

units, not a splitting of zones. That's why I think it's not compatible." Commissioner Stan VanderWerf said he was concerned that a precedent could be set which would really cause a problem.

The vote to deny was 4-1 with Geitner the no vote.

Black Forest second dwelling variance approved

Also at the April 18 land use meeting, the commissioners approved a variance of use to allow a second dwelling at a 2.89-acre property zoned RR 2.5 on the southwest corner of the intersection of Ford Drive and Milam Road in Black Forest. The application came to the BOCC with a recommendation for approval from the Planning Commission. See www.ocn.me/v23n4.htm#epcpc.

Commissioner Geitner made the meeting aware that the applicants were family friends but said she felt she could be fair and impartial in the decision-making process.

The county approved a site plan for a new single-family dwelling in August 2022 and, at that time, the original 1960s dwelling was converted to an accessory living quarters. Such quarters can only be used for occasional temporary stays by family and friends. Christian Haas, planner I, Planning and Community Development, explained that a secondary dwelling was a more intense use which can be permanently occupied and rented out.

Nina Ruiz of Vertex Consulting Services and representing the client said the possibility of a variance of use option was not discussed at the time of the initial application. County staff would only have explained it if the applicant had said that was what they wanted to do. She said, "It wasn't Mr. Patterson [the applicant] trying to be sneaky or trying to do anything out of order. He just simply didn't know that that was an option."

No one spoke in support. Terry Stokka, chairman, Black Forest Land Use Committee, said that while the committee was not opposed to accessory dwelling units or guest houses, it did oppose a permanent dwelling. He said, "Approv-

ing two dwelling units on this acreage which is only 2.89 acres is a violation of the land development code and the county master plan. It effectively creates a subdivision." He said it created a dangerous precedent.

Ruiz stated there were five properties within half a mile with two dwelling units, so the precedent was already set.

Gonzalez said that if the application had been the first one, he would be more inclined to disapprove but there were already others utilizing the same variance. Holly Williams agreed. The vote to approve was unanimous.

Monument Academy minor subdivision

At the April 4 BOCC land use meeting, the commissioners approved a request by Land Resource Associates for approval of a minor subdivision to create one lot and four tracts on the almost 63-acre site of the new Monument Academy. It is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Walker Road and Highway 83.

The 19.38-acre lot will contain the high school, recreational fields, and parking. Two of the tracts are set aside for future development, and two will be transferred to adjoining property owners as part of a property line survey adjustment.

Black Forest slash and mulch program

At its March 28 meeting, the BOCC approved the 2023 memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Black Forest Slash and Mulch Committee (SAMCOM), the nonprofit responsible for the program's daily operation.

This wildfire mitigation program, staffed entirely by volunteers, accepts slash (tree debris including branches, leaves, needles, etc.) from residents that is ground into mulch, which is available free of charge to the public.

Under the MOU, the county contributes up to \$40,000 toward grinder expenses, and SAMCOM provides \$12,000 toward the costs.

The site, at the southeast corner of Shoup and Herring Roads, opened for the 2023 season for slash drop-off on April 29. Normal business

hours will be Saturdays 7 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sundays noon-4 p.m., and Tuesday and Thursday evenings 5-7:30 p.m. The last date for slash drop-off is Sept. 10. There is a \$2 drop-off fee for slash with a loyalty card available that offers a discount.

Free mulch will be available for self-loading from May 20 through Sept. 16. For large quantities of mulch, an end loader will be available on Saturdays only, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., charging \$5 per bucket.

For more information, visit www.bfslash.org. Anyone wanting to volunteer to work a shift can do so via the website.

The Pineries mountain beetle infestation

At the April 18 BOCC meeting, Judy von Ahlefeldt, a longtime

resident of Black Forest, again spoke about a mountain pine beetle infestation in trees at The Pineries Open Space in Black Forest which has spread to private property. Von Ahlefeldt first brought the mat-

ter to the BOCC's attention in early 2022 when she raised concerns about the method by which it was being treated. At the time, the county had signed a contract for \$42,600 to have the affected trees

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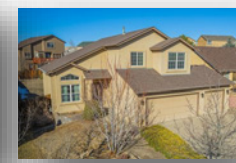
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