COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT NAMES:

SP202200001 Misty Mountain Camp Resort

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST:

Agricultural-Forestal Districts Advisory Committee review of a special use permit amendment request permit 158 total campsites (increasing by 53), to permit 19 cabins, and to permit year-round cabin use (30-day occupancy limit) rather than prohibiting cabin use from November 15 to March 15. The property is adjacent to the Yellow Mountain District.

STAFF CONTACT:

Scott Clark

AGENDA DATE:

October 17, 2022

ATTACHMENTS:

Yes

BACKGROUND:

The subject property (Tax Map 71 Parcel 3) is a 47.11-acre parcel located on US 250, adjacent to the Yellow Mountain Agricultural/Forestal District (see Attachment A). The adjacent District parcel is Tax Map 55 Parcel 15, across US 250 (Rockfish Gap Turnpike) to the northwest of the campground parcel.

The special use permit application proposes the expansion of an existing campground with traditional camping spaces and cabins (see Attachment B). These facilities require a special use permit approval from the Board of Supervisors.

COMMITTEE REVIEW GUIDELINES:

Section 3-202(D) of the Albemarle County Code reads as follows:

D. Consideration of district in taking certain actions. The county shall consider the existence of a district and the purposes of this chapter and Chapter 43 of Title 15.2 of the Virginia Code in its comprehensive plan, ordinances, land use planning decisions, administrative decisions and procedures affecting parcels of land adjacent to the district.

The County's practice has been to consult with the Committee on any special use permit requests located on land adjacent to an existing District.

Those purposes of the Agricultural-Forestal Districts chapter of the County Code are listed in Section 3-100, "Purpose and Intent":

The purpose and intent of this chapter are as follows:

- A. It is the policy of county to conserve and protect, and to encourage the development and improvement of, its agricultural and forestal lands for the production of food and other agricultural or forestal products. It is also the policy of the county to conserve and protect agricultural and forestal lands as valued natural and ecological resources which provide essential open spaces for clean airsheds, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, and for aesthetic purposes.
- B. It is the purpose and intent of this chapter to provide means by which agricultural and forestal lands of either statewide or local significance may be protected and enhanced as a viable segment of state and local economies, and as important economic and environmental resources.

The Committee's role is to assist the Board of Supervisors by commenting on any possible impacts to the Yellow Mountain District from the proposed use. The Committee's review should directly address Agricultural-Forestal District impacts. Other aspects of the review, such as visibility of the facility, traffic, noise, etc., will be addressed in staff's report to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

The Committee's recommendation will be included in staff's reports to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors when public hearings are held for this item.

DISCUSSION:

Section 3-101 of the County Code further explains the County policies that the Districts should promote. Staff will address this proposal's impacts on each policy below:

A. Production of food and other agricultural and forestal products. It is the policy of the State and the County to conserve and protect and to encourage the development and improvement of the Commonwealth's agricultural and forestal lands for the production of food and other agricultural and forestal products.

The majority of the campground expansion proposed by this application would be located at the opposite end of the campground property from the adjacent District parcel, and across a major federal highway (see Attachment A). The addition of camping facilities would not impede the District parcel's ability to produce food or timber products.

B. Provide essential open spaces. It is also the policy of the State and the County to conserve and protect agricultural and forestal lands as valued natural and ecological resources which provide essential open spaces for clean air sheds, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, as well as for aesthetic purposes.

Open spaces within the district would not be reduced by the expansion of an existing campground on an adjacent parcel. The district's value for watershed protection would not be impacted.

C. Strong agricultural and forestal economy. It is the policy of the County to support a strong agricultural and forestal economy.

A campground on adjacent property that does not have direct physical impacts on the District would not impede the District's ability to support agricultural or forestal production.

D. Protect and preserve natural resources and retain continuous and unfragmented land. It is the policy of the County to protect and preserve natural resources, which include mountains, hills, valleys, rivers, streams, groundwater, and retain continuous and unfragmented land for agriculture, forestry, biodiversity, and natural resource protection.

The existing campground is separated from the District property by a major highway, and the expanded portion of the campground would not be adjacent to the District. Development of the site would not create fragmentation of land ownership or of land cover within the district.

RECOMMENDATION:

Physical impacts of the proposed use would not impact agricultural resources on land in the District.

Staff recommends that the Committee advise the Board and the Planning Commission that the proposed use does not conflict with the purposes of the Agricultural-Forestal Districts.

ATTACHMENTS:

A – Location Map

B – Special Use Permit Plan



