

**MINUTES**  
**Regular Session**  
**THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**  
**TOWN OF CAMP VERDE COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**THURSDAY JANUARY 06, 2011**  
**6:30 PM**

Minutes are a summary of the actions taken. They are not verbatim.  
Public input is placed after Commission motions to facilitate future research.  
Public input, where appropriate, is heard prior to the motion

1. **Call to Order**  
The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. **Roll Call**  
Chairperson Butner, Vice Chairperson Hisrich, Commissioners Buchanan, Parrish, Freeman, Hough and Norton were present.  
  
**Also Present:** Town Manager Russ Martin, Acting Community Development Director Mike Jenkins, Asst. Planner Jenna Owens, and Recording Secretary Margaret Harper.
3. **Pledge of Allegiance**  
The Pledge was led by Parrish.
4. **Consent Agenda** - All those items listed below may be enacted upon by one motion and approved as Consent Agenda Items. Any item may be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered as a separate item if a member of Commission so requests.
  - a. **Approval of Minutes:**  
November 4, 2010 Regular Session
  - b. **Set Next Meeting, Date and Time:**  
January 13, 2011 – Special SessionOn a motion by Buchanan, seconded by Hisrich, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved as presented.
5. **Call to the Public for Items not on the Agenda**  
There was no public input.
6. **Election of Officers.**  
On a motion by Parrish, seconded by Norton, the Commission unanimously re-elected Joe Butner as Chairman.  
  
On a motion by Hisrich, seconded by Hough, the Commission unanimously elected Chip Norton as Vice Chairman.
7. **Public Hearing, Discussion and Possible recommendation to Council on a Use Permit 2010-03:**  
An application submitted by Mr. Colin McCavitt agent for Dateland Proving Grounds on a fifteen (15) acre portion of parcel 404-30-368A and 404-30-368C which is leased to the Town of Camp Verde by the Sanitary District. The applicant is requesting to allow for research, development and training for persistent ground surveillance systems for the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division. The portable powered surveillance trailers and aerostats will help protect US Troops operating in remote areas of Afghanistan. Dateland Proving Grounds is requesting a three (3) year lease with an option for five (5) year lease. The property is located on property currently owned by the Sanitary District off of State Route 260.  
  
On a motion by Norton, seconded by Freeman, the Commission voted 6-1 to recommend that Council approve the application submitted by Dateland Proving Grounds on a fifteen

(15) acre portion of Parcels 404-30-368A and 404-30-368C, which is leased to the Town of Camp Verde by the Sanitary District; with the following recommendations: The Camera Training Policy shall be modified prior to the Use Permit becoming effective, to provide as follows: Any observations of crime being committed shall be promptly reported to the proper authorities in accordance with Emergency Response Policy Guidelines, to be dealt with by the Town of Camp Verde, and all such violations of the Camera Policy shall be also reported in a Monthly Violations Report and submitted to the Town of Camp Verde; in addition, insurance policies and proof of insurance indemnifying the Town satisfactory to the Town Council must be presented before any Use Permit could become effective; rescue efforts, humanitarian efforts and crime prevention efforts are all included as part of the Emergency Response Policy; a 5-year duration on the Use Permit is also recommended; **with a 'no' vote by Hisrich.**

#### **STAFF PRESENTATION**

Asst. Planner Jenna Owens first commented that the name under which the application was made has been changed from STARA Technologies, Inc., to Dateland Proving Grounds, a training facility that is currently in use and will be responsible for all aspects of the development in Camp Verde. Also, Mr. Douglas Powell would make the presentation in place of Mr. Colin McCavitt. Ms. Owens reviewed in detail the purpose and background information as outlined in the agenda packet materials. The information included the provision that camera training privacy policies are in place and will be followed in accordance with the Training Policy contained in the agenda packet as well. The required neighborhood meeting was held, with nine individuals in attendance. In addition, a public service announcement was published by The Bugle on December 15, 2010 notifying all Camp Verde citizens of the dates and times of the scheduled Planning & Zoning and Council meetings to hear the subject application. There were no public comments received, other than a letter directed to the Town Manager, Mayor and Town Council commenting on the adverse reaction of some members of the public to the proposed facility described in the Bugle article. Ms. Owens reviewed responses received from the agencies contacted that for the most part had no comments; responses by the applicant to the concerns expressed by Coconino National Forest are included in the agenda materials.

Chairman Butner explained for the benefit of the public that the applicant is requesting a Use Permit; and under the Town Zoning Ordinance, Use Permits are provided to ensure the orderly use of land in conformance with the General Plan and applicable Town standards where uses are proposed that may require special limitations or conditions to provide compatibility with other uses. Use Permits will be granted only upon finding by the Council that the use covered by the Permit, the manner of its conduct, and any structure which is involved, will not be detrimental to persons residing or working in the vicinity, to adjacent property, to the neighborhood, or to the public welfare in general, and that the use will be in conformity to any conditions, requirements or standards prescribed by the Town Code or Council.

#### **APPLICANT'S PRESENTATION**

**Douglas Powell**, Head of Marketing for the Dateland Proving Grounds, gave a brief introduction to how and why the project came about, based on the urgent need in military operations in Afghanistan for advance surveillance to protect the troops from surprise attacks. He explained that the subject balloons are a combination of old technology and new technology, using high definition cameras, resulting in the "eye in the sky." The program has been extremely successful since being instituted in Afghanistan, with no way of telling how many lives it has saved. Mr. Powell said that the Camp Verde area was selected because it is a perfect location for training in that the elevation and terrain are similar to Afghanistan.

Some views of the project were displayed from a Power Point presentation, with Mr. Powell outlining the proposed operational hours, describing the mooring station, the number of trainees anticipated at a time being present on the site, the trainers and trainees using local restaurants and staying at local hotels, as well as other benefits to

the local economy. Mr. Powell added that any landscaping or additions to the site would be done by local vendors or contractors as first choices. Mr. Powell also commented on the job opportunities possible for qualified members of the community, and the convenience of the Camp Verde location to the Phoenix airport.

In responses to questions from the Commissioners, Mr. Powell confirmed that the intent is to request a 3-to-5 year lease; there is currently no need to request the FAA for permission to extend the height above the 1,000 feet, but if possible would apply for the 2,500 feet, which would provide a better simulation of Afghanistan elevation and better test results. The members discussed with Mr. Powell the issues of monitoring violations of the camera privacy policies; the number, safety and visibility of the balloon tether lines; hours of operation including night sessions; the types of targets used for training; weather restrictions; heat-sensing cameras as well as visual photography; the numbers of trainees and class cycles; the hours per day that the balloon will be aloft; the safety mechanisms in place in the event one breaks free; the notification to agencies regulating air space; the types of activities or movement that would attract the attention of the cameras; and the assurance of Mr. Powell that no targets would be put in place without the approval of the Town. Also discussed at length with Mr. Powell was deep concern about adequate supervision oversight to prevent violations of camera privacy policies in place, and responsibility for reporting such violations to the Town, as well as the question of using the cameras to assist local law enforcement and rescue operations; Mr. Powell agreed that such concerns or uses could be negotiated and established in the Use Permit guidelines. Mr. Powell said that tours could be scheduled in order to familiarize members of the community with the facility.

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

(Comments from the following individuals are summarized.)

**Jon Fineman**, Montezuma Airpark, commented on the four airports located within 5 to 15 miles of the site, and said he hoped that provisions have been made with the FAA in light of the small aircraft in the area; he is also concerned about lights on the tethers and their visibility.

**Irene Peoble**, Camp Verde, said she is concerned about how the lights would affect the night sky, how the ultra-light crafts would be made aware of the balloon, and what authority would discipline the trainees on violations of the camera privacy policy.

**Steven Sprinz**, Lake Montezuma, distributed a packet of information to the members, pointing out a letter of opposition from the Beaver Creek Regional Council. He noted some of the several reasons for opposition, including issues of privacy, concern about possible weapons on the sight, and hazards to flight expressed by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association.

**Kala Pearson**, President of the Beaver Creek Regional Council, said she is opposed to creating jobs for out of town workers and the local economy; the Town should target the type of business that we all desire to attract rather than piecemeal programs that may or may not be beneficial in the long run.

**Jan Clann**, Camp Verde, said she would like very much for the Town to embrace this facility, unless investigation shows something really detrimental.

**Helen Zimmerli**, Camp Verde, said her one concern was if the balloon broke loose and ended up hitting the towers at Squaw Peak; what would be done about that.

**Patti Sexton**, a member of the Beaver Creek Regional Council, is concerned about rights of privacy, as well as the sacred land in this community, and the possibility that the Town is selling itself out too cheap.

**Shirley Brinkman**, Camp Verde, said this is a Camp Verde situation; we have a grand

opportunity to help our boys over in Afghanistan; we need to support this. As for privacy, that is not what it is about, it is to help our boys.

**Linda Buchanan**, Camp Verde, expressed her qualified support for the proposal; she appreciates the tough questions being asked. She is not frightened by the privacy aspect; she appreciates the economic opportunity; a 3-year lease would provide a chance to evaluate the project along the way.

There was no further public input.

#### **APPLICANT'S REBUTTAL**

Mr. Powell said there will be no weapons on the site; violators by the trainees will be disciplined according to the laws of Camp Verde in full cooperation with the local authorities; information would be published for local aviators; strobe lights are on the tethers; the complex could be made identifiable to aircraft overhead; the applicant is fully insured in the event of damage caused by a balloon breaking loose, and that information will be provided to the Council, together with any other documentation required. Mr. Powell commented on the benefit to the economy from the purchases of local services and materials and possible job opportunities; as far as sacred land, there will be no damage whatsoever to the facility site.

In response to a question regarding the duration of the Use Permit, Owens explained that any time period can be decided by Council; the Commission can make a recommendation as to the length of time, and there is always the option of periodic reviews for compliance during the term.

During further discussion, Hough commented that he feels uncomfortable with the issue before the Commission that makes decisions on horizontal land use; the question of an object 1,000 or 2,500 feet up in the air does not seem to be in the right venue for a decision. In response to the concern for the tether lighting, Jenkins stated that the Town cannot preempt an emergency type of use such as that required by the FAA; the emergency lighting on the tethers would be exempt from the lighting ordinance. There was also further discussion on the issues of identifying, reporting and dealing with violations of the existing camera privacy training policy. Butner suggested changes to the PGSS Camera Training Policy, including expanding on the "Exception" in the sixth paragraph to state: "*Any observations of the crime being committed will be reported to the proper authorities in accordance with the Emergency Response Policies developed with the Town of Camp Verde, Arizona*"; and to revise the last sentence in the eighth paragraph as follows: "*Failure to follow this policy will result in termination, and all violations of this policy will be reported on a monthly basis to the Town of Camp Verde in a monthly violation report that identifies the location of the violation as well as the duration of the violation.*" Mr. Powell said the applicant would be more than willing to amend the Camera Policy as suggested, in light of the partnership they are trying to develop with the Town of Camp Verde. Mr. Powell agreed that the Camera Policies could also be revised for the Town of Camp Verde to include the provisions for emergency searches and rescues. There was additional discussion on monitoring the trainees as well as the supervising staff.

#### **8. Commission Informational Reports:**

There were no Commission informational reports.

#### **9. Staff**

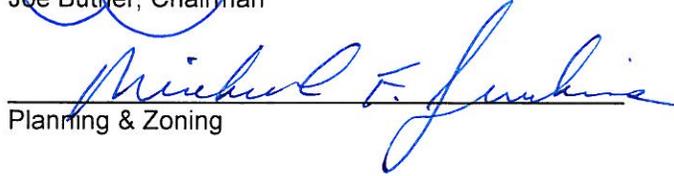
Owens reminded the members of the Special Session next Thursday.

#### **10. Adjournment**

On a motion by Parrish, seconded by Buchanan, the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.



Joe Butner, Chairman



Planning & Zoning

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing Minutes are a true and accurate accounting of the actions of the Planning & Zoning Commission of the Town of Camp Verde during the Regular Session of the Planning & Zoning Commission of the Town of Camp Verde, Arizona, held on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of January 2011. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 20<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2011.



Margaret Harper, Recording Secretary