

To: Craig Dossey, Executive Director of Planning and Community Development
RE: File Number AL-19-016

Mr. Dossey,

We welcome the opportunity to submit a proposal for obtaining a special use permit for horse training, horse riding lessons, and boarding horses at 14650 Eastonville Rd Elbert, CO 80106. We understand the need for a special use permit, and we are willing to move as quickly as necessary to ensure a smooth and easy process and believe we are well suited to do so. This letter summarizes our intent. I am going to create bullets of the criteria needed to be addressed and do them individually. Following that will be some additional comments:

Scope of Business

Ducy's Horse Training is a relatively small operation consisting of minor traffic and little to no noise. There are approximately 15-20 horses at any given time. The limit of horses on the property (training and boarding) will be 18 horses.

Riding lessons occur on a weekly basis with 1-2 lessons per hour during weekdays and 5-6 lessons per hour during weekend hours. Approximate business hours are from 10:00 AM-6:00 PM Tuesday through Sunday. Monday hours are between 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and only feeding and cleaning occurs during these hours on Monday. These numbers represent peak business and are not consistent through every hour all day. Peak training hours are when school is out of session. No business occurs after dark.

The special use is generally consistent with the applicable Master Plan.

This use is consistent with what the intent and use of this barn was when it was built in the early 2000's. That is horse boarding. We are wanting to formalize this by following appropriate processes which apparently weren't followed when it was built and operated by the previous owner of the property. We are also wanting to add horse riding training, mostly for kids but also some adults. That use seems in line with any community's master plan to enhance the lives of kids in wholesome, American, and outdoor ways of life promoting the western culture. Far better to have kids learning tangible skills on an actual horse outside than sitting inside on computers and video games.

The special use will be in harmony with the character of the neighborhood, and will generally be compatible with the existing and allowable land uses in the surrounding area.

These uses are in harmony with the character of the neighborhood. The neighbor directly to the north has a barn with two horses present. The neighbor north of that has a very large barn with several horses in it and cattle present on that property. The neighbor directly to the west has multiple horses and barns and at one time also had cattle for a roping venture in the arena they built. The neighbor to the southeast has multiple cattle and multiple llamas on a smaller acreage than we have for this riding and stable request. The lot of land directly to the east across Eastonville Rd is zoned AG-35. To the east of that is an auto service and sales business/ junk yard. A bit further to the west on Murphy is a long-established dog kennel operation, currently for sale. This is a region that is being used for raising horses and cattle already and has multiple animal and agriculture and other businesses in operation around it. It is a rural community/ neighborhood. The addition of a small horse training operation only enhances the rural and the family atmosphere of the neighborhood. Also, as you will read further down, the operation visually enhances the neighborhood as well. This is only a good thing.

The impact of the special use does not overburden or exceed the capacity of public facilities and services, or, in the alternative, the special use application demonstrates that it will provide adequate public facilities in a timely and efficient manner

Please be more specific about the traffic generated by the site. The previous letter of intent indicated that the traffic generated is approximately three cars per hour. Please include it in the letter of intent.

The average amount of services per hour and day are provided above as peak capacity. These are only for a few hours per day. The barn staffing is one to two people with only one being present on a full-time basis each day. This is not burdensome.

As for facilities, I believe this is referring to restrooms. There is a single restroom in the barn office. It is clean, maintained, and fully functional. Water is readily available with plumbing that is present. Facilities will be adjusted as required by code and the health department. That information is pending. Should it be required in the interim, an ADA approved portable facility will be rented and maintained until any permanent facility requirements are completed.

The special use will not create unmitigated traffic congestion or traffic hazards in the surrounding area, and has adequate, legal access

The special use will not cause traffic issues as the flow of traffic is minimal. Saturdays and Sunday will have more traffic, weekdays especially during the school year have very little traffic.

Peak hours would be 10am to 4pm Saturday and Sunday, and then 3pm to 5pm weekdays especially during the school year. Parking space on site is ample and there will not be cars parked along Eastonville, nor incumbering upon any neighbors' coming and going as parking is well away from the road and away from any neighbors. Access is via the current driveway to the property which has been there since 1996.

Eastonville itself is a fairly heavily traveled road in the first place as it is used in a short cut from I-25 and Highway 83 to Highway 24 eastbound via Hodgen-Eastonville- Murphy Road route. There will be very little additional impact on traffic from this operation.

The special use will comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations regarding air, water, light, or noise pollution

This use will comply with all applicable laws and regulations. There will not be additional lighting as this activity only occurs during day hours. There is no new construction proposed at all. There will not be any loudspeakers. No large events such as rodeos or roping tournaments or barrel race competitions, or horse shows or other such public events.

This is a request for training people, mostly kids, to ride horses on the property. As for the horse boarding, the maximum number of horses planned to be accepted on the property will be 18. This includes three horses that are owned by the property owner and are personal horses. As for the disposal of manure, currently the plan is to spread the horse manure on the acreage itself to continue fertilization and soil reconstitution efforts and on the pasture immediately to the east which is again zoned AG-35. A proper spreader will be implemented to disperse the material as wide and thinly as we can to avoid large piles and clumps which would take longer to dry out and thus create opportunity for smell and more flies to occur. Only compostable bedding material will be used so this will break down naturally when spread. Ideally this will all add to the fertilization of the soil on the property which due to recent severe draughts is also very sandy in the first place. Fertilized soil should support better quality and quantity of grasses and natural flowering. That would be expected to beautify the neighborhood from that regard.

The special use conforms or will conform to all other applicable County rules, regulations or ordinances

To the best of my knowledge and with the assistance of El Paso County planners, I believe this special use conforms to all other applicable County rules, regulations, or ordinances. I have also consulted with El Paso County Sheriff's office regarding applicable rules and regulations.

Additional comments:

Prior to the purchase of this property by Dr. Lee Wilwerding (me) in 2013 this property was dilapidated and deteriorating and simply an eyesore to the area. It had sat empty and owned by the bank for almost 5 years. The property was a deteriorating house, a deteriorating very large barn that had been

pilfered and looted over the years it sat empty, mounds and mounds of old horse manure, excessive and falling vinyl fencing, many small ugly vinyl fence pens all over the property because of the excessive number of horses, a driveway that was nothing but rutted and pitted dirt, and a very long unsightly "barn" which was losing its roof and had panels falling off it. Most of the pastures were in very poor condition with sand being the primary soil matrix, more so than typical for the area. The prior owner had built this property up to be a large horse boarding operation and had stabled up-to 60 horses on these almost 15 acres. That was far too many horses for this property to be able to support and the soil suffered severely. The primary foliage that was present were weeds. It was not a bright spot of the neighborhood.

Immediately upon taking over the property, we had the unsightly "long barn" removed from the south pastures and replaced instead with the single small horse shed which stands there now. Every year since purchase, I have invested in native prairie grass seeds and have seeded every March/ April. Rather than the manure being piled, it is spread to give some substance back to the soil to support the grasses being planted. The barn has had a new roof put on it and has been painted. All of the dilapidated vinyl fencing has been removed and large investment into proper steel and post paddocks was made. The interior pasture fencing is now very sharp and straight T-post and wire to create solid and secure pastures for horses to safely reside.

With the arrival of Ducy Horse Training, the rejuvenation of the barn and the property has only accelerated and improved. Wendy Ducy and her husband, Kevin, have worked hours and hours on property maintenance and repair. Ducy Horse Training and the Ducys have been a positive for the entire neighborhood, personal resentments from neighbors excluded. I cannot tell you how many positive comments people have given me since I bought the property and especially since people started to see the property come to life with beautiful horses back in the much greener pastures and kids riding and being taught these skills on site by Ms. Ducy.

Yes, I was naïve and assumed that buying a property that already had housed a horse boarding business was all set and ready to go with that. I also assumed being in a rural area this was already an allowed use. There was already a giant barn on it used for boarding horses. Life is busy and I have been very busy working and taking care of my primary business. So, I did not follow due diligence with regards to this. I assumed. Regardless of my oversight in this matter, this property was built to stable horses and have a boarding barn on it long before I bought it. Circumstances resulted in that venture failing and the property sat empty. No neighborhood wants that in their midst. The positives that have come from bringing this property and this barn back to life and the positives that Ms. Ducy and her training of kids to ride are invaluable by giving children and adults alike the opportunity to experience the western culture and teaching the of responsibility, ethics, and integrity that will last for generations.

We welcome the opportunity to continue to be an ethical business in El Paso County.


Respectfully,

Lee Wilwerding, DVM
14650 Eastonville Rd
Elbert, Colorado 80106

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