Tammy DeWitt, Senior Planner

Yavapai County Development Services

Planning Unit

Via E-mail: Tammy.dewitt@yavapai.us

October 18, 2018

Re: Rojo Grande Sedona Zoning Map Change on APN#408-29-001F, etc.; H18040

Ms. DeWitt,

Thank you for inviting the City of Sedona to provide agency comments on the proposed zone change for the Rojo Grande Sedona Manufactured Home and Recreational Vehicle Community.

While it is customary to review these types of requests at a staff level, due to the magnitude of the development, its proximity and potential impacts to the city, the intensity of the change in use, and the inquiries we have already received from Sedona residents concerned about the project, we felt it necessary to also provide our City Council an opportunity to give input on this proposal. The City Council met on October 9th and spent several hours discussing this item.

By majority consensus, Council directed staff to forward the following comments and concerns to Yavapai County:

Density – The City of Sedona does not believe the proposed eight-fold increase to dwelling unit density over the existing zoning is appropriate for this area.

* The proposed use is too intensive for the location and the fact that there are no services such as grocery stores, gas stations, drug stores, movie theaters, etc. will require residents to seek those elsewhere, the closest services being in the City of Sedona.
* An approximately eight-fold increase in density is a change which would typically be accompanied by elements in the proposal which result in a positive impact on a community or neighborhood. Positive impacts were not apparent.
* The proposal does not maintain the rural character of Yavapai County.
* Simply the existence of neighboring developments of comparable density should not result in the automatic conclusion that use should be replicated or that this type of project is right for this area.
* Other land uses may be more appropriate.

Traffic/trip generation – The City of Sedona is concerned about traffic impacts from Rojo Grande residents seeking services in the City and the resulting increase in vehicle trips. Traffic is already a significant concern for Sedona and this development would further strain an already overburdened infrastructure.

* + - * It appears the traffic impact analysis anticipated does not extend to the City of Sedona. The City’s Public Works/Engineering Department has identified several areas within the City that should also be included and evaluated for traffic impact:
		- The Foothills South intersection with SR89A. Concern that this level of additional traffic may result in a signal being warranted.
		- Upper Red Rock Loop Road Eastbound right turn lane capacity is often exceeded during the AM peak hours, concern that this level of additional traffic may necessitate the need for improvements.
		- Consider impacts to the congested areas of the City as identified in the Sedona Transportation Master Plan. For example, Uptown SB SR89A, the Coffee Pot and SR89A intersection, the Rodeo Road and SR89A intersection, Cook’s Hill NB SR89A, and NB SR 179.
		- Results of the analyses, and if and how they may necessitate improvements, should be considered in conjunction with the City’s Engineering Department. Contact: Andy Dickey, Public Works Director/City Engineer adickey@sedonaaz.gov
			* If the project moves forward, developer should consider the provision of a shuttle to minimize vehicle trips.
			* The development does not support walkability/bikeability as an alternative to vehicle trips.
			* When new projects occur within the City, developers are required to make roadway improvements to address/mitigate their traffic impacts. There are no proposed improvements to Sedona’s transportation network despite the new volume and impacts that will occur because of this development.

Affordable housing – The ownership structure and age restrictions of the proposed development run contrary to the City’s affordable housing goals.

* The diversification of the economy is a priority for Sedona and the Verde Valley. This includes growing and attracting sustainable industry sectors, but lack of workforce remains an impediment to business and economic development.
* Attainable housing has been identified as the biggest impediment to attracting and maintaining a local and regional workforce.
* The recently completed Verde Valley Regional Economic Organization strategic plan identified aging population, lack of housing diversity, and lack of housing affordability as major challenges to Sedona and the region's workforce. This project only exacerbates these issues.

Restrictions on short-term rentals - State law now preempts municipalities’ ability to prohibit this activity. Since the new law was enacted, Sedona has seen a proliferation of short-term rental activity in and around the community. This changing vacation economy and the conversion of primary or secondary residences, and long-term residential rentals, into short-term vacation rentals resulted in a severe shortage of available housing for Sedona families, workforce, and residents generally. The City of Sedona believes it is imperative for the developer to include provisions in a development agreement that would restrict any of these units from being used as short-term vacation rentals.

Absence of green building practices – The proposal does not contemplate building practices, community amenities, or other aspects of the development that support or promote environmental sustainability.

Additional staff comments - The development proposal requires construction traversing the highway right-of-way that contains the City’s sewer force main. This is critical infrastructure for the City of Sedona, and it will be imperative that any future construction/development within this area be coordinated through the Wastewater Department and developed in a way that would not compromise this critical infrastructure. Contact: Roxanne Holland, Wastewater Manager rholland@sedonaaz.gov

Thank you again for providing the opportunity to comment. Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



Karen Osburn

Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director