

VENETUCCI FARMS – BUSINESS EVENT CENTER

Add property address

LETTER OF INTENT

SEPTEMBER 2021

Add PCD Project # AL 21-015
Address LOI to EPC Planning &
Community Development Dept.

Added

Added

OWNER/APPLICANT:

Pikes Peak Community Foundation
102 S. Tejon Street. #530
Colorado Springs, CO. 80903

CONSULTANT:

N.E.S. Inc.
619 N. Cascade Ave. Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO. 80903

REQUEST

Pikes Peak Community Foundation requests approval of the following applications:

1. A Special Use Permit for a Business Event Center for seasonal weddings and occasional special events.
2. Approval of Site Development Plan.

LOCATION

preface with proposed

Added

The approximately 10.12-acre Business Event Center site is located at 5210, 5202 and 5304 US-85-87 Colorado Springs, CO 80911(TSN: 6511300008, 6511302001). This site is within the larger 191.47 acre parcel known as Venetucci Farm. The Special Use Permit for the Business Event Center will be centered around the event barn located immediately off the internal gravel drive northwest of St. Dominic’s Catholic Church and the Can Am Highway (S US 85-87).



PROJECT DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

Venetucci Farm is best known and recognized in the community of Colorado Springs for its decades of community outreach, annual pumpkin giveaway and fall festival in the community for local school

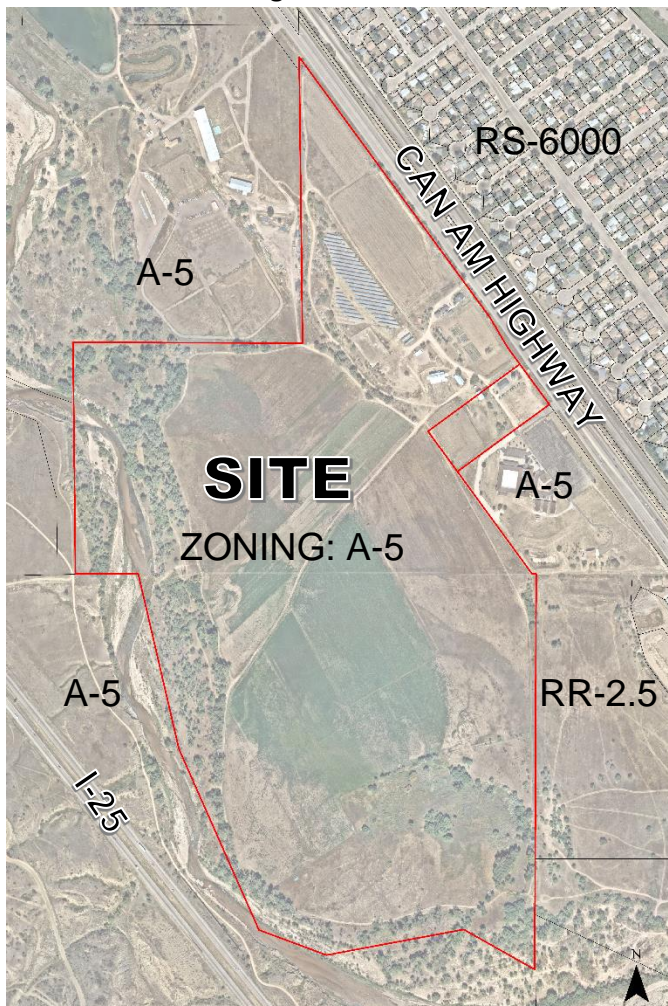
File #: EA 212

Correct to PCD Project File
AL 21-015 all pages

children. The farm was purchased in the 1930s by Nick and Bambi Venetucci and operated as an active farm until 2006 when it was sold to The Pikes Peak Community Foundation. The foundation continued to operate the farm and annual pumpkin give-away until 2016 when PFAs and PFCs were discovered in the farm's well water. Subsequently, the renowned annual pumpkin give away has continued with imported pumpkins and farming operations have nearly halted altogether. A small portion of the farm is currently leased to Gather Mountain Blooms, a local business, for wholesale flower growing operations. Gather Mountain Blooms intends to support the Business Event Center through its flower growing operations.

The farm is currently zoned A-5 and includes a building conservation easement, deeded by Nick and Bambi Venetucci and recorded under reception number 205196779. The Conservation Easement is located towards the center of the parcel, runs adjacent to the Can Am Highway and encompasses all existing buildings on site. A total of four historic farm structures remain on site, comprising of a two-story single-family residence with a detached garage (built in 1905), two hog barns, asparagus shed, historic tuberculosis hut and a newer construction barn (event barn) built in 2013. The residence is currently utilized by an onsite caretaker with water and sewer serviced by Security Widefield Water and Sanitation District.

Venetucci Farm Zoning Exhibit:



Surrounding zoning to the site includes, two parcels zoned A-5 owned by the City of Colorado Springs. To the Northwest, Fountain Creek and Highway 85 run along the westernmost boundary of Venetucci Farm. Bandley development owns an un-zoned and un-platted parcel to the southwest, and Southpark Technological Center owns an undeveloped parcel to the southwest adjacent to Bandley development. Avatar Riverbend LP owns two undeveloped parcels to the south of Venetucci Farm adjacent to the eastern boundary of Southpark Technological Center both of these parcels are zoned PUD. To the east is St. Dominic's Catholic Church zoned A5. Existing access to the site from US 85 is provided by a full-movement paved access owned by St. Dominic's Catholic Church. This access is located 1,500 feet north of the Highway 85 and Main Street intersection and roughly 1,000 Ft South of the existing residential house in Venetucci Farm. There is an informal shared access agreement with St. Dominic's Catholic Church for the use of this access (Church Access). Additional access to the site is provided by a full movement gravel access located approximately 1,000 feet north of the Church Access; this access is referred to as the Farm Access.

Describe agreement

The Pikes Peak Community Foundation is requesting a Business Event Center special use in the current A-5 zoned parcel to allow for smaller seasonal weddings and events. This request will allow for the barn, built in 2013, and adjacent areas to be used for small seasonal weddings (restricted to 75 people) and events. Wedding events will be held both inside the barn for receptions with ceremonies and a small cocktail area outside of the barn near the chicken coup. Weddings will be predominantly seasonal, held from the Spring through the Fall, primarily on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The foundation may allow for small weddings or events outside of the warmer months on a case by case basis. Existing buildings utilized for events will include, the barn, hog barns, and chicken coup with all event activities contained within the event barn and area immediately surrounding it, as shown on the Site Development Plan.

Does this include wait staff? See accompanying note contained in the TIS

The existing single-family residence and garages located onsite are intended to house a property caretaker for all site operations including seasonal wedding/event operations.

Water, drinks and food for all events will be provided by an outside caterer. All alcohol will be served in compliance with El Paso County alcohol storage and serving regulations. A porta-potty will be brought on site for all wedding events from Spring through the Fall.

Gravel parking is provided for a total of 161 parking spaces for guests, and wedding service workers (69 spaces required at 1 sp per 100 Sq. Ft. of event space). The gravel parking lot is located adjacent to existing barn and south of the flower growing operations. Landscape improvements include tree plantings along Hwy 85, parking lot screening and internal landscape improvements for the Business Event Center.

ADA and Vendor parking is located in front of the Business Event Space with an ADA path connecting to the outdoor event space. All accessible paths will include appropriate signage and will be compacted to create a firm, stable and slip resistance surface. Staff will be briefed on 'service dogs' and the proper and safe assistance for anyone with a disability. Patrons needing assistance will be strongly encouraged to contact staff. The Pikes Peak Community Foundation is committed to making this facility as accessible as possible – beyond basic ADA responsibilities and within their financial and the site's physical limitations.

Traffic may enter the site at either the Farm Access, located 1,000 feet north of the Church Access or the existing Church access. With this application the first 50' of the existing Farm Access from US 85 will be paved and connect to an internal 24' gravel looped drive.

To control traffic flows at the property, events will be limited to one per day, with no weddings or events scheduled during the annual fall festival. The traffic study completed by SM Rocha in April of 2021, concluded that the proposed site-generated traffic resulting from the change in use for the Business Event Center is expected to create no negative impact to traffic operations for the surrounding roadway network and existing site accesses. Analysis of site-generated traffic concluded that proposed development traffic volumes are minor.

Traffic:

The Traffic Memo provided by SM Rocha LLC dated April 16, 2021, indicates that the proposed site generated traffic resulting from the proposed Business Event Center is not expected to create negative impacts to traffic operations for the surrounding roadway network and existing site accesses. Analysis of site-generated traffic concludes that proposed development traffic volumes are minor. Existing turn lanes at the Church access provide adequate storage length and no additional improvements are recommended at this location.

Based on the projected peak hour ingress volumes, the traffic figures indicate that a right-turn deceleration lane is required at the Farm Access based on assumed trip distribution. A left turn at the Farm Access is not required and it is noted the a two-way-left-turn-lane (TWLTL) exists along US 85 which can be used for left-turning vehicles. Right-turn and left-turn deceleration lanes, as well as right-turn acceleration lane, are already in existence at the Church Access. These are considered to be adequate for supporting the proposed development. Internal traffic circulation utilizes a two-way looped 24ft gravel access drive between the Farm access and Church access.

Drainage: There are no new structures proposed or changes to the impervious surfaces or existing drainage pattern associated with this application.

Utilities: Water and Sewer are provided to the main residence by Security and Widefield Water and Sanitation District. The event barn is not currently serviced by water or sewer. Events will have water and drinks supplied by outside vendors for individual events. Restrooms will be seasonally provided with an onsite port a potty.

Geologic Hazards:

The proposed business event center is outside of the existing floodplain in tile 08041C0763G and 08041C0744G effective 12/7/2018. No new structures are proposed, a geotechnical and soils study is not required.

Wildlife: There is no development or construction associated with this site that would negatively affect wildlife on the site.

Wildfire: There is no development or construction associate with this site that would negatively affect or contribute to an increased risk of wildfire. This parcel is marked as low-moderate to low fire risk by the Colorado State Forest. Vegetation on the site includes riparian, oak shrubland, shrubland and grassland.

Districts Serving the Property:

- Widefield School District No. 3
- Security Fire Protection District
- Security Widefield Water & Sanitation District(SWWSD)
- Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District

Discuss how the proposed use is in line with the Conservation Easement Deed and not in conflict with C.D. Restricted Practices

Justification of the Business Event Center's support of the Conservation Easement Deed and Conservation Values has been added to the LOI.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

The relevant County Plans for Venetucci Farm are the County Master Plan, and the 2040 Major Transportation Corridor.

County Special Use Review Criteria (5.3.2):

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

The proposed development supports the County Master Plan by preserving the historic character of existing farm, supporting economic development opportunities and regional tourism opportunities within El Paso County. Seasonal weddings at Venetucci will provide an economic revenue stream for the Pikes Peak Community Foundation to continue its preservation efforts of the existing farm and philanthropic endeavors in the community. The County Master plan designates Security Widefield as an enterprise zone and commercial development opportunity area. Being less than 1/4mile away, weddings at Venetucci Farm have the ability to spur commercial development and business support in the downtown area. Currently a portion of the Farm is leased to a local wholesale flower growing operation. Weddings' need for flowers will serve to support this local business along with employee retainment and attraction of a skilled workforce. A business event center at Venetucci is highly probable to attract couples, guests and patrons interior and exterior to El Paso County. As such, individuals and groups attending events at Venetucci will be in need of nearby hospitality, restaurants and likely to visit nearby attractions in El Paso County.

COUNTY POLICY PLANS

The Special Use Permit for a Business Event Center at Venetucci Farm will support the following goals of the County Master Plan.

Housing and Communities

Goal HC.2 Preserve the character of rural and environmentally sensitive areas.

Objective: HC2-6: Continue to carefully analyze each development proposal for their location, compatibility with the natural environment, and cohesion with the existing character.

Business event center use at this site will enable the Pikes Peak Community foundation to continue the legacy of the annual fall festival and pumpkin giveaway while preserving the historic character of the farm. Weddings are located within developed areas and existing buildings of the farm; as such,

undeveloped areas of the farm will remain as such. No new structures are proposed with this development and all environment impacts are anticipated as minimal.

Economic Development

Goal ED.1 - Recruit new businesses and spur the development of growing sectors.

Objective ED1-3: To help activate spaces, provide more options for fun an recreation to residents.

Objective ED1-4: Attract more visitors to the County by emphasizing development of entertainment uses in Regional Centers.

Objective ED1-5: Allow residents to manage compatible, low intensity personal businesses from their home to create greater opportunities for new companies to be established.

Objective ED1-7: Transit routes and stops at or near all Employment Centers should be strategically located as these areas continue to develop and redevelop.

Goal ED.2 - Support efforts to recruit, train, and retain a skilled workforce.

Objective: ED2-2: Foster and further develop all partnerships that are essential to workforce development in the community to ensure residents have access to the tools and training they need to live and work in El Paso County.

Goal ED.4 - Utilize economic opportunity zones to support new business development

Security Widefield, immediately adjacent to Venetucci, is identified as commercial development opportunity areas and an enterprise zones. Weddings at Venetucci Farm will support localized economic development through its partnership with Gather Mountain Blooms and its proximity to Security Widefield downtown. Seasonal weddings at this location will support County goals to train and retain a skilled workforce and local employment opportunities (such as flower growers, wedding photographers and/or food vendors). Furthermore, this use will serve to attract local commuters, residents and tourists to Venetucci Farm and Security Widefield. Guests and/or patrons attending weddings and events may serve to further support economic development opportunities and employment within Security Widefield as out of town guest may be in need of hospitality and restaurant resources.

Community Facilities

Goal CFI.1: Continue to coordinate with local and regional agencies to provide well-managed, high-quality community facilities and services.

Goal CFI.3 - Ensure adequate provision of utilities to manage growth and development.

Objective CFI3-6: In general, all forms of energy generation should be considered and appropriately sited in the County as opportunities arise.

Goal CFI.4 - Use best management practices to protect water quality, conserve water, minimize impacts of flooding, and beautify El Paso County

Objective CFI4-3: Plan for water resources in a thoughtful way that recognizes the nonrenewable nature of water resources in the area, accommodates existing and historical uses, and allows for sustainable planned growth.

The Pikes Peak Community Foundation currently leases land to Colorado Springs Utilities for solar panels. This partnership supports the County Master Plan by focusing on clean alternative energy sources and providing continued support for resources and technology to ensure clean energy is both reliable and sustainable. There are no new structures or associated impacts to water or the watershed associated with this use. All water for events will be brought onsite by an outside caterer and restrooms will be provided by a seasonal porta-potty.

Tourism

Goal RT.3 - Explore projects, programs, and initiatives for enhancing tourism in unincorporated areas.

The special use permit for a business event center at Venetucci farm will enhance tourism opportunities and create a tourist destination within the Security Widefield enterprise zone. Weddings at Venetucci have the ability to attract patrons, couples and families from outside of El Paso County to Venetucci farm. Tourists drawn to Venetucci can then serve to support other economic sectors and existing tourism opportunities including, recreational attractions, restaurants, hospitality services, ride share and car rental services.

Environment

Goal E.1 - Consider the environmental impacts related to natural resource conservation, air quality, water quality, wildlife habitat, and waste management during any planning process.

The Business event center at Venetucci will be located within the developed area of the existing farm and utilize existing buildings, such as the event barn and chicken coup. Undeveloped areas of the farm are to remain undeveloped and in alignment with their agricultural usage prior to the business event center; this will support the preservation of wildlife habitat and leave existing habitat undisturbed. Landscape areas around the business event center are planned as predominantly native with a Foothills Seed mix, Native Seed mix and minimal shrub beds to lower water demand.

COUNTY WATER MASTER PLAN

Goal 1.1 – Ensure an adequate water supply in terms of quantity, dependability and quality for existing and future development.

Policy 1.1.1 – Adequate water is a critical factor in facilitating future growth and it is incumbent upon the County to coordinate land use planning with water demand, efficiency and conservation.

Goal 1.2 – Integrate water and land use planning

PFA and PFCs well water contamination has halted nearly all farming operations and sources of revenue for the Pikes Peak Community Foundation. The adaptive reuse of the event barn for seasonal weddings and occasional small events will allow for additional revenue to support the annual Fall Festival while preserving the farm’s historic character and philanthropic endeavors. There are no increases to water or waste water demand at this site because all water/drinks will be brought in from an outside caterer. The caterer will also be responsible of removing the dishes offsite for cleaning. Restroom facilities for all events will be provided by portable toilets located on site seasonally. Landscape improvements at this site are designed to be low water usage, low maintenance and predominantly native. The existing residence is serviced by Security Widefield Water and Sanitation District. This residence is occupied by a single caretaker.

Goal 4.2 – Support the efficient use of water supplies.

Goal 4.5 – Plan for water resources in a thoughtful way that recognizes the non-renewable nature of water resources in the area, accommodates existing and historical uses, and allows for sustainable, planned growth

Goal 6.1.2 – Promote water conservation

Existing well water at Venetucci Farm is currently utilized to support non-edible vegetation, such as whole sale flower operations and existing vegetation. Landscape improvements for the Business Event Center will likewise be supported by existing well water. This usage is in alignment with the historic usage, rights and health risk factors associated with the well water and farm.

COUNTY TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN

The 2040 Major Transportation Corridor plan identifies I-25 west of Venetucci as a Freeway and the Can Am Highway as a Principal Arterial. There are no planned roadway improvement projects for either I-25 or the Can Am highway in 2040. I-25 is similarly identified as a Freeway in the 2060 Corridor Preservation. The Can Am highway is likewise identified as a Principal Arterial.

A traffic memo by SM Rocha LLC in April of 2021 concluded allowance of a Business Event Center at Venetucci is projected to have a minor effect on existing traffic volumes. Existing turn lanes at the Church access will provide adequate storage length and no additional improvements are recommended at this location.

Based on the projected peak hour ingress volumes, the traffic figures indicate that a right-turn deceleration lane is required at the Farm Access based on assumed trip distribution. A left-turn lane at the Farm access is not required and it is noted that a central turn-lane exists along US 85, which may be used by left-turning vehicles.

- 2. 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**

The use of the barn at Venetucci for seasonal weddings will maintain the existing harmony of Venetucci Farm with the character of the neighborhood. Small seasonal weddings at this location will be located interior to the site and across the CanAm highway from residential properties. All receptions will be interior to the event barn and all services (caterers, music, etc...) will be brought in. In the Traffic Memo completed by SM Rocha LLC, traffic impacts from the Business Event Center to the area were determined to be minimal and having no negative effects. Traffic will access the site from the CanAm highway and may enter/exit the site at the Farm access or Church access; no traffic is anticipated to travel through the residential neighborhood.

3. The impact of the special use does not overburden or exceed the capacity of the 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

Drinking water for the business event center will be provided by a caterer and restroom facilities will be provided by a port a potty that will be brought in seasonally for special events. The existing residence is currently serviced by SDDSD for water and sewer. There is no anticipated increase in usage or impact to either water or sewer for the residence. Internal traffic circulation is provided by a gravel drive and parking lot. Traffic impacts to the Can Am Highway are projected to be minor.

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

The Traffic Memo provided by SM Rocha LLC indicates that the proposed site generated traffic resulting from the proposed Business Event Center is not expected to create negative impacts to traffic operations for the surrounding roadway network and existing site accesses. Analysis of site-generated traffic by SM Rocha in April of 2021, concludes that proposed development traffic volumes are minor. Existing turn lanes at the Church access will provide adequate storage length and no additional improvements are recommended at this location.

Based on the projected peak hour ingress volumes, the traffic figures indicate that a right-turn deceleration lane is required at the Farm Access based on assumed trip distribution. A left-turn lane at the Farm access is not required. It is noted that a two-way-left-turn-lane exists along the US 85 which may be used by left-turning vehicles. With this proposal the existing Farm Access is proposed to be widened to 24ft.

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

All proposed uses on the site will comply with local, state, and federal laws and regulations regarding air, water, light and noise. All business center activities on site are located away from wetlands and the associated migratory bird paths. There are no anticipated or foreseen impacts to wildlife with a seasonal business center usage at this location. All reception noise from weddings and/or occasional large gatherings such as reunions will be inside the barn to mitigate noise impacts. Weddings will be limited to 75 people and receptions will be located inside the event barn, noise impacts are anticipated to be

minimal. Dark sky compliance safety lighting will be provided onsite and will remain respective of the agricultural nature of the site.

6. The special use will not otherwise be detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare of the present or future residents of El Paso County

A seasonal business event center at Venetucci farm will support the philanthropic Fall Festival at Venetucci and serve as a nearby community amenity for the residents of El Paso County, Colorado Springs and Fountain. A seasonal business event center at Venetucci farm will provide a nearby wedding venue for the surrounding community and aid to support ongoing larger community events such as the Fall Festival and Flower growing operations by Gather Mountain Blooms. Additionally, the business event center will provide local employment opportunities adjacent to the Security Widefield commercial priority development area.

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

A business event center at this location will comply will all applicable County rules, regulation and ordinances.

The Traffic Memo provided by SM Rocha LLC indicates that the proposed site generated traffic resulting from the proposed Business Event Center is not expected to create negative impacts to traffic operations for the surrounding roadway network and existing site accesses. Analysis of site-generated traffic concludes that proposed development traffic volumes are minor. Existing turn lanes at the Church access will provide adequate storage length and no additional improvements are recommended at this location.

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