the perimeter of the property for privacy between the campground and the neighbors. They will have quiet hours as do most campgrounds. Any pets would need to be on a leash. They have been in communication with all regulatory agencies for this potential development.

Concerns that have been brought up by community members:

Noise, with more people in the area, there will be some noise. As there is currently little activity on the property, it is quiet.

Traffic, during summer and camping season there is now and will continue to be more traffic. Per information in the Comprehensive Plan, page 50, the traffic on County Road C has decreased West of HWY 13 from 2004 to 2021. County Road C is a major road in our Town and is already considered a major route from East to West. The area in question has a speed limit of 45 mph. It was brought up at two meetings that the area around an Autistic Child sign, not far from the proposed campground, should be 35 mph and that people were not slowing down. Unless posted, there is no requirement to change speed.

Wildlife, the family looking to put in the campground are interested in maintaining tree cover and as much area as possible in its natural state. No doubt animal patterns will be altered as they are with MFL tree thinning or with new roads and new housing. Usually animals adjust and a new normal is maintained.

If rezoned another business could go in, this has brought up issues about the soil, water or the family deciding not to put in the campground. The soil and water will be tested by an environmental consulting firm. As discussed at various meetings, the land has been monitored yearly and no issues to this point have been raised. If tests come back with concerns, the property owner will need to work with the DNR to remediate the problem. If the proposed campground does not come to fruition, the property owner could apply to have the land restored back to R2. It would have to follow the same process for the comprehensive plan and rezone.

It will destroy hunting, it is difficult to say how this will change hunting to surrounding property owners. It is noted that spring hunting is in Apr and May. Fall hunting starts in Sept. June, July and August are the prime camping times.

ATV/UTV traffic, the campground will set rules related to use in the campground. As for use on County Road C, the county is looking at what county roads to open and what sections. As of now, County Road C is not open to ATV/UTV traffic. People will need to follow current routes.

Water table, the water table in Big Flats varies from year to year depending on rain fall and seasonal snow cover. A pond on the property will not have an effect on the surrounding water table.

Bathrooms/unleashed pets, concerns were raised about bathrooms. How many and placement. There are rules to be followed, so many bathrooms per camp site and placed through

out the campground for accessibility. Pets will have to be on a leash.

No second driveway to a side road, close to cemetery, traffic interruption with church times or other church events, this property is not attached to a side road so no access is available to a side road. The campground development will abide by the proper setbacks. The buyers are looking to work with the Church and other neighbors. They will consider check in and check out times with church traffic in mind. One must remember that people come and go from campgrounds at various times, not all at once.

Increase or decrease in property values/taxes, the tax assessor was contacted about this concern. Putting in a campground per say does not lead to a change in value for other property owners. What makes a difference is recent sales and whether they are higher or lower than in the past. Our town is due for a new assessment in the next year. They will be looking at recent sales in the town. This reassessment may or may not lead to higher taxes.

Garbage from the campground, the campground will have their own dumpsters and a contract with a disposal company. Their trash will not be sent to our local dump site.

Increased crime, both the Wood and Adams County Sheriff's were contacted. While they stated that some calls are made to campgrounds, not all are crime related. A campground is typically not an area of concern for their department. The owner of Pineland Campground attended a recent meeting and stated that he has called the sheriff's department once in two years.

Wildfire concerns, campground fires are monitored more than that of private property owners who burn. The campground will have to follow area burn bans and follow all safety regulations. The potential owners do not want to risk a wildfire.

Shoreland Zoning concern, The Dead Horse Creek does not pass through this property. It is nearest the SE corner of the property and a 75' setback would eliminate any concerns altogether.

**Other considerations**, review comprehensive plan - specifically on Economic Development. Utilities available and able to meet the needs of a campground at that site. Some Plan Commission members went to the proposed site for a tour. One shed that was near the lot line and one house that had few trees on the property could be seen from the perimeter. Reviewed survey used to develop the comprehensive plan. Reviewed chapter on implementation, updates, monitoring. Many comments for and against the proposal on social media. Many people for the proposal are not willing to speak up in public due to a negative feeling or yelling by some meeting attendees. Quite a few community members are neutral about the proposed business development. A petition, on social media, was given to the committee at a recent meeting. It was reviewed, the majority of the signers were not property owners or members of the Big Flats community. Current zoning for the property is R2. That would potentially allow for 15 new lots and houses to be developed on the 77+ acres. Many of the people against the proposal want it left as open land. Of course a person or group could offer to buy it and have it rezoned as open space/preserve. It would require an update of the comprehensive plan and rezone. Nonetheless, the request before us is a rezone from R2 to Commercial.

Lastly, I was asked to share the below information.

Wendy,

I know there has been some concern in the community as to why the Becks have been able to run a business on residential zoned land. I have some history of the Beck's land and the salvage yard I would like to share.

The land was purchased by Larry and Leo's father, Albert Beck in 1945. The property was transferred to Larry and Leo Beck in 2003 after their father passed away.

The auto salvage operation was started in 1955 by Larry and Leo's father, Albert. The Beck's had a DOT salvage dealership license to operate the facility. The area was not zoned at the time the operation began. Adams County initially adopted a zoning ordinance in 1983. The facility predated the ordinance, these types of facilities were typically "grandfathered" to continue operation. In 2003 the operations license was transferred from the DOT to the DNR's oversight. The Beck's license to operate is still valid as of today. The land has been used to operate a business for almost 70 years beginning long before zoning ordinances ever began.

Thanks,  
Bobbi Klein