

LETTER OF INTENT REZONING APPLICATION

Sturgeon County
9613-100 Street
Morinville, Alberta
T8R 1L9

July 18, 2023

Attention: Planning and Development

Re: Land Use Bylaw Amendment (Rezoning) Application

Free Spirit Ranch Inc.
Plan 1220583 Block 1 Lot 1-12.26 acres
56210 Range Road 253
Sturgeon County, Alberta
T0A 0K0

We purchased the property in 2016 to develop for our horses and family use. We proceeded to build a shop in 2018, a horse barn in 2021 and a timber frame barn in 2022. The property is fenced on all sides with a secured gate for access on an approach which meets the County's GMSS standards.

We have been using the property for family gatherings on special occasions of all kinds and working with our horses. As we developed the property, we started getting inquiries from friends, community members and people driving by as to whether we would be interested in renting out our property for private events. With these inquiries increasing in number, we as a family had to decide whether this was something we were prepared to do.

We knew that this would involve obtaining approval by Alberta Transportation and Sturgeon County, both regarding development approval and rezoning. We followed along as Sturgeon County went through the process of amending the Land Use Bylaw and dealing with event venues.

We realized that our property fit the criteria for event venue zoning as it is over TEN (10) acres in size and is currently zoned AG Minor. Additionally, the property has paved access to the site, has few neighbors in proximity and has onsite services including power, water, septic, gas and internet.

Coming out of the pandemic and with the restrictions being lifted on gatherings we decided our property would be ideal for use as a place where individuals, families and community could celebrate and grow.

We met with Jonathan Heemskerk and Tyler McNab in November of 2022 to discuss our plans for the property. We were advised to apply to Alberta Transportation for a Roadside Development Permit before making a rezoning application. We had previously obtained a Traffic Impact Assessment from Bunt Engineering and applied to Alberta Transportation in January of 2023. We received approval for our Roadside Development Permit on July 7, 2023. The permit is valid for FIVE (5) years. We also met with Paul Shepherd of Superior Safety Codes in February of 2023 to get an initial assessment on the timber frame barn given our plans to use it as an event venue. The meeting went well with advice to install fire extinguishers and a push bar on one of the exits.

We envision the types of uses for our property as follows:

Celebrations

- Birthday parties
- Anniversaries
- Weddings
- Reunions
- Gatherings of all types that involve milestones and holiday events
- Christmas parties
- Skating parties

Personal Growth and Wellness Classes and Events

- Yoga and other physical fitness, mental health and wellness modalities
- Wellness retreats

Corporate Events

- Team Building
- Business and development Meetings
- Strategic Planning

The balance of the property will be used for our horses and consist of corrals and hay/pasture areas.

We see our property as appealing to a niche market of smaller gatherings with a maximum of 120 people in attendance which suits the size of our timber frame barn and our own personal preference. The timber frame barn is stunning and unique, and we intend to keep it that way as we plan to continue to use it as a family.

Our hours of operation would be subject to County approval, but we are proposing the following hours of operation:

- For daytime events, starting at 8:00 am

-For evening events, quiet hour at 10:00 pm with the doors closed by that time and all music to be limited to the inside of the venue.

-Guest checkout would be midnight and all clean up and closing of the barn to be complete by 1:00 am

The venue would be used year-round however most events would be in the months of May to October.

We would prefer that guests would stay off-site and we encourage that to be the case. We would however request consideration for limited RV overnight stays. For example, a newly married couple. We have power capability to supply limited RV overnight to avoid the need for a generator and the RV's would need to be self sufficient in all other ways.

To specify the services on the property in place are:

Power

Gas

Internet

Water (two cisterns with water hauled to site by Reed's Water Hauling)

Septic (two underground concrete tanks which are pumped out and hauled away by RT Septic)

Our intent is to provide a venue for all to gather and grow with an emphasis on supporting local businesses and vendors.

To date we have used the following local services at our property:

-Former Sturgeon County employee, now retired to provide site maintenance and upkeep on a part time basis

-Local cleaning company to clean the event barn and horse barn

-Accommodations at Heritage Park RV in Sturgeon County and Holiday Inn on the north end of St. Albert

-Catering by Tracy Mulligan, Kelly Perras and other local Vendors

-Bartending by Top Shelf bartending

-Event Planning by Infinite Event Services (Sheldon Fingler)

-Transportation by Tammy Tipple (bus) and Morinville Taxi as well as Uber

At the end of the day, we see this as not only beneficial to economic development and tourism for the County but just as importantly for the personal well being of the members of our community and their families.

We intend to minimize or eliminate any impacts to our surrounding neighbors. Our property is located between Highway 2 and Range Road 253 (old Highway 2) two miles north of Morinville. There is also an unused CN rail line which borders the west side of our property. There is traffic noise generated by transport trucks, passenger vehicles and motorcycles which fluctuate depending on the time of day. This noise is expected given it's a primary highway. The CN rail line has only ever been used to store railway

cars for the summer and this summer is the first summer that there were no rail cars stored on the line. We understand the long-term plan for the rail line is to discontinue it's use.

The neighbors to the south of us own 18 acres and their residence is located on the most southerly area of their property. It is estimated that their residence is 700 metres from our timber frame barn. We have discussed with them our plans for the property and they advise they have no concerns at this time other than that we apply for and obtain all necessary approvals, permits and rezoning. They have been to our property to see the timber frame barn. We have planted SEVENTY-FIVE (75) Okanese poplar trees on the common border of our property with them and we have built two four rail, six foot fences to separate our properties. This has been done to eliminate any possible unwanted noise. These trees grow up to nine feet per year and reach the height of sixty feet.

The neighbors to the immediate north are good friends of ours and they do not live on the property. They are aware of our plans and have attended private functions at our property. We have constructed a six foot, three rail fence on the common boundary and there are several mature trees on the north property line which provide a sight and sound barrier.

The second property to the north is the residence of my first cousin and his family. We have asked for their feedback on our plans, and they have no concerns at this time. They have assured us that if they have any concerns they would come to us directly to resolve.

The neighbors to the north east have a residence and yard on 2.47 acres. We are trying to find a way to connect to them. We have attempted to visit them directly but they have an electric gate with signage and we respect that they wish to have privacy. We will look for another opportunity to talk to them directly. We know who they are and they know us as well . We have to date, had pleasant relations with them in our previous careers when they had used our services.

To the north of that property is another well treed residence and yard. We know these people and they have been to our property. One of the residents delivers water to our place and has indicated that he has never experienced any noise nuisance from our property.

Out of an abundance of caution and after meeting with Tyler McNabb and Stephen Chipchase we have decided to retain the services of an acoustical consultant to provide a report for us and to provide to the County.

We will be prepared to provide additional information and answer any questions at the Public Hearing.

We would require any customer to sign a contract and provide proof of event insurance and any other licenses including liquor. In almost all cases, the customer has their own on site planner or manager who is the point person for the event. The Morinville fire department, RCMP and ambulance is less than five minutes away from our property.

We require that all garbage and recycling generated on site by a customer be removed at the end of the event or the following day.

We have the utmost respect for our First Nations and our proposed venue includes two paintings by a well known First nations artist Terry McCue who visited our property and then painted a portrait of one of our horses. These paintings hang proudly in the barn and are a reminder of our recognition of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation report.

We are pleased to provide any other information you require.

Renee and Gord Putnam

Thanks

