

to have junky structures and I think the RV is a step up from the tent that we had." Dossey added, "There needs to be some flexibility because it is such a developing market right now."

Commissioner Becky Fuller commented that it was not just four more tent sites that were being requested. She said, "I believe when this [the original application] was approved, the neighbors kind of let it go because it was tents." She said she thought it was very intentional to approve tents and that this application was a different use variance than that which was already approved. She said she could not see the compatibility of short-term, summer camping versus the longer-term nature of hard-sided structures which could be lived in year-round. She also commented on the code violations which resulted in the special use applications, asking, "Why are we doing something and asking for forgiveness?"

Dossey said he felt the tent-only definition was county staff's "interpretation" of the wording in the original special use. Mathy said, "it is clearly depicted

that it's all tents" and Meggan Herington, executive director, Planning and Community Development, concurred.

Chris Maciejewski, attorney with Robinson and Henry, P.C. and representing several of the neighbors, said, "It's clear they're asking for open-ended approval as to what they can do under that special use permit." The three sites beside Monument Creek must be tents as no permanent development is permitted on the floodplain. Maciejewski said he thought the expectation is that the other nine would be hard-sided structures and commented, "The expansion to hard-sided structures is going to be a significant change from eight approved tent sites."

Commissioner Eric Moraes said, "This was approved based on tents. Both the executive director and county attorney confirm that and now we are coming to what's in my mind a drastically different business to be in the neighborhood with hard-sided, large structures." Commissioner Christopher Whitney said, "I'm going to be opposed because I think it's completely incompatible. It's not really a modification of the earlier special usage but a brand-new application in my mind."

Commissioner Thomas Bailey took a different view, stating, "Portions of the master plan encourage economic development, encourage this kind of thing, and I see it very much as an entrepreneurial use." Commissioner Sarah Brittain Jack concurred.

The vote was 7-2 to recommend denial of the ap-

plication. The nay votes were Bailey and Brittain Jack. The application was then heard at the El Paso Board of County Commissioners' (BOCC) land use meeting on June 27. See BOCC article on page 1.

Vessey Road rezone

At the June 20 meeting, the commissioners heard a final plat application by Pawel Posorski to create two single-family lots of just over 2.5 acres each on a 6.02-acre Vessey Road property, about one-third of a mile east of the intersection of Vessey Road and Holmes Road. The land was rezoned from RR-5 (rural residential) to RR-2.5 (rural residential) in April. See https://www.ocn.me/v24n5.htm?zoom_highlight=posorski.

The commissioners voted unanimously to recommend the application for approval. It was heard as a consent item, meaning there was no discussion, and is now due to be heard at the BOCC land use meeting on July 25.

The El Paso County Planning Commission normally meets the first and (as required) the third Thursday of each month at the Regional Development Center, 2880 International Circle, Colo. Springs. Meetings are live-streamed on the El Paso County News and Information Channel at <https://www.elpasoco.com/news-information-channel>. Information is available at 719-520-6300 and <https://planningdevelopment.elpasoco.com/planning-community-development/2024-hearings-schedule/>. HelenWalklettcanbereachedathelenwalklett@ocn.me.

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WIA (Cont. from 1)

covenant items in May, three of which resulted in violations. The remaining 17 were resolved with a courtesy communication and did not result in a violation.

- Gleason noted that Woodmoor Public Safety (WPS) had received complaints about solicitors. While WPS cannot prohibit access to public roads, it will respond to complaints about trespassing. Gleason cautioned residents against signing contracts with roofing contractors as they can have expensive cancellation clauses.
- Director of Architectural Control Ed Miller reported that WIA maintains a 100% approval rate of the 244 projects submitted to date. Seventy-six projects were submitted in May, with 66 approved in the office and 10 approved by the Architectural Control Committee.
- Director of Commons Area Steve Cutler reported that the Barn sprinkler system was started,

and flowers were planted in early May. Working in conjunction with adjacent neighbors, noxious weed spraying in common areas was completed by the end of June, and prairie dog removal is scheduled for early August.

- The board unanimously approved refinishing the floors in the Barn for a cost not to exceed \$8,000, and WPS was directed to track any damage that occurred after Barn rentals.

The WIA Board of Directors usually meets at 7 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the Barn at 1691 Woodmoor Drive, Monument. The next meeting will be on July 24.

The WIA calendar can be found at www.woodmoor.org/wia-calendar/. WIA board meeting minutes will be posted at www.woodmoor.org/meeting-minutes.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

MONUMENT (Cont. from 1)

mended that the town manager be placed on paid administrative leave. In the interim, his responsibilities will be jointly handled by Director of Parks and Community Partnerships Madeline VandenHoek and Police Chief Patrick Regan.

The Town Council has issued a press release regarding this decision, emphasizing that it was made with the community's best interests in mind. Due to the sensitive nature of personnel matters, specific details have not been disclosed. The press release reads as follows:

"After careful consideration and consultation with legal counsel, the Town Council has decided to place the Town Manager on paid administrative leave effective immediately. We have appointed an interim Town Manager to oversee day-to-day operations during this period. We appreciate your understanding and assure you that this decision was made with the best interests of our community in mind. As this is a personnel matter, we will not be discussing specific details at this time. Thank you."

New lodging tax ordinance discussed

The Town Council deliberated on June 3 a proposed lodging tax ordinance that would impact short-term rentals (STRs) and other lodging within the town. The proposed tax would increase town taxes by a specific percentage on lodging purchases, effective Jan. 1, 2025. The revenue generated would be retained and spent according to voter-approved guidelines.

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Councilmember Steve King voiced concerns about public perception, emphasizing, "I don't want people to think this is a tax they are paying." Town Attorney Bob Cole confirmed that the tax includes short-term rentals, prompting King to inquire about the current tracking of STRs. Cole confirmed that no short-term rental regulations exist.

Mayor Mitch LaKind pointed out the discrepancies in STR taxes across different cities, noting, "Denver is 11%, Parker is 3%, Colorado Springs is on the low end at 2%. I think we should be 2%." He suggested the funds be earmarked for municipal park maintenance rather than the general fund. This proposal sparked a debate. King believed the funds could support general maintenance, while Councilmember Marco Fiorito noted a potential issue: "If they go to only the town's parks, other municipalities' parks don't get the funds."

Planning Consultant Sophia Hassman identified the main sources of the proposed tax revenue as the town's single hotel and truck stops. Town Manager Foreman raised logistical concerns, stating, "This takes a lot of administrative work, and 2% will probably not bring in what it takes to pull this off. We suggest 5%." Mayor LaKind recommended a detailed analysis, saying, "I suggest we figure out how much this will actually bring in; also figure out where the funds will go. We come back in a month to decide."

The council must finalize the ballot question by Sept. 2 to ensure it can be presented to the voters. The next meeting will likely see further discussions and decisions on the specifics of the lodging tax ordinance, including the proposed percentage and allocation of funds.

Lost Island II Final PUD approved

The council unanimously approved Ordinance No. 12-2024, which allows for the final Planned Unit Development (PUD) of Lost Island II, a family-oriented fun center. The approval followed a public hearing on Resolution No. 31-2024, which also passed unanimously, granting the final plat known as Conexus Filing No. 3, a replat of Conexus Filing No. 2-Lot 4.

Julie Esterl from Baseline presented the ordinance and resolution, with John Olson, the applicant and planner, detailing the project. The property, located on the west side of I-25 between the Interstate and Old Denver Highway, will feature an indoor/outdoor recreation center aimed at family fun. The approved plans for Phase 1 include:

- Four 18-hole miniature golf courses
- Indoor playroom with inflatables
- Ninja gym
- Party rooms
- 316-space parking lot

Phase 2, which will be developed later, involves the construction of a water park funded by the revenue from Phase 1.

Councilmember Kimple raised questions about operational hours and lighting, expressing concern about the center's impact during dark hours and its plans to serve alcohol. Olson confirmed that the center would operate from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and assured that the owners are mindful of screening and lighting issues. Julie Esterl added that the lights would be turned off at night.

Willow Springs Ranch Final Plat approved
 The council unanimously approved Resolution No.