

Palmer Lake Planning Commission, Feb. 19

More questions about proposed gun range

By Jim Adams

The Palmer Lake Planning Commission tabled a gun range proposal and discussed a plan for a cell tower at its Feb. 19 meeting. Three members of the Palmer Lake Town Council attended the meeting: Mayor Nikki McDonald, Trustee Bob Grado, and Trustee and former Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department Chief and Trustee Shana Ball.

The proposal for a gun range on County Line Road was introduced by Trustee Grado and presented again by Tri-Lakes Shooting Supply. This time a new concept for a "no blue sky" range was shown. This design was offered as a state-of-the-art outdoor shooting facility with a large sound-absorbing roof, extensive berm works with sound-absorbing panels, deflectors to prevent off-range firing, and enough range to accommodate handguns and long guns.

Tu Lam, affiliated with Tri-Lakes Shooting, made repeated impassioned pleas concerning the need for training in the Palmer Lake Police Department and the inadequacy of the town's current facility. Benefits to the town were listed as including a long-term lease, user fees, sales taxes, and increased economic activity. Palmer Lake would be recognized nationally, and regionally, for having a state-of-the-art National Rifle Association-sanctioned training facility.

About 25 people spoke, with 18 town residents opposed to the proposal. There was much talk of the decibel level that a gun range might produce.

Of those opposed to the range, many actually wanted the range and were sympathetic to the need for one, but were wary of this proposal due to noise concerns. Many expressed extreme concern that the noise would be intolerable despite any sound proofing due to the volume of rounds expected to be fired (one person calculated 2 million per year). A claim was made that property values near gun ranges

fall from 7 percent to 30 percent. One person said they would move away, but feared their home would be hard to sell. Another questioned whether or not such a large installation could easily be closed by the citizens if it proved to be a nuisance.

Of those in favor, many

expressed belief that the no-blue-sky system would make the noise levels negligible or nonexistent. One person repeated that residents would get used to it, and that it would not be a problem at all. Many restated the need to relieve the Rampart Range National Forest of the burden of



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