

**From:** Meggan Herington  
**Sent:** Monday, February 12, 2024 3:58 PM  
**To:** Sabine Reynoso  
**Cc:** Christian Haas  
**Subject:** RE: Neighborhood Fraud and Deception

Sabine, I will have Christian respond with the details.



**Meggan Herington, AICP**

Executive Director  
El Paso County Planning and Community Development  
719-520-7941  
<https://planningdevelopment.elpasoco.com>

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**From:** Sabine Reynoso <[sabinerey@aol.com](mailto:sabinerey@aol.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 12, 2024 3:22 PM  
**To:** Meggan Herington <[MegganHerington@elpasoco.com](mailto:MegganHerington@elpasoco.com)>  
**Cc:** Christian Haas <[ChristianHaas@elpasoco.com](mailto:ChristianHaas@elpasoco.com)>  
**Subject:** Re: Neighborhood Fraud and Deception

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Meggan & Christian,

Some neighbors raised some more questions and concerns after your reply from this morning:

What exactly are the requirements for a school and what needs to be done once she morphs it into a school? Which she WILL undoubtedly be doing!  
And what is your definition of a parochial school?

Thank you.

Sabine Reynoso, AAS, RVT

On Feb 12, 2024, at 10:39 AM, Sabine Reynoso <[sabinerey@aol.com](mailto:sabinerey@aol.com)> wrote:

Meggan,

Mrs. Shell told me IN PERSON in the presence of Mikaela Otto that she is intending to build and run a school out of 3980 Walker Rd. There is documentation (links in my email

that she filed for this before she even closed on the property). The plans show 10 (!) classrooms!

But regardless, even if it is “just” a religious institution, our neighborhood’s private, cul de sac, one lane road is NOT set up for additional traffic from students and their parents or church goers or whatever she tells you she will be “hosting” here!

It will put all of us here, especially us the ones that live up above her, at great risk - possibly even at risk of life - if a fire were to occur and we needed to evacuate our families and animals.

This is unacceptable, very scary and frustrating.

Respectfully,

Sabine Reynoso, AAS, RVT

On Feb 12, 2024, at 8:41 AM, Meggan Herington  
<[MegganHerington@elpasoco.com](mailto:MegganHerington@elpasoco.com)> wrote:

Sabine,

Thank you for the email. We’ve received a few on this topic and will enter them all into the record. I’ve talked to staff about the property and the issue at hand. You are correct, a religious institution is an allowed use in the zone district. We need to take applicants at their word and review the information that is provided as part of that application. We’ve let the property owner [know the requirements](#) for a school. Right now, they are opening a religious institution that may have classroom space per the County Code definition. We will continue to work with the applicant and reiterate what needs to occur if this morphs into a “school”. Thank you,  
Meggan

<image001.png>

**Meggan Herington, AICP**

Executive Director

El Paso County Planning and Community Development

719-520-7941

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**From:** [sabinerey@aol.com](mailto:sabinerey@aol.com) <[sabinerey@aol.com](mailto:sabinerey@aol.com)>

**Sent:** Saturday, February 10, 2024 5:49 PM

**To:** Meggan Herington <[MegganHerington@elpasoco.com](mailto:MegganHerington@elpasoco.com)>

**Subject:** Neighborhood Fraud and Deception

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Colorado Springs, CO 02/10/24

Hello Mrs. Herington,

My name is Sabine Reynoso, and I thought you'd like to hear about a "religious institute" trying to destroy my neighborhood.

Here's what's happening: About a year ago, my neighbor sold his property at 3980 Walker Rd., Colorado Springs, CO 80908, to what he thought was a lovely family with five children looking for more property — indeed, that's what the buyers themselves told him.

But only ten days after closing on the property, the new owners, James and Donna Shell, [quick claimed](#) their property to a recently formed Limited Liability Company called [Valens Capital, LLC](#) (also owned by Donna Shell, the new owner) with the sole purpose of turning the property into a commercial venture. According to our relator, you can't purchase a property as a primary residence if you don't intend to occupy it as such. The Shells never lived at the residence, but their initial purchase was for a primary residence. Thus, we enter the first instance of fraud—**mortgage fraud.**

About the Walker Rd. Neighborhood: Walker Rd. is a private, one-lane dirt road that's solely maintained by the neighborhood. The area is rural, with horses, cows, chickens, and large properties ranging from 40-acre to 5-acre sites. Kids routinely ride their bikes in the middle of the private road and run from house to house. People ride their horses here. It's classic Americana and a wonderful place to live and raise a family.

After the Shells purchased the property, one of our neighbors heard from a teacher who worked at Ms. Shell's school, [Twelve Stones](#), that the school was moving to our neighborhood. Shocked, our neighbor alerted everyone, and the neighborhood called an emergency meeting.

Upon further investigation, we discovered that Ms. Shell planned to move Twelve Stones to 3980 Walker Rd. and run her school illegally until she could obtain the required special use permit. Simultaneously, she turned the house into a VRBO.

Made aware that the neighborhood was on to her shenanigans and planned to report any violations to El Paso County, Ms. Shell quickly abandoned her initial plan and moved Twelve Stones to 4820 Walker Rd. El Paso County informed Ms. Shell that she'd still need a special use permit, but she never obtained one and is now **illegally operating Twelve Stones out of 4820 Walker Rd.**

On 09/28/23 Ms. Shell suddenly appeared at my house together with Mikaela Otto, Nelnet Customer Relationship Manager, and informed me she still intended to build her school and pitched it as an excellent thing for the neighborhood. When I pushed back against such a notion as that would completely ruin the neighborhood, Ms. Shell became belligerent and said, "Well, if I don't get my school, I'll just subdivide the property! And I don't know about you, but I'd rather live next to a small school than a subdivision!" I felt very threatened by her demeanor and have this encounter documented and would be happy to supply you with this document, if you like.

The Shells closed on the property at 3980 Walker Rd on July 21, 2023, but on July 6<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Shell already filed a [request](#) to build a school at this location, and El Paso County informed her she'd need a special use permit for her plan. Not wanting to go that route, on July 26<sup>th</sup> (5 days after closing), Ms. Shell filed an updated [request](#) for a parochial school, and was again informed by El Paso County she'd still need a special use permit. Thus, on Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Shell [submitted](#) her current plan for a "religious institution."

Specifically, because of the pushback Ms. Shell has received from the neighborhood, instead of filing for a school and a special use permit with the County—which would necessitate a county meeting where we neighbors could voice our concerns—she filed a plan to build what she's calling a "religious institution," to get around permitting.

The County is aware of what she's doing and has repeatedly informed Ms. Shell that she must get a special use permit to operate a school out of the property. But she now claims she only wants a "religious institution" but has sought a permit to build an 11,100 sq ft. modular building **with 10 classrooms**. Everyone involved with the project knows this is an attempt to get around the special use permit, which brings us to **fraud instance number two**. All her current plans can be found [here](#). Unfortunately, the County can't deny the current plan as it's within her rights to build a "religious institution."

On top of the above concerns, the road that services Walker Rd. is eroding and can't handle the traffic already using it. The fire marshal has said such a venture would present a problem for the fire department and would impact the ability to evacuate the neighborhood safely in the event of a fire. Plus, there's the fact that this is a rural neighborhood (zoned RR5) full of families, and a commercial venture is trying to come in and destroy it. Not only would she be destroying the sanctuary this wonderful neighborhood offers us, the whole reason why we all moved here, but she would also put us all at risk of loss of life, especially all of us living above her property. Imagine 85+ parents trying to pick up their children from school on a one lane, privately maintained dead end dirt road while we try to evacuate our families and animals???

The neighborhood is fighting Ms. Shell's plans, and need your help. Thank you for your support. I'd be happy to tell you more about what's happening, as there's too much to put in one email.

Kind regards,

Sabine Reynoso

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