

Date: March 15, 2024

Attn:

Kylie Bagley, Planner

El Paso County Planning & Community Development

(719) 520-6323

KylieBagley@elpasoco.com

Regarding:

PCD File No. RVP231, Lazy Y Rocking J Park Rezone

Hello, I am submitting this letter in opposition of the application to rezone the property at 12960 Peyton Hwy from Agriculture to RVP. Any rezoning of the property, and associated plans for the development of a recreational vehicle park, is in **direct conflict** of Goal 2.2 of the El Paso County Master plan which is to "Preserve the character of rural and environmentally sensitive areas. "

I respectfully request that this process be transparent, and allow time for opposing residents to respond and organize our opposition. Clearly, the development plans have been in process for over one year. Many residents are opposing this development and we request that time be granted for our response to this proposal, in particular to our elected officials and other interested entities.

This is a significant issue for many of us who reside here, and for citizens of El Paso County who wish to protect the beauty and history of our county. This area is known for a traditionally rural lifestyle. Many opposition letters have already addressed this major concern. This proposed development is not consistent with a rural residential lifestyle. The lifestyle is not extravagant, or one of wealth. Most of us have worked very hard, paid our taxes, and have modestly priced properties. We represent all walks of life and live with respect for each other. There are other additional concerns of importance such as the environmental impact which is *not* adequately addressed in any of the reports.

There will be an effect to the environment in terms of damage to grazing lands of wildlife, bird habitats, and possibly to water resources. There are implications for Black Squirrel Creek, and possible drainage and/or contamination concerns. I do not see comments from representatives of Black Squirrel Creek Conservation or Black Squirrel Creek ground water representatives. I believe they have reserved the right to comment and I

hope that they do comment. I do not believe there has been *adequate* information provided regarding the possibly environmentally sensitive Black Squirrel Creek. I submit that Black Squirrel Creek may be an environmentally sensitive area, and it is in very close proximity to this proposed development. What is the environmental impact of this proposed development to Black Squirrel Creek?

The posted wastewater study includes many disclaimers such as noted under the floodplain and drainage comment “Additional investigation is recommended as development and grading plans are finalized”. In BOLD letters the report notes that “**Specific drainage studies are beyond the scope of this report.**” The study places a great deal of emphasis on the fact that contractors are ultimately responsible. Unfortunately, this is how contamination happens, and environments are left vulnerable.

There are legitimate wildlife impact concerns. Eagles are documented to be present in the area. What other wildlife and potentially protected species are in the area?

Beyond this rather glaring non-existent environmental impact information, I have concerns about the posted traffic report. The traffic study count began at 7 a.m. on the 3 day count. I believe much of the commuter morning traffic would have been through that area before 7 a.m. because many military and other professionals are commuting from these outlying areas at a much earlier time. Perhaps the traffic engineer was not familiar with the demographics of our area or the usual commute times. The report mentions an expected completion time of the development by the end of 2023. Is there an expiration date on the reports submitted for these rezoning changes? The report notes “to the best of our knowledge, there are no neighborhood or public input issues associated with this area.” The obvious reason for that is that most concerned neighbors would not have been aware of the proposed plans at the time of the study. Many concerns have now been raised as evidenced by the opposition letters. I do not see any comment regarding traffic crash data or injury/ fatality data at the already hazardous Peyton Hwy and US. Hwy 24 intersection. This area is notorious for speeders. The safety concerns are real and not mentioned in this report. *Any* increased traffic in this area represents increased risk of injuries or fatalities given our inadequate roads.

The Peyton Fire Department has signed off on this report. Their sign off approval acknowledges they are a “water poor fire department.” I know the El Paso County Commissioners are fully aware of the property damage and life threats associated with wildland fires. Please consider this carefully. They do NOT provide full time advanced life support staffing (ACLS). For emergencies such as heart attacks, strokes, unconscious babies, major trauma and others, they must call Calhan or Falcon fire departments for mutual aid assistance from *their* advanced providers. This results in delayed response of advanced emergency medical care. The current ACLS or advanced provider transport is American Medical Response with a very poor history of response times, even within the city limits of Colorado Springs. While we all support our local fire department, it must be recognized that the services they can provide are certainly limited by their resources.

Finally, although there are numerous other concerns, I will mention one which I do not see previously mentioned in other letters. The eastern plains of El Paso County, and the Bijou Basin, have not been acknowledged or recognized as unique geographically and historically important areas of El Paso County. This needs to be brought forward just as the Paint Mines have finally been designated as significant for preservation. It is time for all of us to respect the lands which we are forever altering in the name of development. I believe this area, which has been unappreciated, and is being devastated by reckless development, is of importance to many Native American Tribes. This should be further researched with the tribes. It is important to our wildlife and environment. It is important to those of us who live here and for all residents of El Paso County (past, present, and future). I urge the planners and county commissioners to fully research and understand the significance of granting rezoning which will open the door for others who may destroy this area forever. Once it is gone, there is no turning back. Rural residential zoning has at least preserved large areas of land, and the hope of keeping this land intact, for all to benefit.

Please grant us the time to organize the opposition.

I oppose this rezoning and development in Peyton.
Thank you for your consideration of this issue.
Sincerely,

Shawna M. Mistretta March 15, 2024 (please recognize this as my
electronic signature)

Signature Date

17560 Cleese Court
Peyton, Colorado 80831