



Inter Office Memo

DATE: August 24, 2023

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Planning Commission

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION NO. 13004 – UNCLASSIFIED CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION NO. 3757 AND INITIAL STUDY NO. 8354

APPLICANT: Linda Dineen

OWNER: Sierra Remote Observatories LLC

REQUEST: To allow expansion of existing observatory facilities constructing fourteen additional buildings (thirteen Observatory Buildings, one Breakroom Building) on a 4.95-acre parcel in the RR (Rural Residential, two-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District.

LOCATION: The project site is located on the west side of Bald Mountain Rd., approximately 1,074 feet south of its intersection with Auberry Rd, and approximately 17 miles north of the City of Clovis (APN: 128-740-07) (42140 Bald Mountain Rd.) (Sup. Dist. 5).

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

At its hearing of August 24, 2023, the Commission considered the Staff Report and testimony (summarized in Exhibit "A").

A motion was made by Commissioner Arabian and seconded by Commissioner Ewell to adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for the project; adopt the recommended Findings of Fact in the Staff Report; and approve Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3757, subject to the Conditions listed in Exhibit "B" which reduce the number of allowed buildings built and location of proposed buildings.

This motion passed on the following vote:

VOTING: Yes: Commissioners Arabian, Ewell, Abrahamian, Carver, Chatha, and Zante

 No: Commissioner Woolf

 Absent: None

 Abstain: None

STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR
Department of Public Works and Planning
Secretary-Fresno County Planning Commission

By: 
Chris W. Motta, Manager
Development Services and Capital Projects Division

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NOTES: The approval of this project will expire two years from the date of approval unless a determination is made that substantial development has occurred. When circumstances beyond the control of the Applicant do not permit compliance with this time limit, the Commission may grant an extension not to exceed one additional year. Application for such extension must be filed with the Department of Public Works and Planning before the expiration of the Conditional Use Permit.

Attachments

EXHIBIT A

Initial Study No. 8354
Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3757

Staff: The Fresno County Planning Commission considered the Staff Report dated August 24, 2023, and heard a summary presentation by staff.

Presenters: The Applicant and their representative concurred with the Staff Report and the recommended Conditions. They described the project and offered the following information:

- Due to a previously approved Solar Array, one proposed observatory building cannot be built.
- A previous source of noise was a result of a telescope fan breaking, which has since been fixed and is no longer an issue.
- Due to surrounding mountains, it was communicated that the observatory cannot be seen from the highway.
- A revision of the site plan was offered to reduce the proposed amount of observatory buildings and to eliminate the proposed buildings on east side of the property, closest to Bald Mountain Road to address visibility and forestry concerns.
- An alternate proposal was given of four observatory buildings to be built on the south side of the parcel, one breakroom building and eight mini-domes.

Others: One individual, neighbor north of the subject parcel, presented information in opposition to the proposal. They presented the following concerns:

- Due to the Creek Fire in 2021, most of the forest in that area was destroyed and this expansion will eliminate most of what is left.
- Voiced concern regarding the visibility of proposed buildings on the east side of the property as being too close to Bald Mountain Road.
- Expressed concern with the noise element, due to constant construction over years of continuous building and more recently an unknown noise during the night.

Correspondence: One correspondence was presented to the Planning Commission in support of the application from the neighbor to the south of the property.



County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

July 24, 2024

Linda Dineen
2985 E Willis Ave.
Fresno, CA 93726

Dear Linda:

Subject: Resolution No. 13004 –Unclassified Conditional Use Permit No. 3757 and Initial Study No. 8354

On August 24, 2023 the Fresno County Planning Commission approved your above-referenced project. A copy of the Planning Commission Resolution is enclosed.

If you have any questions regarding the information in this letter please contact Alyce Alvarez at alyalvarez@fresnocountyca.gov or 559-600-9669.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Randall', is written over a large, stylized blue oval shape.

David Randall, Senior Planner
Development Services and Capital Projects Division

DR:jp
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Enclosure
