

April 28, 2009

Boise City Planning and Zoning Commission  
Boise City Hall  
P. O. Box 500  
Boise, Idaho 83701-0500

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DEVELOPMENT  
SERVICES

Re: Request for Conditional Use Permit  
Ethel Ficks  
5600 W. Hill Road  
CUP09-00017

Gentlemen:

We adamantly oppose the granting of the captioned Conditional Use Permit (CUP09-00017) for the following reasons:

1. The operation of a community social center on Hill Road would create dangerous traffic conditions.

Hill Road is one of two routes on the north side of the Boise River heading east into the Boise city center. It is a very narrow, two-lane road with narrow bike paths. It is very heavily traveled, especially in the early morning and late afternoon as people travel to and from work. The speed limit is 35 miles per hour, but many cars zip along at 40 mph or more.

The present entrance to the proposed community center is a one-lane dirt road on the north side of Hill Road just 500 feet from a curve to the east and about 100 feet below the brow of a hill to the west. Cars slowing or pausing to enter the proposed community center would only be visible to on-coming traffic, 500 feet to the west and 100 feet to the east.

2. The Conditional Use Permit would establish a business in what is now a residential/rural area. The "community social center" for the holding of meetings, family gatherings, weddings, etc., would be completely out of character with its surrounding

3. Apparently, many of these gatherings would be held out of doors, with the result that music and noise would disturb and destroy the tranquillity of the surrounding properties.

4. The weddings would be limited to "no more than 75 people." Therefore, it is reasonable to assume at least 30 to 40 cars would be needed to deliver the wedding guests and participants. This would require a sizable paved parking lot on the property and would detract from the property's rural atmosphere. In the future, if the business develops as envisioned by Mr. Ficks, the residential building on the property would undoubtedly have to be enlarged, creating an even larger commercial area.

5. During rainy and snowy periods, there is a great amount of runoff from Plano Drive and the north side of Hill Road. Much of this runoff drains into our pasture and onto the property at 5433 Hill Road. This is an ongoing problem that has yet to be resolved by Boise City. A paved parking lot at 5600 W. Hill Road will only increase the runoff problem.

6. Several years ago Boise City extended the sewer system along Hill Road. The size of the pipe used is for residential not commercial properties.

7. The establishment of a commercial business that would attract many people to this section of Hill Road would lower the value of surrounding properties.

8. If one commercial business is permitted in this area, it will be difficult to keep other properties from going "commercial." Hill Road between Pierce Park and Collister would ~~then~~ look more like Hill Road around the 36th Street area, and would no longer be a suitable residential area.

9. Mrs. Ficks and her son indicate that they plan to plant trees, grapes and organic gardens. Since all of this requires water, and since the property no longer receives water from the nearby canal, we can assume they will be using water from their domestic well on the property. We are therefore concerned that this additional water use for the plantings, the community social center and the residence may draw down the water level in the wells on the surrounding properties.

10. In our opinion, the Book Farm is not and was never a viable business. At first there may have been some interest, but in later years we feel it was a business in name only. Therefore, the Book Farm's "existence" does not justify transforming it into an ongoing commercial business requiring a Conditional Use Permit.

There are many churches, wedding chapels, parks, schools and other places in Boise to hold weddings, meetings and family gatherings without the necessity of placing a commercial community center in the heart of the residential/rural area along Hill Road. For the above-stated reasons, we respectfully request that the proposed Conditional Use Permit CUPO9-00017 be denied.

*Don a. Borgeson/mb*  
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