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| **WC Logo.emf** | **Staff Report to the Ogden Valley Planning Commission** *Weber County Planning Division* |
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****Synopsis****

****Application Information****

**Application Request:** Request to amend the Weber County Zoning Ordinance by adding certain ancillary uses, under the overall term of “Agri-tourism”, to the list of Conditional Uses found in Chapter 5-B; Agricultural Valley-3 (AV-3) Zone.

**Agenda Date: Tuesday, January 25, 2011**

**Applicant:** Patricia Dickens, Kelly Creek Farm

**File Number:** ZO 15-2010

****Property Information****

**Approximate Address:** NA

**Project Area:** NA

**Zoning:** NA

**Existing Land Use:** NA

**Proposed Land Use:** NA

**Parcel ID:** NA

**Township, Range, Section:** NA

****Staff Information****

**Report Presenter:** Scott Mendoza

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 801-399-8769

**Report Reviewer:** RS

Background

The petitioner is requesting an approval to amend the Weber County Zoning Ordinance, by adding certain ancillary uses, under the overall term of “Agri-tourism”, to the list of Conditional Uses found in Chapter 5-B; Agricultural Valley-3 (AV-3). See page 1 of Exhibit A for the petitioner’s letter to the Ogden Valley Planning Commission, and pages 2-3 for the petitioner’s proposed ordinance language addressing “Agri-tourism”.

Agri-tourism is defined by many sources; however, the most general definitions describe agri-tourism as a growing industry that can supplement a farmer’s income by diversifying what the farm can offer the general public. In addition to producing fruits, grains, vegetables, and providing grazing land for livestock, farms that are participating in agri-tourism are combining a wide variety of (nontraditional but somewhat related) activities with those customarily found on working farms. For example, it is becoming more common for farmers to offer public access to a farm as a venue for activities such as farmer’s markets, petting zoos, and community gardens, farm stays, cooking classes, corporate retreats, family events, corn mazes and other seasonal activities. See Exhibit B for additional agri-tourism information provided by the petitioner. See Exhibit C for examples of existing Utah farms that are participating in agri-tourism. See Exhibit D for an existing Davis County “Ancillary Agricultural Activities” Ordinance.

The intent of this proposed amendment is to allow agri-tourism as a conditional use in the AV-3 Zone. According to the petitioner, the rationale behind the request is that, “it is becoming increasingly more difficult for local farmers to maintain a profitable or ‘break-even’ operation which forces many to sell to land developers and investors.” Also, “by providing alternatives to farm land use, while preserving farming operations, farmers can retain their lands and protect against overdevelopment and enhance sustainable land use.” See the petitioner’s letter attached as Exhibit A.

Planning Staff research, performed to date, shows that by offering land use alternatives to farms, the farms can become more financially stable and in turn remain as an agricultural operation which is the preferred use in agricultural zones.

Summary of Planning Commission Considerations

The request has been made that Weber County make a policy decision; therefore, the Ogden Valley Planning Commission should consider the following:

* The Ogden Valley General Plan states that Valley residents are proud of the Valley’s agricultural lands and that they are a “unique characteristic”. Due to this resident opinion should Weber County utilize agri-tourism as an agricultural preservation tool?
* Should there be a minimum acreage requirement?
* Should there be vehicular access requirements i.e., should a farm that participates in agri-tourism, be required to have vehicular access off of certain types of roads? For example, a collector or arterial.
* What type(s) of impacts could result from amending the AV-3 Zone to allow agri-tourism?
* As a requirement, should “ancillary activities” be related to a farm’s customary activities?
* Do the benefits of preserving agriculture outweigh potential impacts?
* Should a farm owner be allowed to manufacture and sale retail goods made from products grown and/or raised on the farm? For example, if a farmer grows pumpkins, should the farmer be allowed to manufacture and sale pumpkin pies? If yes, should there be a graduating scale implemented that ensures that the level of manufacturing is proportionate with the size/acreage of the farm?
* Should retail sales be limited strictly to products grown or raised on the farm?

Conformance to the General Plan

* The Ogden Valley General Plan states that Valley residents are proud of the Valley’s agricultural lands and that they are a “unique characteristic” that should be promoted.
* The General Plan also states that Weber County should promote working farms as an integral part of the Valley’s cultural heritage.
* The Recreation Element of the Ogden Valley General Plan states that Weber County should adopt an open space program that includes the use of various policies and tools. It further states that “the objective is to protect as much open space as possible while maintaining the right for every property owner to receive a fair return on their real estate investment.”

Staff Recommendation

Based on the information submitted and the guidance found in the Ogden Valley General Plan, the Planning Division Staff is recommending that the Ogden Valley Planning Commission table the request to amend the Weber County Zoning Ordinance by adding “Agri-tourism” to the uses listed in Chapter 5B (Agricultural Valley – 3, AV-3 Zone). The Planning Staff is also recommending that the Planning Commission consider scheduling this item for the February 1st, 2011 work-session.

Exhibits

1. Petitioner’s request letter and proposed ordinance language addressing Agri-tourism.
2. Agri-tourism information provided by the petitioner.
3. Information describing existing Agri-tourism farms in Utah.
4. Davis County’s existing Ancillary Agricultural Activities Ordinance.
5. Weber County’s existing Agricultural Valley – 3 (AV-3) Ordinance.