

Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes March 4, 2025

A regular meeting of the Town of Chino Valley Planning and Zoning Commission was held on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at the Town of Chino Valley Council Chambers, 202 N. State Route 89, Chino Valley, Arizona.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEMBERS present: Chair Chuck Merritt, Vice-Chair Gary Pasciak, Commissioner Michael Ditta, Commissioner Teena Meadors, Commissioner Jeffrey Pizzi, Commissioner William Welker, and Commissioner Richard Zamudio. Alternate Commissioner Joseph Morabito was present.

STAFF MEMBERS present: Laurie Lineberry, Development Services Director, Will Dingee, Assistant Director, Jessica Barragan, Senior Planner, Terri Denemy, Town Manager, Gerreann Froberg, Senior Processing Coordinator, and Nicholas Harwick, Audio/Video.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Merritt called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was declared. The Commission meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner **Zamudio**.

CONSENT CALENDAR – A motion was made by Commissioner **Meadors** to accept the consent agenda. The motion was **seconded** by Vice-Chair **Pasciak** and **Zamudio** and passed unanimously by a 6-0 vote, with Pizzi abstaining.

PUBLIC HEARING #D.1 – CUP-2024-05 - This is a request by Olsen's Events (Mike Olsen) for the approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow for the continued use of an existing rodeo and additional outdoor recreational arena activities, on property located at 344 S State Route 89, Chino Valley, Arizona.

Chair Merritt asked if anyone on the Commission had a disclosure to declare regarding this item. Merritt and Pasciak both stated that they had spoken with staff regarding this matter.

Will Dingee, Assistant Director, presented the staff report and stated the applicant was in attendance. He explained the two parts of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) request; establishing the rodeo and event arena as a conforming use on the property, and expansion of their uses to include community gatherings, weddings, dog shows, adoption events and competitions, also with branching into limited motorsports known as dirt bike barrel races. He brought up slides of the parcels and surrounding area and shared that staff had conducted multiple site visits, data collection, verification of data provided by Olsen's in regard to their lighting and sound studies, and staff provided the property owners with suggested mitigations based on those studies. Dingee explained that the subject parcels were on twelve acres with two different zoning districts, Commercial Light (CL) and Agricultural Residential (AR-5). The Town Zoning Code for AR-5 allowed for rodeo, livestock auctions, fairgrounds, riding academy and recreation facilities, and private arena with public attendance with a Conditional Use Permit. He further explained the history of prior permits for the parcel and showed a timeline of Olsen's interaction with prior staff. He shared that a neighborhood meeting was held on January 28, 2025, with twelve people in attendance representing seven properties. There was one neighbor in opposition; one who originally was in opposition and had her concerns addressed; and five in support. Dingee stated that included in the staff report were letters and a petition of support from community members. He explained the mitigation measures that Olsen's took to address the concerns by the neighbor in opposition: traffic, noise, and lighting. He went over the Conditions of Approval and stated that staff recommended that the Commission forward a recommendation of approval to the Town Council.

Merritt asked the Commission if they had any questions for staff.

Merritt asked out of the total of ninety events per year how many would be held on weekends.

Dingee replied that there could be no more than four events per week, with a maximum of three held at night. Out of the ninety total events allowed per year, a total of forty could be held at night.

Zamudio asked what the time limit would be for the night events.

Dingee replied that the Town Lighting Code allowed for operation until 11 p.m.

Ditta asked about the noise at night.

Dingee replied that the Town Noise Ordinance was active between midnight and 5:00 a.m., and that the Ordinance stated sound amplification systems cannot be heard at a distance greater than 50 feet, unless otherwise approved by the Chief of Police.

Meadors asked if the sound of guns going off would be under 60 decibels.

Dingee replied that guns would only be allowed during daylight hours and could exceed 60 decibels.

Merritt shared that in the past motorcycle races at Old Home Manor had been closed down due to public outcry about noise and dust, and that there was more density near Olsen's.

Dingee replied that the Commission could further restrict dirt bike barrel racing if they choose. He explained that the barrel races ran only one bike at a time, unlike motocross, and therefore had less impact.

Mike Olsen, applicant, stated that he was one of the owners of Olsen's Grain, and that they had been doing business since 1979. He felt that **Dingee** stated their position well and he was willing to answer any questions the Commission may have.

Merritt asked if the Commission had any questions for the applicant.

Merritt asked if the applicant would be conducive to not asking for motor barrel racing.

Olsen replied that he felt there was a real need in the Community for this type of event, and that a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) had been approved by the Town staff last summer for motor and horse barrel racing. It had been a huge success with many families attending, and kids riding small 50cc or 100cc dirt bikes one at a time, for 20-30 seconds. He explained that a dirt bike and a horse would enter as a team, the bikes ran first, and their times got posted. Then the horses ran, and the two times were added together to determine the winning team. He further reiterated that parent and community support for this was very strong, and he respectfully would like the Commission to hear from the public. **Olsen** stated that a maximum of four per year motor barrel racing events would take place, with maybe a practice session the day before.

Pasciak asked if there would be an upper limit on the size of the motor, that if you limit the size of motor, it would limit the amount of noise.

Olsen stated that they would be willing to work it out with Town staff.

Ditta asked if the bikes would be stock or could they have souped up exhaust systems.

Olsen replied that they had no rules or provisions in place but would be willing to put some stipulations if asked by Town staff. He stated that in order to go around three barrels, the bikes do not go very fast.

Merritt asked if they received any complaints from neighbors from the prior motor event.

Olsen replied not to his knowledge.

Zamudio asked how the events were advertised.

Olsen replied through social media, newsletters, on the marquee in front of the feed store, and a roping magazine statewide for team roping events.

Merritt opened the meeting for public comments and shared the rules for speaking to the Commission.

James Holt, 1771 E Perkinsville Road, Chino Valley, stated he was here with the members of the Equine Emergency Evacuation group, and would be speaking on behalf of the applicant. He shared that he knew and worked with Mike's Dad, John Olsen, for two decades, and that he felt the Olsen's family and employees were honest, trustworthy and had a great deal of integrity. He further shared that the Olsens supported their group and other nonprofit organizations throughout the community.

Kim Hennessey, 514 W Road 1 South, Chino Valley – (*Speaker provided written submittal attached)
"Hello. My name is Kim Hennessey. I am opposed to this permit as it currently reads. With less than 3 minutes, I'll cut to the chase on the biggest issue. I don't care how Mike Olsen uses his property, as long as it doesn't impact the tranquility of mine. And that's what town ordinances are for. 131.01 is clear – Zero decibels at 50 feet. It cannot be sugar coated or glossed over. If the town wishes to change its ordinances, it knows what needs to be done. Approval of this permit would be a serious breach in public trust and would also make it very difficult for the police to enforce code going forward. Olsen is requesting the town make an exception for a regular and re-occurring violation of its own ordinance. This is a tremendous ask that I've not seen the town do for anyone else in my years here. Permission to violate town ordinance...4 days or 3 nights a week, during the best months of the year, with pseudo-set parameters but if you read carefully, really unlimited parameters, with the blessing of Development Services. If the town moves forward with approving this, without a guarantee that zero at 50 will be met, then I am respectfully requesting: A one vice 5 year review to see how compliance is being met and to properly mitigate any issues; that their requested event numbers be cut down by two-thirds to 30 days with no more than 13 of those being at night; that events end much sooner, with lights off by 9pm; a substantial and effective sound barrier mitigation; that arena lights be shielded per code 4.24; no dirt bike or motor sports events – this shouldn't even be possible in a residential area; and that Development Services NOT be granted the power to authorize them any increases in events. It's easy to get lots of signatures for an arena. But nobody would sign up for this spilling over property lines and into their, and your homes – disturbing the comfort and repose we all work so hard for. Please do not agree to approve this without further review & mitigation efforts. The impact to my home has been significant. Thank you."

Ashley Hall, 832 W Perkinsville Road, Chino Valley, stated she had moved back to Chino Valley in 2019. She explained that when she lived here in 2007, there were not a lot of places to go for horse sporting events and she had to travel to Phoenix and other areas. She would rather have been able to stay local and keep her money local. She shared that she has friends that come to Chino Valley from Phoenix, Lake Havasu and Flagstaff to attend events, and that they spend money while they are here. She felt Olsen's offered a place for kids to go to an arena, and these activities are a huge positive for our community. She shared that she had attended the dirt bike barrel race and felt that Olsen's followed every guideline and were very courteous, with three-year-olds on dirt bikes. She stated the community support for this event was amazing. She reiterated that she supported Olsen's and what they were trying to do in the community.

Taelor Shoemaker, 24380 N Marblehead Ave, Paulden, stated that she was the adoption coordinator for Yavapai Humane Trappers, and was in support of Olsen's. She shared that Olsen's allowed them to have two dog adoption events last year, with one resulting in seven dog adoptions, as well as a dog fair with attendance from many organizations. She stated the Olsen's outdoor event was their main event, and it worked better than Petco, which was too small. She felt that if they did not have Olsen's, she did not know where they would go next, and that they had huge community outreach because of Olsen's support. She stated that she appreciated the Commission and everything they did.

MeLynda Davis, 1268 N Buena Vista West, Dewey, stated she was with Yavapai Humane Trappers and was in support of Olsen's. She shared that they had two dog adoption events last year resulting in ten dogs being adopted, and that the Yavapai Humane Trappers rescue many dogs which may be found by their owners if Olsen's were allowed to have these events. She felt the barrel racing with the bikes was a good idea, and shared complaints found on Facebook about dirt bikes going through properties. She asked the Commission to please consider approving Olsen's CUP.

Pam Berry, 2705 S State Route 89, Chino Valley, stated she was representing Horses with Heart therapeutic riding, and was in favor of Mike Olsen, and that the Olsen's had been a been a supporter of Horses with Heart since 1993. She shared that Olsen's supported non-profits, the disabled, young

people, and anyone in the community that needed services. She shared that she enjoyed barrel racing and that Olsen's put safety first. She felt that it was good that young people had someplace to ride and learn to be safe, instead of out in the forest with the possibility of getting hurt. She urged the Commission to support the CUP for the Olsen Event Center.

Melissa Ambrose, 1046 W Road 4-1/2 North, Chino Valley, thanked the Commission for their patience and stated she was in support of Olsen's Events. She shared that she was a mounted shooter and that Olsen's had been a huge advocate for them; they appreciated everything Olsen's did for them. She stated that she coached a lot of kids in the barrel races and gymkhana, and that Olsen's was such support for the youth of the community and brought members of families together for horses and bikes.

Greg Patterson, 725 Road 1 South, Chino Valley, stated he had lived in Chino Valley for 64 years, had seen a lot of changes, and wanted to see Olsen's continue to hold events for the community. He stated he was in full support of Mike Olsen.

Missy Nelissen, 1096 El Rancho Road, Chino Valley, stated she is with Makin Time Ranch, a sponsor of Olsen's Events, and was in support of them and everything they were doing. She felt that Olsen's was family friendly, safety oriented, brought a lot to the community, and she agreed with what others had stated.

Donna Richardson, 1441 Perkinsville Road, Chino Valley, stated she was here with Yavapai Humane Trappers and was in support of everything Olsen's had done to help them in the community. She shared that she sits in the backyard of her son's house hearing and cheering on the young kids playing ball and having fun at the pool and playground nearby. She felt that Olsen's provided opportunities for the families in the community, that Chino Valley was rural and people in the community did not want that to change. She stated that Olsen's might need to make accommodations to meet the needs of the residents, but was in full support of continuing these types of events that help families and children learn and be part of the community. She felt that by inviting people to Chino Valley, they would spend money here, and that would be good for the whole community.

Helen Fuller, P.O. Box 353, Paulden, stated she was President of the Tri City Speedsters, a gymkhana group that operated in Chino Valley, Prescott, and Prescott Valley. They had eight to ten events per year, half of them at Olsen's, and half at Triple 3, with between 60-75 riders and families that come to each event. She stated she is in full support of Olsen's, and that Olsen's had been very supportive of them, and that kids' safety was number one. She shared that their events were family oriented, where parents and kids came and watched and invited everyone to come out and watch these events. She stated that she participated in the barrel race and dirt bike race and expected it to be louder than it was. She thoroughly enjoyed it, especially the little kids on their dirt bikes. She stated, as President of the Tri City Speedsters, they supported Olsen's 100%.

Artemis Saxton, 2950 W Conestoga Court, Yavapai County, stated that she had not lived in Chino Valley as long as others, but had moved here for Olsen's Events. She shared that she used to haul up from Phoenix with her daughter for horse events and spend money here, and because of those memories and sense of community was why she moved here. She did horse events in Phoenix and felt it did not have the same feeling that Olsen's provided. If she could have had something like the barrel races when her kids were young, she felt that it would have pulled her kids together, with something they could have done together and would have been more encouraging of each other. She would have loved it.

Shawn Russell, 1640 E Verde Ranch Road, Paulden, stated she had been in Town for three years, and shared that this had happened to her before and she was very passionate about this. She felt the Commission should think carefully about letting one person take away the fabric, the heart of this community, and the kids. She stated she had moved to a community very much like Chino Valley when her kids were six and eleven, and that there was an outfit similar to Olsen's there that put on horse events every Friday night for the community. There was one person in opposition in that community that did the same thing, and stopped it for everybody, it all went away. She felt that when that happened, the community did not have the same feel, the same values and neighborliness. In this Town, people treat each other with respect and she is not afraid to walk downtown at night, because she knew that people here are good and their values are good. She reiterated that the events held at Olsen's were for

everybody, not just the equine. She stated she grew up riding dirt bikes, and as far as noise goes, most horse owners would have had a bigger fit than the homeowner if the noise was going to scare their horses, so it couldn't be that bad. She felt that if the Town allowed one person to take this away from the whole community, it would be a very big mistake and would change the fabric of the community. It would change the goodness that Olsen's gave to this community for kids to have something clean and constructive to do. She felt if you did not like the sound, you might as well move because everybody rides side by sides, razors and quads everywhere here. She reiterated that from experience, that this would affect the very core of this community and the future of our young people. She stated that she felt bad for the neighbor, but it would not be fair to take away all of the value that Olsen's brought to this community. She said she knew that Olsen's didn't do it for the money, that she knew what the fees and paybacks were, and that Olsen's was not making any money. She appreciated that and supported them 150%.

Merritt stated that there was overwhelming community sentiment in support, and one homeowner in opposition who would be most impacted by the Olsen's Events. He asked Dingee to step up and the Commission and staff held discussions regarding the Town's Noise Ordinance and Lighting Code, Zoning, hours of operation, and any complaints that the Town had received regarding the prior dirt bike events.

Merritt asked the applicant if he would be amenable, if the neighbor in opposition chose to participate, in communication regarding light and sound mitigation.

Olsen responded he would, but only if it did not impact the safety of their participants. He stated that based on the photometric study and consultation with their lighting expert, the new angle of the lights were set to minimize glare and maximize safety in the arena. He believed that they had done everything that could be done with the existing lights, that they had a significant investment in them, and that they were approved by the Town. He felt that there was no light trespass now with the changes, and that there was nothing more that could be done. He emphasized that the sound PA system was vital to events, that it was a large area where people were working with their horses waiting for their turn to compete, and they needed a way to notify those people when they were expected to compete in the arena. He stated that they operated with an 11:00 p.m. cutoff, with an exception one time when a horse was injured. He shared that they would start earlier if they anticipated a huge turnout for an event. He added that they pay back 70% of the entry fees to the winners.

Merritt closed the public portion of the meeting.

Motion was made by Vice-Chair Pasciak, seconded by Meadors, to approve CUP-2024-05, as presented, subject to the staff report, and information provided during the hearing, and the conditions of approval in Attachment A.

Merritt continued the discussion with the Commission and stated he wanted to add an additional requirement to have the official closing of events to be 11:00 p.m. **Pizzi** asked if there would be any legal issue, and felt it was not fair considering Triple 3 can run until midnight. **Zamudio** stated he thought that there must be a way for the neighbors to get together, make amends, and to make it acceptable for both parties. He felt that what Olsen's was doing was great, although he did feel for the neighbor. **Pizza** shared that he lived just outside of the 1000-foot radius, had seen the lights and heard the PA, and he felt it was not any different from the High School football, baseball, and track and field seasons. He had been a big part of the youth in the community and felt that Olsen's was great for the community. He understood where Ms. Hennessy came from, however there was growth in communities, and this was part of living in our community.

Merritt called for a roll-call vote on the additional requirement to close at 11:00 p.m. The vote passed with a 6-1 vote, with **Pizzi** voting no. The Commission agreed that an additional vote would not be necessary on a condition that the Chief of Police approve in writing beforehand an exception to the Sound Ordinance.

A roll-call vote was taken, (including the additional condition) and the motion passed unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

Merritt addressed the public and stated that the Town Council would be requiring the Commission to address an Animal Ordinance in the near future and requested that all the horse people in attendance take the time to speak with the Town staff or Town Commission with good ideas to mitigate issues about horse and animal limits on properties. He reiterated that the Commission would love to hear from the community. He thanked the public for coming.

Merritt called a recess at 7:30 p.m.

Merritt re-opened the meeting at 7:34 p.m. and turned the meeting over to Vice-Chair Pasciak.

ACTION ITEMS: Election of Officers. Vice-Chair **Pasciak** opened up the nominations for the Planning & Zoning Commission Chair position. **Welker** made a nomination of **Merritt** for Chair, with a second by **Meadors**. There were no other nominations for Chair. **Pasciak** asked for a vote and the vote passed with 6-0-1 (**Merritt** abstained) in favor of **Merritt** continuing as Chair. Chair **Merritt** accepted the nomination and stated he was honored. Chair **Merritt** resumed control of the meeting and called for a nomination for the Planning & Zoning Commission Vice-Chair position. **Zamudio** made a nomination of **Pasciak** for Vice-Chair, with a second by **Welker**. There were no other nominations for Vice-Chair. **Merritt** asked for a vote and the vote passed with 6-0-1 (**Pasciak** abstained) in favor of **Pasciak** continuing as Vice-Chair.

INFORMATION ITEMS – FROM STAFF: COUNCIL ACTION OF PRIOR P&Z CASES: **Dingee** updated the Commission about prior cases heard by Town Council. On February 25, 2025, TA-2025-01 – Residential Zoning Amendment Procedures, was approved by Town Council. **Lineberry** shared that the Solar Ordinance would be heard by the Town Council on March 17, 2025, at Grace Church, starting at 5:30 p.m.

INFORMATION ITEMS – FROM THE COMMISSIONERS: none.

INFORMATION ITEMS – FROM THE CHAIR: **Merritt** welcomed new Commissioner Pizzi and stated he appreciated his volunteering, as well as the participation from the whole Commission at the meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS – FROM THE PUBLIC: none.

ADJOURN – A motion was made by Vice-Chair **Pasciak** and **Meadors** and seconded by **Ditta** and **Zamudio** to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m.



Charles Merritt - Chair

Prepared By: Gerrean Froberg

P&Z Meeting, IRT OLSEN CUP - 2024-05

March 4, 2025

Comments for the Record from Kim Hennessey

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A one vice 5 year review to see how compliance is being met and to properly mitigate any issues.

That their requested event numbers be cut down by 2/3s to 30 days with no more than 13 of those being at night.

That events end much sooner, with lights off by 9pm.

A substantial and effective sound barrier mitigation.

That arena lights be shielded per code 4.24.

No dirt bike or motor sport events - this shouldn't even be possible in a residential area.

And that Development Services NOT be granted the power to authorize them any increases in events.

It's easy to get lots of signatures for an arena. But nobody would sign up for this spilling over property lines and into their, and your homes - disturbing the comfort and repose we all work so hard for.

Please do not agree to approve this without further review & mitigation efforts. The impact to my home has been significant. Thank you.

Kim Hennessey's Home

