



**FH640 Glamping Appeal: Town Hall**  
**“Resort Camping- Proj-2020-00191”**

**Thursday, August 31, 2023 6-8pm @ Flamingo Heights Community Association**

6:00 - 6:30pm

**1. Introduction:**

- a. Morongo Basin Glamping Taskforce
  - **Chris Clarke, associate director of CA desert program of the National Parks Conservation Association + Co-Host of podcast *90 Miles from Needles* (had episode on FH640 last year)**
    - Remarks on really good turnout at meeting
    - Started Glamping Taskforce email list April 2021: list contains a diverse group of folks but all who loves the desert, locals and those who visit, experts and non-experts
    - [cclarke@npca.org](mailto:cclarke@npca.org) (contact to sign up for Taskforce email group)
    - List also exists in mutual aid and support: references Wonder Inn got denied by Planning Commission, and tracking of their glamping developments (e.g. bubble motel)
    - Marks Sept 27 = sponsoring a visitation forum, will take some of the momentum pre-pandemic, eventbrite
- b. [SaveOurDeserts.org](https://www.saveourdeserts.org) (SOD)
  - **Justin Merino, individual who has been involved with many different groups (Homestead Valley Community Council (HVCC) Immediate Past President, Landers Community Association President, Flamingo Heights Community Association ‘Community Council’ Member, initiated SOD to disseminate information about FH640)**
    - Attended in person to City of San Bernardino to speak in front of the Planning Commission in March 2023
    - [hello@saveourdeserts.org](mailto:hello@saveourdeserts.org)  
(email to sign up for updates/newsletter)

**2. Recap of FH640:**

- a. How it started and where we are today.
  - **Caroline Partamian, individual and community member, no organizational association, started [Save Flamingo Heights petition via change.org](https://www.saveflamingoheights.org)**
    - **April 2021**
      - Neighbors receive adhoc letters via US mail from Contract Planner Jim Morrissey
      - Glamping Taskforce Commences
    - **April 19, 2021**
      - HVCC holds it's first in-person meeting on the topic

- **April 26, 2021**
  - Comments due to Contract Planner Jim Morrissey
- ***Silence for a ~year***
- **March 2022**
  - Neighbors learn that RoBott tries to get the project exempt from an Environmental Impact Review report (applying for a CUP)
- **April 21, 2022**
  - 2nd round of comments due to Jim Morrissey
- **August 15, 2022**
  - HVCC holds an in-person meeting with community members and RoBott Land Developers
- **March 9, 2023**
  - Planning Commission Meeting
  - Over 30 in-person comments by individuals on the record, all opposed to the project
  - Planning Commission Denies CUP for Flamingo 640 effectively by not voting: 'denial without prejudice'
  - Without this permit, the project cannot move forward
  - JM also mentions that 'denial without prejudice' is rare
- **RoBott Land has 11 days to file it's appeal** (below are updates on the appeal from the County)
  - Appeal is filled with Land Use Services 3/22/2023.
  - Land Use Services planned to hold a public hearing on June 27, 2023, for the appeal of a Planning Commission denial (by lack of vote) for the Project commonly referred to as Flamingo 640, as described below.
    - Project Description
      - A Conditional Use Permit (CUP) was submitted for a campground that includes a number of facilities, including 75-camp sites, camp store, restaurant, bar, restrooms, pool, workshop buildings, helipad, and common area gardens and pathways within an approximate 25-acre portion of a 640-acre parcel in the community of Landers. The zoning for the site is Rural Living, which permits campgrounds with a CUP. The proposed amenities are ancillary to the campground, for registered campers only, and not open to the general public.
    - Planning Commission Decision
      - On March 9, 2023, Staff recommended approval of the Project to the Planning Commission, but the Project was ultimately denied, as the recommendation failed to get a motion. The applicant, RoBott Land Company, has filed an appeal seeking approval of the Project by the Board of Supervisors.

- Land Use Services was informed by the project applicant that they are looking to make *some scope reductions* to this project, and would like the item to be presented at the July 25, Board meeting to allow time to redesign. The department will also be coordinating with County Counsel as to whether or not the revisions would need to go back to the Planning Commission, which depends on the extent of the design changes.
- BOS provides this update on August 25, 2023: We recently received a revised Project Description for the Project. We are meeting next week to determine next steps based on this information. We will update you once we have more information.
- **As of August 31, 2023 there has been no hearing scheduled for the BOS or PC to hear the appeal.**

### 3. Board of Supervisors or Planning Commission:

#### a. Who will hear the appeal.

- Speaker: Justin Merino
  - PC 'denied without prejudice'
    - if appeal meets criteria for BOS to hear, they'll hear it
    - no word from BOS yet, supposed to have an update the week of Sept 4th 2023
    - JM suggests appeal process is supposed to be 30 days from filing; should have been heard before August 20 (July 20 is when appeal is dated)
    - JM has emailed County inquiring why it's not been heard yet, trying to get clarity on this
    - if heard by BOS, community should reach out to all the supervisors, etc.
    - if PC, community should reach out to planning commissioners, etc.
    - next step still unknown/to be determined

### 4. Rural Living (RL) zoning:

#### a. Update on request to Board of Supervisors to review code.

- Speaker: Justin Merino
  - Update on formal request to Board of Supervisors to review code of allowable uses in the RL zone
  - RL zoning is a leftover byproduct of lack of foresight by county as mentioned by Supervisor Dawn Rowe's; one of these is "campground"
  - A year ago HVCC and Lucerne Valley Economic Development Association appealed to review allowed uses in the RL zone <https://www.saveourdeserts.org/#rizoner>
    - quick history; 19 Dec 2022 Supervisor Rowe presents proposal to HVCC where the county would classify these developments as boutique lodging, major/minor campground, and RESORT. This project is "Resort"

Camping-Proj-2020-00191” - different level of CUP they have to go through.

- Per the proposal: *“RESORT – NOT Permitted in RL, must be in commercial zone and subject to a Conditional Use Permit”*
- Sound Clip from Supervisor Rowe’s July 2023 Z107.7 interview:  
<https://www.saveourdeserts.org/#rowez1077>
- JM says the RL zoning most likely is not going to help us with FH640 as it would apply to future projects
- JM has asked for a moratorium on any “resorts” in his letter to LUS/Supervisor Rowe, no response to request to date
- JM plays this as a way to show that changes in RL Zoning can change; we’re not stuck with “50 year old” zoning decisions
- when Dollar General went in, a decision was made that the northern part (of Flamingo Heights) would essentially be commercial while the south part (where FH640 is) would remain rural in-line with the Homestead Valley Community Plan  
<https://www.saveourdeserts.org/#guide>

#### 5. **RoBott Land Appeal:**

- a. Presentation by the Taskforce of developers documents to BOS.

Speaker: Justin Merino

- JM points out “visual simulations”
- 2 lanes coming off on the 247
- Hired Community Works Design Group to mock up plans
- JM refers to point in PC when PC asked developer about their consultations with Caltrans - they hadn’t and still haven’t talked to Caltrans it appears
- Visits [SaveOurDeserts.org](https://www.saveourdeserts.org) website for visuals and letter of appeal

#### 6. **Glamping Taskforce on Appeal:**

- a. Thoughts and insights on the presented items.

- Speakers: Justin Merino, Chris Clarke, Caroline Partamian
- CC: these projects just don’t go away
  - stick to our opposition; stick to making substantive and relevant comments, attacking the flaws of the project
  - substantive comments are important
- CP: environment + traffic still not brought up

6:30 - 7:15pm

#### 7. **Public Comments and Discussion:**

- a. Your input is invaluable as we strive to make a difference.

- Speaker: Various voices
  - Peo’s CHP traffic accident/death report comes up; working to decipher report
- Discussion on number of cars added by development; whether it would be a worry for Caltrans or not; depends on calculations of # of cars
  - ~75 units; 2 cars per unit, several trips/person - potential for 6 or 8 trips per day per vehicle + employees

- reduction in SF but not in acreage; Suzy from MDLT says *it's still all an environmental concern*
- 25 acres of the 640 acres parcel would be developed; but remark comes up asking what's to stop the developers from expanding more in the future; nothing except they need to do CUP again or rest of the acreage
  - water: water district; they have a letter of intent from Bighorn to pipe in water to the facility
  - (discussion about **economic feasibility**)
  - community member recommends that we need to see a business plan and make it a stipulation for them to turn that into the BOS as part of the appeal
  - make the realization of the development "so expensive" that a developer who would potentially buy the project would shy away
  - homesteader family with homes in washes doesn't want noise and light pollution : developer's response says they will do 'dark sky nights' + distinct parking zones
  - MDLT cannot make any official comments at this time (Suzy) but taking notes
  - 1992 earthquake; fault line adjacent to project; apparently they've done this study and have passed that hurdle.
  - accessibility issues brought up with main parking lot vs. no parking/driving within the project as pitched during the PC hearing
  - area is an ACEC (Area of Critical Environmental Concern)
    - [www.saveourdeserts.org/#acec](http://www.saveourdeserts.org/#acec)
- reflects the ecological resource of the land but doesn't restrict land outside of the BLM land.
  - relink talking points: examples [here](#) but note date (there have been some changes to project since this was posted)
    - Traffic safety (demand a full traffic report)
    - Wildlife and flora concern (desert tortoises, Joshua Trees)
    - Air + water quality
    - Leech field from septic tanks going into Pipes Canyon Wash (part of Sand to Snow National Monument)
    - Noise
    - Dark sky impacts
    - Greenhouse gas emissions
    - This project is not a campground; it is a RESORT
- PERMANENT structures = not a campground; it is a resort (plumbing)
  - Joshua Trees protections according to new Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act (WJTCA)
    - protected as a candidate species under California Endangered species act (CESA); fines and fees - link to info about this and WJTCA (advantage of how no one knows its going to work out yet);
    - Brendan Cummings; CBD/essentially a co-author of WJTCA; fees are not as high as we'd like them to be
- RoBott Land are not developers; they are investors ; they build concepts out and sell them to a developer.
- Miscellaneous other points: other developments are popping up akin to whac-a-mole: shopping center in airplane hangar across la copine? ; lonely dove motel (landers, small scale and approached community for guidance before applying to county); geodome project behind integration

7:15pm - 7:30pm

**8. Next Steps:**

- a. What's next and how best can the community use its collective voice.
  - Writing Supervisor Rowe today may not help JUST YET because it's not on the agenda
    - But project is in review now, so this may happen very soon
  - what can change now is the change to RL (because it currently says 'campground' we are where we are here today)
    - Advocating for a change in the allowable uses and updating an outdated ~50 year old zoning ordinance that does not reflect today's values of Rural Living the BOS should be encouraged to make an impactful change by working with the community under the guidance of the Communities Action Guide.
  - **Stop Wonder Inn reference:** when they came to comment with PC they were very disciplined, they all divided and conquered on various points;
    - toby didn't think traffic was a concern but Chris said mention ANYTHING that we see as a potential problem should be brought up
    - e.g. even if dark sky sensitive lighting is brought up by developer, this is only helpful if lighting was already there in the first place. But currently there is NO LIGHTING at all there so dark sky sensitive lighting so will make a difference in lighting (cite wildlife corridor and neighbor concerns)
  - Use the collective voice at the appropriate time.
  - Sign up for GT and SOD listservs
  - Ear to the ground: PC or BOS agenda postings
  - And if it's not at a time you can go you can go to a BOS any meeting when it's not on the agenda. You have this stuff pending, but I wanna comment about it.
  
  - Calls to action:
    - Keep submitting pictures of wildlife found in area to California Natural Diversity Database of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife
    - Getting ON THE RECORD.

[SaveOurDeserts.org](http://SaveOurDeserts.org)

Sign up for updates, research, browse documents, watch the Planning Commission hearing, locate key contact information, important dates and more.

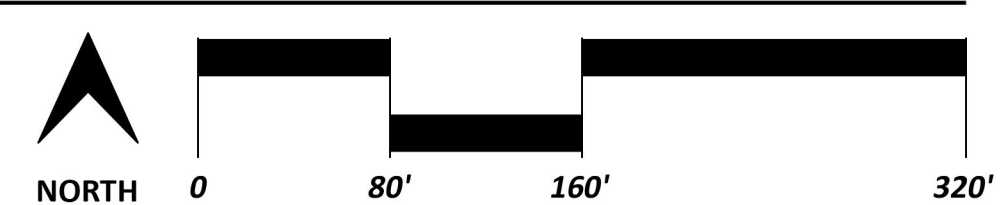


**LEGEND:**

- |                             |                                       |                            |                              |                     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| ① ENTRY MONUMENT            | ⑦ PRIVATE BAR                         | ⑬ BERM SCREENING           | ⑲ YOGA DECK                  | ⑽⑵ CONCRETE WALKWAY |
| ② JOSHUA TREE MITIGATION    | ⑧ PRIVATE KITCHEN & DINING AREA       | ⑭ REFUSE/RECYCLE ENCLOSURE | ⑳ GLAMPING TENT (35 TOTAL)   | ⑻⑽ EXISTING TRAILS  |
| ③ DECELERATION LANE         | ⑨ WORKSHOP                            | ⑮ LOADING SPACES           | ㉑ GLAMPING CHALET (20 TOTAL) |                     |
| ④ 26' WIDE FIRE LANE        | ⑩ STORAGE AREA W/ MURAL WALL          | ⑯ RESTROOMS                | ㉒ GLAMPING LOFT (20 TOTAL)   |                     |
| ⑤ SECONDARY FIRE ENTRANCE   | ⑪ GUEST PARKING (50 9'x19' SPACES)    | ⑰ PUBLIC ART               | ㉓ POOL                       |                     |
| ⑥ RECEPTION & PRIVATE STORE | ⑫ EMPLOYEE PARKING (50 9'x19' SPACES) | ⑱ SWING GLIDERS            | ㉔ FIRE PIT                   |                     |

**SCHEMATIC PLAN ENLARGEMENT**  
**FLAMINGO HEIGHTS CAMPGROUND**  
 ROBOTT LAND COMPANY, INC.

JULY 20, 2023





July 20, 2023

Mr. Jim Morrissey, Contract Planner  
San Bernardino County  
Land Use Services Department  
385 N. Arrowhead Avenue  
San Bernardino, CA 92415

**RE: Appeal to the Board of Supervisors of the Planning Commission's Decision to Take No Action on the Conditional Use Permit to Establish a Destination Resort Consisting of Tent Camping (Glamping) with Support Facilities, including Restaurant/Bar, Reception Area/Store, Trails and Paths, and Recreation Buildings, on a 640-acre Parcel; APN:0629-181-01; 3<sup>rd</sup> Supervisorial District; PROJ-2020-00191**

RoBott Land Company, Inc. is appealing to the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, the decision of the Planning Commission, at the March 9, 2023 public hearing, to take no action on the proposed Flamingo 640 project.

### **Project History**

The project site is a 640-acre site located at 2107 Old Woman Springs Road. The area proposed for development of a new campground is shown on the attached site plan prepared by Community Works Design Group. The project site is bisected in a northeast to southwest direction by Pipes Canyon Wash. No development is proposed to occur within the Pipes Canyon Wash portion of the project site (approximately 350 acres), nor the approximately 65 acres located east of the wash. We are requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit to develop approximately 25 acres of the 640-acre parcel.

**In May 2020**, we submitted a Pre-Application package for County staff review. As originally proposed, the project included a music festival site with related parking on the northwest portion of the property covering approximately 90 acres. In consultation with County staff, we eliminated the music festival component from the project. No development is proposed on that portion of the property. The project scope has been significantly reduced and the development footprint is now approximately 25 acres.

**In September 2020**, we submitted our application for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a 75-site campground with onsite amenities for campers. Changes to the original development plan included no public access to the proposed restaurant and bar; the amenities are now only available to patrons of the campground (managed by onsite staff) as an ancillary use. In addition, the proposed helipad remained a part of the site plan as an emergency use only helicopter pad (no commercial use), with no aerial tours being conducted from the site.



**On March 9, 2023**, the project was presented to the Planning Commission. There were several comments and/or questions regarding the size of the project and whether it was an appropriate use of the property. There was no vote taken by the Planning Commission, therefore the project was denied without prejudice. The issues were related to the size and scale of the project, particularly regarding the size of the restaurant and bar. In response, we are proposing to reduce the square footage of both the restaurant and bar, and eliminate other amenities as described in the table below.

### **Appeal to the Board of Supervisors**

We are appealing the decision of the Planning Commission to take no action on the proposed Flamingo 640 project. The Site Plan attached herein is similar to that which was presented to the Planning Commission with modifications made to address comments received during the March 9, 2023 public hearing.

The following items underscore some of the modifications to the Site Plan and project Description:

Entertainment component	<b>Removed</b>
Helipad	<b>Removed</b>
Fire Pits	<b>Removed</b>
One (1) 3,600 sf workshop	<b>Removed</b>
One (1) 5,500 sf art barn	<b>Removed</b>
Size of Restaurant	<b>Reduced</b> by 60% (10,108 sf to 4,000 sf)
Size of Bar	<b>Reduced</b> by 45% (5,500 sf to 3,000 sf)

Please feel free to contact me or our planner, Nancy Ferguson, with any additional concerns you may have regarding PROJ-2020-00191.

Sincerely,



Stephen Botthof

### Revisions to the Flamingo Heights 640 Project Description

<b>Accommodations</b>				
<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Size/Area</i>	<i>Proposed Revisions</i>	<i>Size Area</i>	<i>Net Change</i>
Camping lofts – 20 sites	1,230 SF		No Change	
Camping tents – 35 sites	220 SF			
Chalets – 20 sites	850 SF	--		--
Total – 75 sites				
<b>Accessory Uses</b>				
Reception Building/ Camp Store	2,288 SF	--	No Change	2,288 SF
Restrooms - 8 units <sup>1</sup>	1,120 SF each (8,960 SF)	--	4 units	--
Fire Pits – 8 units <sup>2</sup>	700 SF each (5,600 SF)	Eliminate fire pits replace with public art space	0 SF	No Change
Pool/Patio –	3,000 SF	--		3,000 SF
Workshops (2 units)	3,600 SF each (7,200 SF)	Eliminate one workshop	3,600 SF	- 3,600 SF
Art Barn <sup>3</sup>	5,500 SF	Delete from site plan		- 5,500 SF
Restaurant <sup>4</sup>	10,108 SF	Reduced size	4,000 SF	- 6,108 SF
Agave Bar <sup>5</sup>	5,500 SF	Reduced size	3,000 SF	- 2,500 SF
Storage Area	25,275 SF	No Change		25,275 SF
Yoga Deck	2,400 SF	No Change		2,400 SF
Sewage Disposal <sup>6</sup>	58,902 SF	Subject to final design and approval by EHS	No Change	58,902 SF
Retention Basin <sup>6</sup>	58,902 SF	Subject to final design and approval by Land Development	No Change	58,902 SF
Parking Lot	100 spaces	No Change	No Change	
Helipad	7,854 SF	Delete from site plan		- 7,854 SF
Gardens <sup>7</sup>	212,000 SF	No Change		212,000 SF
<b>Net Reduction in SF</b>				<b>- 25,562 SF</b>

## Notes:

1. Only Camping Lofts would have private facilities, all other guests in remaining sites would use the 8 common restrooms.
2. Fire pit areas consisting of the fire pit and associated seating areas have been eliminated and replaced with art space with either permanent or temporary installations, providing local artists with an opportunity to show their work.
3. Activities associated with the Art Barn are now incorporated into the Workshop uses.
4. Restaurant area reduced by 6,108 square feet. Part of this space is intended to be used as meeting space for presentations to visitors (e.g., lectures on local history, the night sky, etc.). Restaurant area includes outdoor seating area.
5. The bar area reduced to 3,000 square feet. In addition to the bar and associated seating, the internal space is intended to include video games, pool tables, air hockey, and other related games. The bar area includes outdoor seating area.
6. The septic system and retention basin are subject to final design approval by County DEHS and Land Development.
7. The design of gardens will focus on local native plants.



SCHEMATIC RENDERINGS: EXISTING CONDITIONS  
**FLAMINGO HEIGHTS CAMPGROUND**  
ROBOTT LAND COMPANY, INC.

JUNE 20, 2023





SCHEMATIC RENDERINGS: PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS  
**FLAMINGO HEIGHTS CAMPGROUND**  
ROBOTT LAND COMPANY, INC.

JUNE 20, 2023





SCHEMATIC RENDERINGS: EXISTING CONDITIONS  
**FLAMINGO HEIGHTS CAMPGROUND**  
ROBOTT LAND COMPANY, INC.

JUNE 20, 2023





SCHEMATIC RENDERINGS: PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS  
**FLAMINGO HEIGHTS CAMPGROUND**  
ROBOTT LAND COMPANY, INC.

JUNE 20, 2023





SCHEMATIC RENDERINGS: EXISTING CONDITIONS  
**FLAMINGO HEIGHTS CAMPGROUND**  
ROBOTT LAND COMPANY, INC.

JUNE 20, 2023





SCHEMATIC RENDERINGS: PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS  
**FLAMINGO HEIGHTS CAMPGROUND**  
ROBOTT LAND COMPANY, INC.

JUNE 20, 2023

