

MEMORANDUM

TO: Albemarle County Community Development Staff

FROM: Kendra Moon, PE
Line and Grade Civil Engineering

DATE: Revised September 19, 2022

RE: SP202200001 Misty Mountain Camp Resort Redevelopment
Special Use Permit Application Narrative

Project Details:

Applicant: Misty Mountain Investment LLC
Engineer: Line and Grade Civil Engineering | Daniel C. Hyer, PE
Name of Project: Misty Mountain Camp Resort
Short Description: Special Use Permit for Additional Camping Spaces and Cabins
Proposed Site: 56 Misty Mountain Road, Greenwood, VA 22943

Property Details:

Parcel ID Number: 07100-00-00-00300
Short Parcel ID: 71-3
Total Acres: 47.11
Owner: Misty Mountain Investment LLC
Property Address: 56 Misty Mountain Road, Greenwood, VA 22943
Current Tenant: Misty Mountain Camp Resort
Magisterial District: Samuel Miller
Zoning: Rural Areas (RA)
Proffered: Yes
ZMAs Related to Proffers: None
Comprehensive Plan Area: Rural Area 3
Comprehensive Plan Use: Rural Area
Comprehensive Plan Use: Unassigned
Land Use: Commercial
Surrounding Uses: Vacant land to the west
Single family residential to the north
Small residential subdivision to the east
Vacant land to the south

Site Photos:

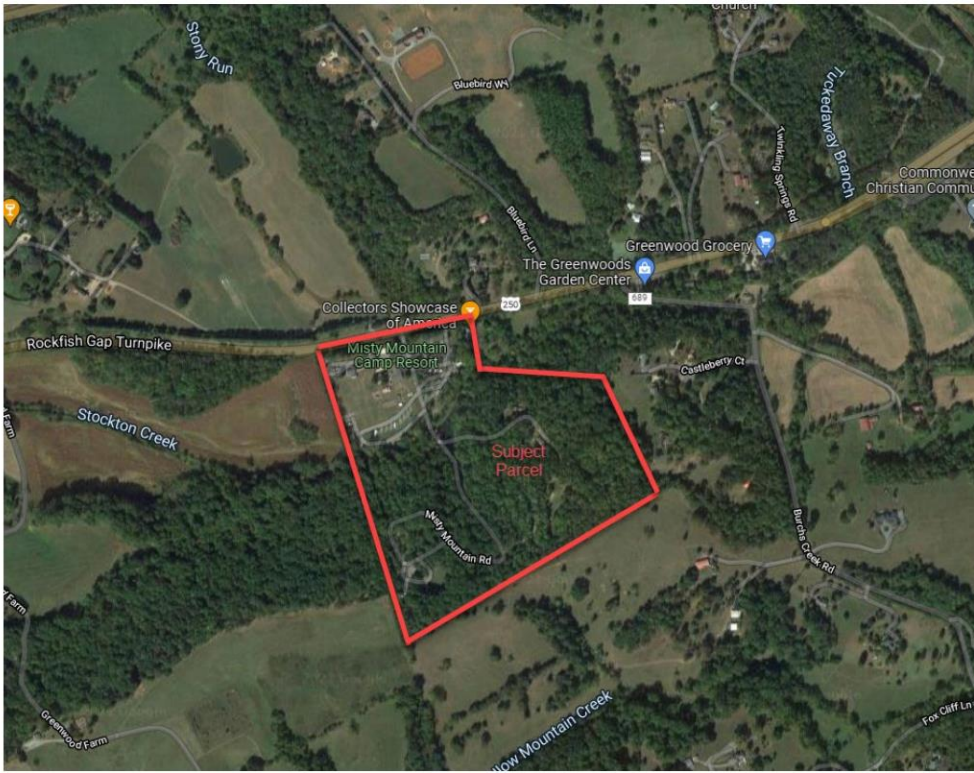


Photo 1 – Aerial image of subject parcel (courtesy of Google Maps)



Photo 2 – Camp area nearest Route 250



Photo 3 – Fishing pond



Photo 4 – Outdoor recreation area

A. Background

Misty Mountain Camp Resort (MMCR) is located on a 47.11 acre parcel zoned Rural Areas in Greenwood, Virginia. It has been an active campground for over 40 years and currently has 16 rentable cabins (two of which are considered dwelling units), 105 rentable campground sites, and two non-rentable dwelling units (see Appendix A). There are four special use permits (SPs) associated with this site. The full conditions associated with each SP are included in Appendices C through F, but the brief summary of each SP is as follows:

- SP-82-61 | Allows 112 camping sites/150 ft setback
- SP-94-30 | Amends SP-82-61 to allow 10 cabins (not more than 4 can qualify as dwelling units, and no cabins may be used from November 15 - March 15)
- SP-2009-16 | Allows one music festival per year subject to conditions, for trial period of two years
- SP-2010-48 | Five-year extension of SP-2009-16 to continue allowing annual music festivals

B. Proposal

Outdoor recreation is now more important than ever, and therefore it is the intent of this special use permit to expand the capacities of the Misty Mountain Camp Resort. The applicant seeks to amend SP199400030 (see Appendix D) to allow 19 cabins and 158 campsites, an increase in 53 campsites from what is existing. Please note that SP-94-30 allows for only 10 cabins, therefore the applicant wishes to bring the site into conformance by allowing for the 16 cabins which were built under previous ownership. The applicant also seeks to amend the condition that the cabins are not used from November 15 to March 15 and instead limit the *duration* for which any rentable cabin is used to 30 nights per stay.

The proposed campsites are to be located in the southernmost portion of the property, furthest from Route 250 and well outside of the floodplain of Stockton Creek. Please see Appendix B for the Concept Plan showing the proposed campsites. Access to the new campsites will be via the existing Misty Mountain Road; no new entrances to the site are proposed.

Proposed improvements include the additional campsites and supporting infrastructure for those sites (e.g., travelways, water, sewer, electric), improved organization at the site entrance for check-in, and the improvements required to organize certain existing campsites within the project area and bring them into conformance with setbacks.

C. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The subject property is designated Rural Areas. The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes the preservation of natural resources and scenic beauty in these areas. The entire

purpose of this campground is to provide a retreat for people to enjoy the beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and the preservation of natural resources is inherent to that goal.

According to the MCCR website¹, guests are invited to “explore nature trails, splash in our pool, sit by the creek, fish in our pond, play at several playgrounds, climb our hills...,” all of which are geared toward facilitating people in enjoying the outdoors. A rural setting is necessary to allow the opportunity for these activities to exist alongside one another.

D. Impacts on Public Safety Facilities, Public Transportation, Public Schools, Public Parks and Environmental Features

The impact that the addition of these campsites will have on public facilities is minimal, mainly due to the nature and location of the site.

Impact on Public Safety Facilities:

There is no discernible impact on public safety facilities that would be caused by this proposal. Activities with high risk for potential fires are regulated. Part of SP-94-30 that is not being amended is that “provisions for outdoor cooking, campfires, cooking pits, etc., shall be subject to Albemarle County Fire Official approval.”

Impact on Public Infrastructure:

The property will not have an impact on public infrastructure such as sanitary and water lines as it will remain serviced by private well and drainfield. Consultants have sited areas for wells and drainfields that will be utilized for the added campsites. The property *will* have a minimal impact on public roads, as the trip generation of the site will increase.

Water

Fracture trace analysis performed on August 26, 2021 indicates there is ample groundwater available to sustain the needs of these added accommodations. The Virginia Department of Health Office of Drinking Water (VDH-ODW) has issued approval of the proposed well sites and both have been drilled at this time, with high yields of 7 gpm and 30 gpm. Water storage tanks are currently used on site for the lower campsites and will be used for the proposed campsites to reduce impacts of peak-demand water usage.

Sewer

Preliminary soils investigation of the proposed campground area reveals that there are multiple sites for potential drainfields, in addition to the two existing drainfields that were previously permitted with VDH but never used. Sewer Permitting with the Virginia Department of Health is ongoing for the proposed

¹ <https://www.mistymountaincampresort.com/>

drainfields, and a Central Sewer System Request is to be completed following VDH approval.

Public Roads

The additional campsites will increase the property’s peak hour trip generation by 15 trips, or roughly 43 percent (see Tables 1 and 2), though it should be noted that the projected trip generation is based off of very few data points available. Compared to the VDOT 2019 Traffic Data for Rockfish Gap Turnpike, this is a 1.6% increase in *peak hour* traffic on the road.

Table 1. Existing Conditions - ITE Trip Generation 10th Edition

ITE TRIP GENERATION (10th Edition)				PM PEAK HOUR OF ADJACENT STREET TRAFFIC				
Use Description	ITE CODE	UNITS	QTY OF UNITS	% IN	% OUT	IN	OUT	TOTAL TRIPS
Single Family Detached	210	Dwelling Units	2	63%	37%	1	1	2
Campground	416	Occupied Campsites	121	65%	35%	21	12	33
<i>SITE TOTALS =</i>						22	13	35

Table 2. Proposed Improvements - ITE Trip Generation 10th Edition

ITE TRIP GENERATION (10th Edition)				PM PEAK HOUR OF ADJACENT STREET TRAFFIC				
Use Description	ITE CODE	UNITS	QTY OF UNITS	% IN	% OUT	IN	OUT	TOTAL TRIPS
Single Family Detached	210	Dwelling Units	2	63%	37%	1	1	2
Campground	416	Occupied Campsites	177	65%	35%	31	17	48
<i>SITE TOTALS =</i>						32	18	50

The site has an existing right-turn lane which will help to mitigate negative impacts from an increase in traffic to the site.

The existing traffic volumes on Rockfish Gap Turnpike are high enough that a left-turn lane is warranted for this site, both in existing and proposed conditions. However, a Design Waiver has been approved by VDOT to allow for the expansion of the campground without the installation of a left-turn lane (see Appendix H). The main reasons for this waiver were the required right-of-way take and disturbance to Stony Run that would result from the turn lane. The applicant has proposed to reorganize the traffic flow within the site to move vehicles off of Rockfish Gap Turnpike more quickly, which should help to alleviate possible queuing that is a result of camper check-ins.

Impact on Public Transportation:

This proposal has no impact on public transportation as there is currently no form of public transportation that services this area of the County.

Impact on Public Schools and Parks:

This site has no impact on public schools as the nearest school is almost 2 miles away, and the peak hours do not coincide. Likewise, the nearest public park is 2 miles away and located along a different road, therefore no impact is anticipated.

Impact on Environmental Features:



MMCR offers fishing, hiking, and “private sites nestled in the trees.” It is to the benefit of all that the campground’s impact on environmental features be as minimal as possible. The health of the fishing pond will rely on the health of Stockton Creek, which runs through the property. The joy of hiking and the privacy of campsites will largely depend on the preservation of trees on site; therefore tree removal will be selective. Individual trees in the proposed campsite areas will be surveyed prior to final design such that large canopy trees can be saved wherever feasible. MMCR is determined to keep a low impact by expanding in areas where minimal land disturbance and tree removal is required. Approximately one quarter of the site will remain forested.

Impact on Adjacent Properties:

Along with the addition of new campsites, the applicant intends to redevelop existing sites in the southwest corner in order to bring them into compliance with side yard regulations. This redevelopment will largely follow the existing layout in order to minimize disturbance, but it will bring more organization to the area. An 8-ft tall, black, solid wood screening fence will be installed along the western property line behind the campsites. This will be a net positive impact on the adjacent property TMP 71-2, and has already been discussed with the owner. The added campsites adjacent to TMP 71-5 and TMP 71-4E will be screened by existing vegetation and an added screening fence in the rear and side yard areas, therefore their impact on adjacent properties will be minimal. In order to prevent campers from trespassing onto adjacent properties, the owner has put up signs at the perimeter of the property warning campers of the zero-tolerance policy for trespassing. Any campers found trespassing will be immediately escorted from the premises.



Photo 5 – No trespassing sign

E. Conclusion

Misty Mountain Camp Resort has been a place for people to gather to enjoy the outdoors for over 40 years. As development within the surrounding areas continues, it is increasingly important to provide opportunities like this for people to connect with nature. The addition of 53 campsites and the revised limit on the time of year in which the cabins can be used will allow that many more potential campers and families to spend time outdoors. The character of the campground will remain unchanged, it will just be expanded for more to enjoy.

Potential impacts on public facilities were evaluated, and no substantial detriment was found. The location of the site and the rural nature of its surroundings are such that its impact on schools, parks, public transportation, public infrastructure, and public safety facilities are inherently low. Preservation of environmental features on site is a key part of this development.

This special use permit is a chance to extend the benefits of the outdoors to more people and to fix existing zoning violations on the site.

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Existing Conditions Plan
Appendix B: Concept Plan
Appendix C: SP198200061 Action Letter
Appendix D: SP199400030 Action Letter
Appendix E: SP200900016 Legacy Document
Appendix F: SP201000048 Review Comments 2011-03-16
Appendix G: Office of Drinking Water Well Approvals
Appendix H: Approved VDOT Design Waiver