

City of Alamosa
Planning Commission
July 27, 2016
6:00 p.m.
Minutes of the Meeting

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order on the above date at 6:00 p.m. by member Shirley Adcock. Present were the following members: Farris Bervig, Robert McWhirter, Darrel Cooper and Scott Travis. Excused: Debbie Clark and Mark Manzanares. A quorum was declared. Staff present: Pat Steenburg, Harry Reynolds and Julie Scott.

Introduction of new member: Darrel Cooper was introduced as the new planning commission member to serve as Second Alternate until 6/01/2021.

Agenda Approval: M/S/C. Bervig, Travis. Motion was made to approve the agenda as presented. (Unanimous)

Approval of the Minutes: M/S/C. McWhirter, Travis. Motion made to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2016 meeting with the correction of the inclusion Shirley Adcock being present on roll call. (Unanimous)

Public Comments: None

Regular Business - Conduct Public Hearings- Zoning Issues- No applications received.

Planning Issues

1B. The request of the Early Childhood Council of the San Luis Valley for a Permitted Use by Special Review to allow child care and early learning services (Use Group C-3) in a Residential Medium zone (RM). The property affected is a portion of Lots 9 thru 12, School Subdivision, Block 69, City of Alamosa, Alamosa County also known as 809 Ross Ave.

The public hearing opened at 6:01p.m.

Adcock: Is there someone to speak for this? Please step forward and state your name and address for the record.

Neufeld: Nicole Neufeld, I'm representing the Early Childhood Council, 10130 E. County Road, Hooper CO 81136. The council owns this building and Children's Garden Early Learning Center; these are the co-directors sitting here; they would like to use our building on a temporary basis to serve children under the Colorado preschool program.

So, a little bit of background, Rocky Mountain SER Headstart is actually changing their enrollment and servicing children for full day services where previously they were serving part of the day pre-school children under Federal Headstart Funds and part of the day under Colorado

preschool funds. Because they are making this change they will no longer serve the preschool and it will displace approximately 60 pre- school children in the Alamosa School District and so Children's Garden, which has already been contracting with the school district and are in the midst of applying for grant monies and private foundation funding but in the mean time they would like to use this building for one morning session and one afternoon session. I believe they are looking to serve 12 children in the morning and 12 in the afternoon.

Adcock: So it's Monday thru Thursday morning and afternoons? Thank you. Is there anyone else that would like to speak?

Lambert: My name is Mary Lambert, 9079 5th Ave., Mosca, CO. 81146 I just wanted to add to this that in order to serve preschool children we are licensed and have a Quali -Star rating which are one of the requirements and have licensed teachers. Everything is in place to serve these children.

Adcock: Thank you. Is there anyone else that would like to speak for this? Anyone against this? Step forward and state your name and address.

Romero: Leland Romero, 1025 San Juan Ave., Alamosa. I'm actually opposing this and the concept is a well thought out concept but I am against this for a variety of reasons that I am going to state here shortly. I have nothing against this organization and as the council knows I applied for a permitted use for a day care facility in the building directly north of this location, the old Headstart building and when the health inspector went in they stated I have to have a commercial kitchen. That is the only thing holding us up. I don't know if they have a commercial kitchen. We had an issue with the roof and I have had the roof repaired by Alcon Construction and also repaired by an organization south of Alamosa, the Amish, putting up the metal- the steel trusses. I have an issue with the traffic, when I canvassed the neighborhood and applied for my permitted use and licenses there were concerns about traffic issues. When my building goes up, well it is up, but when my business is up and running with their business and my business, I'm thinking about the traffic issue.

We have two streets running into the south corridor of Alamosa- Ross and State. There is quite a bit of traffic already on Ross St. when we have my business and their business side by side I'm thinking about the drop off they don't have adequate space. I get to use the east side of the street as well as the north side. Competition is healthy so it's not me against them.

I also have an issue with the water, I have the water meter turned off in the Headstart building but there's water in one of the sink areas; I'm still exploring that. I talked to a couple representatives from the water department and there was a sewer line busted last week so they were busy and do you remember that Julie, last week? They said if I could hold off they will try to resolve that issue. I had a plumber come by and try to detect if there were any lines from the old Headstart building to that house; he told me at one time those houses used to be connected on the same water line. Those kind of issues need to be resolved before you can allow a permitted use; that needs to be resolved.

Another issue is I don't see anywhere that if this is temporary I didn't see at all on this application that it is temporary permitted use for one year. That's why I'm here; those questions need to be addressed.

Adcock: Permitted use is available until the building is taken away and they don't use it for that purpose anymore.

Romero: Correct. As I see she is seeking just one year on the application. I understand as a former city councilor when you do have that permitted use, it's just like you said you have that permitted use until you apply for a different business. So I want to be cautionary and want these questions addressed so you are aware and make a healthy and wise choice.

Adcock: Thank you. Is there anyone else that would like to speak against? We will close the public hearing and are there questions from the commission. Please one or both step up to the podium.

The public hearing closed at 6:10 p.m.

McWhirter: So this is a temporary just looking at these dates to lease the building? We can put a limitation on this for these dates?

Steenburg: If you think it's necessary.

Adcock: Also, on the dates we need to correct those - it goes from August 2016 to May of 2017, not May 2016.

McWhirter: I have written down a couple of concerns, are you going to provide food?

Roberts: We are required to provide a morning and afternoon snack. That is according to CAFC Guidelines

Neufeld: And for the record the building does have a commercial kitchen.

McWhirter: The other thing I had was the pick- up and drop- off.

Roberts: To be honest, we haven't been overly concerned with parking issues; it is only 12 children it would be quick parking and drop off. We would plan on it being in front of the building and there is space to the south.

McWhirter: And to the alley? To be honest I don't remember when it was open how it worked, but they were in the street sometimes.

Adcock: What hours are you planning on being open?

Roberts: 7:30 in the morning to 4:30 in the afternoon. Our school sessions are Monday thru Friday but we do require the teachers be there on Friday for lesson plans and to sanitize toys.

Adcock: There would be four teachers?

Roberts: No, we follow the NAYCE ratio, 2 teachers per 12 children and the same two teachers will be there for the afternoon session as in the morning. The director would be there at all times to comply

Bervig: You said 60 kids; is that the number I heard?

Neufeld: No, I'm sorry, 60 children is the number of preschool children that will be displaced by Rocky Mt. SER. Children's Garden hopes to serve 12 in the morning and 12 in the afternoon, a total of 24 and the rest of the children I believe will be served at the Gingerbread House at Adams State University.

Bervig: So why did this other organization drop out?

Neufeld: Because previous to now they were serving half the day under Federal Headstart dollars funding and half the day under Colorado preschool program dollars. They are converting the Headstart slots to serve all day; they will utilize federal dollars all day long. They didn't have the space or need for the state funding. It impacts the number of children total to be served.

Bervig: It doesn't add up. A bunch of kids aren't going to have a place to go.

Neufeld: You're correct. It's a huge problem in our community. I would love to come back and talk to you about this.

Roberts: I have over 70 children on the waiting list right now.

Travis: There's plenty of room for many daycares.

Roberts: Absolutely.

Neufeld: The organization I work for Early Childhood Council is the federal grantee for early Headstart services in all six counties of the valley we have federal allocation to service 108 children from six weeks old to 3 years old. We are currently enrolled for all those and have waiting lists equal to that or higher. And that is just infants and toddlers that were currently serving there is a huge need for quality day care in the valley.

Adcock: And this is all free programs. If they go to centers, they have to pay.

Neufeld: This is all center based care.

Adcock: I know that, I did child care for 25 yrs. I understand, what I'm saying is this free program is what you have. The other kids will have to go to centers and pay.

Neufeld: There isn't any center based care that is not in the same situation. We partner with centers and it's maxed out.

Roberts: And my waiting list is separate from the Headstart one and that doesn't even count the two, three calls every day that I get from parents that need childcare.

Adcock: My other question is special needs kids. Are you going to have special needs kids, is it set up for that?

Roberts: We will have children that need IEP for speech therapy only.

Neufeld: The building is ADA compliant.

McWhirter: If you have such a high demand have you looked at other buildings where you could have 40 children? Have you considered any other locations?

Neufeld: Absolutely, there's a lot of dollars wrapped up in that- it puts our organization and Children's Garden apply for DOLA dollars and USDA and the grants require matching private donations and in our community that's hard to do. We all have big dreams and visions; this is just a little step in that direction.

Roberts: Our plan is to get some kind of modular for our property and add five classrooms, apply for grants and supplement this need.

Adcock: And you have checked with the City and you have enough space?

Neufeld: Yes.

Bervig: My question is what is your relationship with what your trying to do and how does it fit with the party that just spoke once the kitchen is up and running? Sounds like competition.

Neufeld: I don't interpret it that way and the reason for that is because Mr. Romero has been pretty involved and trying to work through this with Early Childhood Council One of the primary differences is Children's garden is working through a contract with the school district. Because Mr. Romero's site is not licensed yet with the State he is not eligible to serve any children quite yet or contract with the school district. What I'm picturing is his intention is to focus on child care and before and after school tutoring and in my mind your talking about two different populations of children.

Roberts: Because there is such a need in our community, once he is ready to open, his doors will be full.

Bervig: Apparently, they can enroll in your program free of charge. He'll charge a fee?

Neufeld: Yes, the Colorado Preschool Program is free of charge. He would be a private tuition based center. There are other supports services; there is Childhood Assistance Program in all six counties and families qualify based on needs.

Bervig: Apparently, he's spending a lot of money on this building and you don't have to do that.

Neufeld: No, we don't have to do that because the Council has spent the dollars previously on this facility to be compliant.

Bervig: I not sure I understand.

Roberts: This facility is ready to go.

McWhirter: He thought he was ready to go now he has to have new roof, plumbing and this and this and I thought he was ready to go when he got approval from us and from Council. Their facility is completely ready to go.

Steenburg: This right now is what we are looking at - a Permitted Use by Special Review to allow a preschool facility. Those kinds of issues are worked out at the building permit process and inspections I'm sure they have State requirements also.

Neufeld: As well as the Health Dept. and licensing.

Bervig: Who works out those issues?

Steenburg: If a building permit is required, it's issued by the City.

Adcock: Thank you any other comments? Do you have anything else to say? Let's let him speak ask questions and move on.

Romero: This is a free enterprise country and I respect that; and I'm putting a lot of money in this business because I know there is a need out there. However, I'm not disgruntled in any way, but I am lack of compassion when a business similar to mine gets to go ahead and have a business free. Also how their funded is another issue that concerns me. She talked about how she has to have so many slots for the CCP program however she declined to tell you what that's about. I have a lot of information that I had to gather make sure to get my business work right. Yes, it is a free program they are providing, the way CCP is working is that the school district is actually given so many slots by the State of Colorado and those slots are filled by organizations such as theirs, such as mine and some other people and they have 24 slots - 12 in the morning and 12 in the afternoon. They generate a path of PPORE is the state funding which is through our taxes to provide schooling for our children to go to school. They get half of that - \$4,000 to \$3,700 per child. That's where the issue is for me; we have an organization that is pushing money around or distributing it and not one time have I received an email that there is money available or classes

that I could take; I ended up having to call this organization to see what is available and I'm doing everything on my own and it is taking some time. I want to make sure I have a qualified day care center. There is going to be traffic issues as I said earlier when I end up by the square footage of the building and able to have 73 students I'm going to max it out. I want the commission to be aware of this. I've worked with Nicole and want you to be aware of these issues.

Adcock: How many teachers will you have?

Romero: Three and some assistants. We have to jump through these hoops and follow the same guidelines and we had the fire inspector and got the okay and there are a couple extinguishers to recertify and then we're okay. Again, I work with them and there will be people that are impacted in the neighborhood and let me tell you the concern; they didn't want to come up here. I worked as their representative Ward 4, 14 years on the south side but when you want to have them at a City council meeting you can't get a voice out of them and when it is passed then you hear from them. I found it on City Council many times. I am being a little proactive. I believe it's an excellent idea, just a bad location.

Bervig: When will the kitchen be done?

Romero: We purchased the stove and the three compartment sink and we need the inspector will look at it depending on her schedule and we had issues and ended up taking care of the roof. We thought it would be June.

Adcock: So you're looking at another month, about when they open?

Romero: It might be a little longer, when you're looking at the license sometimes they can rush it through and the direction we are going is my wife has been teaching 24 years and she'll be requiring the license and knows the classes she was a preschool teacher before in Albuquerque so we're ready and have staff member that want to work for us. We are seeking the four, five star rating from Qual Star to go ahead and capture those funds.

Adcock: Thank you, you have another comment and then we need to move on.

Neufeld: Thank you. In encouragement of Mr. Romero's project and to hopefully address one of Mr. Bervig's previous questions, once every five years the state they put out the RFP for those slots and that will be coming up this next year. One of the reasons Mr. Romero was not eligible is the Children's Garden and Gingerbread House were already serving this population and just picking up the extra kiddos. So in the coming school year, Mr. Romero would also be eligible to apply for those funds.

Travis: It seems to be about supply and demand if you're looking at a business model. The supply is not; but the demand is we need to stimulate the economy. We need to watch out for our kids and if moms and dads have to stay home we're not doing that. I just wanted to add that.

Travis: I motion to approve.

McWhirter: Did we talk about the timeline?

Travis: I motion to approve, period.

Motion died due to lack of a second.

M/S/C: Bervig, McWhirter. Motion made to recommend denial of the request of the Early Childhood Council of the San Luis Valley for a Permitted Use by Special Review to allow child care and early learning services (Use Group C-3) in a Residential Medium zone (RM). The property affected is a portion of Lots 9 thru 12, School Subdivision, Block 69, City of Alamosa, Alamosa County also known as 809 Ross Ave. (Yes's Adcock, Bervig, McWhirter, Cooper, nays Travis.)

Bervig stated the need for additional information.

Adcock stated the parking issue as did McWhirter.

The recommendation will go to City Council for final action on Wednesday, August 17, 2016 for final action.

Other Business: None.

After no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Scott
Recording Secretary

