

**NORMAN PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**

OCTOBER 9, 2014

The Planning Commission of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in Council Chambers of the Norman Municipal Complex, 201 West Gray Street, on the 9th day of October 2014. Notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Norman Municipal Building and online at <http://www.normanok.gov/content/boards-commissions> at least twenty-four hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Chairman Dave Boeck called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

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Item No. 1, being:

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Andy Sherrer
Roberta Pailles
Curtis McCarty
Sandy Bahan
Dave Boeck
Jim Gasaway
Tom Knotts
Chris Lewis
Cindy Gordon

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

A quorum was present.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Susan Connors, Director, Planning &
Community Development
Jane Hudson, Principal Planner
Janay Greenlee, Planner II
Roné Tromble, Recording Secretary
Leah Messner, Asst. City Attorney
Larry Knapp, GIS Analyst II
Ken Danner, Subdivision Development
Manager
Drew Norlin, Asst. Development Coordinator
David Riesland, Traffic Engineer

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Item No. 8, being: **SERETA AND ROB WILSON**

8. **O-1415-14 – SERETA AND ROB WILSON REQUEST SPECIAL USE FOR A VETERINARY CLINIC/HOSPITAL TO INCLUDE A DOG BOARDING FACILITY FOR PROPERTY CURRENTLY ZONED A-2, RURAL AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT, LOCATED AT 10400 EAST STATE HIGHWAY 9.**

ITEMS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:

1. Location Map
2. Staff Report
3. Aerial Photo/Site Plan
4. Pre-Development Summary

PRESENTATION BY STAFF:

1. Janay Greenlee – The applicant is requesting a special use for a veterinary clinic/hospital to include a dog boarding facility at 10400 East State Highway 9. The existing zoning is A-2, with A-2 to the north and also to the east, then RE, Residential Estates zoning to the west. We do have a couple of pieces of tourist commercial on the north, northeast and just directly to the east of the site with A-2 in between. This is an aerial of the site. Currently Sereta Wilson and her family live in this single-family dwelling. The proposal is to put a 2,000 square foot dog boarding facility on the north side of the property, keeping the one entrance off Highway 9. It will be located somewhere around here. It will be completely fenced – a double fence, actually, for extra security – meaning two six-foot fences back to back. This is the site of the single-family home entrance off of Highway 9 on the south side, then kind of generally located somewhere in this area would be the facility. Right across the street is the Big Sky Ranch, which is currently for sale, I believe. But there are wineries and also the convenience store down to the east. Storage facility. Convenience store across the street. The Shell to the east of the site. Staff believes that this use does fit within the area and the character of the area and is recommending approval of Ordinance No. O-1415-14 for a special use. The applicant is here to make a short presentation.

PRESENTATION BY THE APPLICANT:

1. Sereta Wilson, the applicant – I'm very low-tech, as are most things doggie daycare. My husband is at football tonight. I am the owner of Annie's Ruff House that is currently located at 1043 North University. We have been there for six years. I have lived in central Norman for over 20 years. I have two grown-ish children – they still want money, but grown. One is at Norman North High School and one is in the Air Force, so we're in the community – we're community people.

Annie's Ruff House, the current location is a doggie daycare and boarding studio. Our focus is on exercise and fun times for dogs. I wrote this up not knowing what my audience would be, so I feel a little like it doesn't need to be so formal. But we've been there for six years. We average around 50 dogs a day every day of the year at our current facility. We have five full-time staff members and approximately 6 or 7 seasonal – seasonally it changes – part-time staffers. We pay 20-40% above the federal minimum wage, so we try to be good business people. Four of our five full-time employees have been with us for over four years, so we're good stewards of our people.

We're here tonight to hopefully build. We purchased 20 acres for us to live in and hopefully build an overflow facility on agriculturally zoned land, seemingly out in the middle of nowhere for us. It is 10400 East State Highway 9, which is the south side of the highway and midway between 96th and 108th. We are almost directly across the street from Big Sky Ranch, which is, as I understand it, a horse boarding facility, so very similar. We are asking for a special use permit. We live on the site and will remain on the site. Any concerns that any resident might have, we will also have because we will be living there as well. We intend to build a 2,000 square foot kennel with 20 animal enclosures and 3 indoor play spaces – ish – depending on what we can afford. A small lobby/office. It will have some retail, but that's not our goal to have a retail center. It will be sort of collateral retail when people are there doing their business for boarding their dog, they can buy a collar or food or whatever they might need.

Annie's Ruff House is a well-established business. It has an excellent reputation for treating the dogs beyond reproach. We get all of our business by word of mouth. We do zero marketing and turned away 2,500 dogs last year. Thus, the need for expansion. We have bookings into the 2015 travel season – meaning I have people on the books for July of next year. So there's a business need for sure.

We also are good stewards in our community. We started Annie's Rescue Foundation, where we give back to the community. We do dog food drives. We support other non-profits, such as Second Chance. We support the local animal shelters. We have taken in dogs from the shelters during tornados and things like that when they needed space for other needs. We do free community dog walks several times a year. We also have placed 120 dogs that we've personally, or individually, saved – spayed/neutered, vaccinated and put into good, loving, forever homes. We kind of do our part. We started Annie's Rescue Foundation, which is still pending a non-profit through the federal government. So that's kind of a big deal.

We're hoping to build with Morton Buildings. This will tell you a little bit about what the building will look like. They have experience building these types of buildings. They've built kennels in other markets. There will be sound-proofing. Janay touched on the double fence system. In our current facility we were unable to go in and just put a whole bunch of new fences. But since we're building from the ground up, we know what we need. So we're going to build a perimeter fence and then each play yard will have its own fence, so we will have a redundancy there. We don't want dogs getting out and getting hit on Highway 9. That's the reason why we're doing that.

During our Pre-Development information meeting a few concerns came up and I'll go ahead and address those here, in case you have those in your head, too. Dog escapes – it's a policy in place at our facility, where there's signs up that say you must have your dog on a leash, controlled by a person 18 years or older into the facility. In the facility, once you're in there, you hand off the leash to the staff member and we go back to the secureness of the kennel area. So that would be our only point of failure at the new place as well, is if people lost their dog all of a sudden. Hasn't happened at our current facility. We're right next door to a kid daycare and they don't mind us. The other thing that was kind of a concern was vicious dogs. We don't take vicious dogs. We only take dogs that pass a demeanor test; I have to be able to handle a dog. We don't take personal protection dogs. We don't take dogs that have been trained to attack for any reason. We don't take dogs that have had a history of bites. And if they develop any kind of bite situations in our place, we also don't take them anymore. Before they ever get dropped off to stay, they have to pass the demeanor test. I don't like vicious dogs, either. The cleanliness of the facility – we're a very clean facility. We are inspected biannually by Norman Animal Control and we have always passed every inspection. And then I can also go back to the fact that we are word-of-mouth business so people aren't going to tell their friends to go to us if we're nasty. We're very clean. We pick up all solid waste as it happens. We bag the waste and then bag all the bags before it hits the City dumpsters. It will go in the City dumpsters and that's how we currently do our business there. Sound-proofing, because dogs like to bark. One of the things that we've addressed already – and the current facility is right in the middle of – if you're not familiar, we're at 1043 North University, right smack dab in the middle of a bunch of houses, even though we're industrial and commercial. So we have to be very good neighbors, because we don't want people upset with us. Plus, a lot of those people use us, so we don't want them upset with us. Our hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Dogs are outside and playing. We keep the groups – our current license at the current facility restricts us to having 30 dogs outside at a time, and that's to counter the noise. So we adhere to that. And we close up everything at 7:00 at night. We focus on exercise throughout the day so the p.m. is very quiet.

Our current facility we retro-fitted an industrial building and kind of have to make due with what's there. But this building we'll be able to build from the ground up and Morton has a very good sound-proofing system that they've already put into place at other kennels. It is acoustical seal and I can't tell you the amount of insulation but it's big – lots of insulation. And we're also naturally sound barriered to the neighbors around us. You saw the photos. There are

trees everywhere. We plan on keeping as many trees as possible. We just want to take out the footprint of the building – the construction guy might get upset with me, but I'm very serious about keeping as many trees as possible. We're also kind of over a hill and next to Highway 9 from our surrounding neighbors that might get upset with noise. And that is all I have, unless you have questions.

2. Mr. Knotts – Are you a vet?

Ms. Wilson – Am I a veterinarian? No. I'm not a veterinarian or a veteran. It's a dog boarding facility. But there's not just dog boarding facility on the 1954 zoning thing, so that's the best fit we have.

Ms. Connors – The reason is that the special use in the zoning code is a veterinary clinic/hospital. We know that they're doing dog boarding, but we're recommending this under the auspices of that special use because it's of a like nature. But never intended to be a veterinary clinic.

Ms. Wilson – Not really. We're open to it if you know a veterinarian that needs a place.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

None

DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

*Jim Gasaway moved to recommend adoption of Ordinance No. O-1415-14 to City Council.
Cindy Gordon seconded the motion.*

There being no further discussion, a vote on the motion was taken with the following result:

YEAS	Andy Sherrer, Roberta Pailles, Curtis McCarty, Sandy Bahan, Dave Boeck, Jim Gasaway, Tom Knotts, Chris Lewis, Cindy Gordon
NAYES	None
ABSENT	None

Ms. Tromble announced that the motion to recommend adoption of Ordinance No. O-1415-14 to City Council, passed by a vote of 9-0.

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