

[EXTERNAL MAIL] Comment on No. ZAJ-20-5 Application Virtual hearing: The Animal Care Center

maya jambalaya <maya\_pierce@hotmail.com>

Fri 10/2/2020 10:07 AM

To: Leia LaPlace <leia.laplace@dpr.vi.gov>

Good day,

Regarding the rezoning of proposed animal care center in coral bay No. ZAJ-20-5:

I am a landowner in Coral Bay near the proposed ACC.

To my knowledge, no one is debating the worth of the ACC at this time. It is an admirable program, but the concerns of the surrounding residents have merit. Nearby landowners either inherited their properties, made their decisions to build homes, or created businesses knowing that the current zoning is what it is. They cannot change their situations easily even if many others living in different neighborhoods think the zoning should, and have a right to a voice in how their community develops.

Noise is a major concern in this valley. It is a natural and very effective amphitheater. Hundreds of residences are strongly affected by all the noises coming from the upwind side. Rental revenue is the only significant income in coral bay and renters expect a peaceful visit. I am not against the existence of this facility PROVIDING sufficient noise barriers are in place. I have spent much time in the library and in surrounding area near the current ACC and the barking is frequent and quite loud.

Noise travels up and out, and therefore a low wall will only shield horizontally and do nothing for the hundreds of houses on the hillsides surrounding the proposed site. I applaud the many other noise reduction methods currently planned, but would like to request additional shielding through the use of high, natural screens, such as bamboo, hedges, vines on fences, etc. around the wall and play area.

Thank you,  
Maya Craig

On Sep 30, 2020, at 4:31 PM, Leia LaPlace <leia.laplace@dpr.vi.gov> wrote:

No. ZAJ-20-5: Animal Care Center of St. John

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**[EXTERNAL MAIL] Zoning Application ZAJ-20-5 comments**

Sharon Coldren &lt;sharonc@coralbaycommunitycouncil.org&gt;

Wed 10/14/2020 10:47 PM

To: Leia LaPlace &lt;leia.laplace@dprn.vi.gov&gt;

Dear Mrs. LaPlace,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the rezoning application ZAJ-20-5 for parcel 14 remainder Estate Carolina for the purpose of building a new Animal Care Center for the island of St. John. This is a worthy purpose, although there are some concerns that this would not be the best place for this important service, given its location in and near an extreme flood zone, and at the bottom of an amphitheater valley surrounded by residential homes and the residential Rental villa tourism business that is the core of the Coral Bay economy. A boarding kennel or animal pound requires either Commercial – C or Industrial zoning, not the B-2 zoning that was requested by the applicant.

These C and I zoning districts also accommodate other kinds of uses that could have noise comparable to that of barking dogs. It was clear from the numerous comments made in the hearing that the problem is not just that the dogs might bark but that just the presence of the kennel could cause some people to avoid choosing Coral Bay as a vacation destination. It could be a reputational issue – just as adding other noisy commercial or perceived to be noisy commercial activities could harm Coral Bay's tourist economy.

Estimating a \$500 square foot construction cost, the proposed facility of 5500 square feet would cost over \$2,700,000, plus additional funds for the parking lot, access road, equipment, furnishings etc. So we're talking about a \$3,000,000 project in round numbers, although I do not know the ACC's own estimate. It is easy to imagine that as the planning goes forward, that the ACC's donors and planners might decide that these millions would be better spent in another island location, even if it cost more money. The land that the ACC purchased was on the market for around 8 years and did not sell because it is mostly wetlands and in a flood plain and includes part of the main Carolina gut drainage. A \$275,000, the ACC was pleased to get it so inexpensively. Time will tell if this is a good site choice.

Therefore, **if this rezoning is to go forward, the Coral Bay Community Council strongly suggests that DPNR recommend a Use Variance to the current district for the animal care center**, including boarding and pound facilities. Choosing a Variance means that should the ACC decide to make a different decision on location or finds this parcel unsuitable due to the wetlands, the flood zone and any other factors, the land would revert to its previous zoning for any future use. It would truly be a disaster for Coral Bay if this lot was rezoned C or I, not used as the shelter, and then sold or leased for another legally allowable use that would not be a good residential neighbor for the homes on the surrounding hillsides.

Choosing a variance is especially important because DPNR anticipates that St. John will go through a comprehensive land use planning process during the next year and issues about what kinds of development are appropriate in the Carolina Valley are certain to be key issues in this process. Noise of all kinds is an important issue to discuss as we go forward into planning the future of St. John.

Using DPNR's use variances and through the wishes of the local land owners, the center island up in Adrian and Susannaberg has become a construction and industrial service center and houses many of the uses that are important for the island, but maybe noisy or unsightly by necessity. In that location few homes or tourism businesses are directly impacted.

I also added some charts below indicating some research on the distribution of noise and the difficulty of using barriers to reduce it, when it can carry long distances in particular and is enhanced by the SE wind direction carrying noise through our amphitheatre. We look forward as this project goes through the future hearings for the Senate and the CZM process to learning more about the details of the kennel design and soundproofing of the outdoor play areas. We are also interested in the potential recreational uses for the rest of the (normally dry) wetlands on the majority of the property.

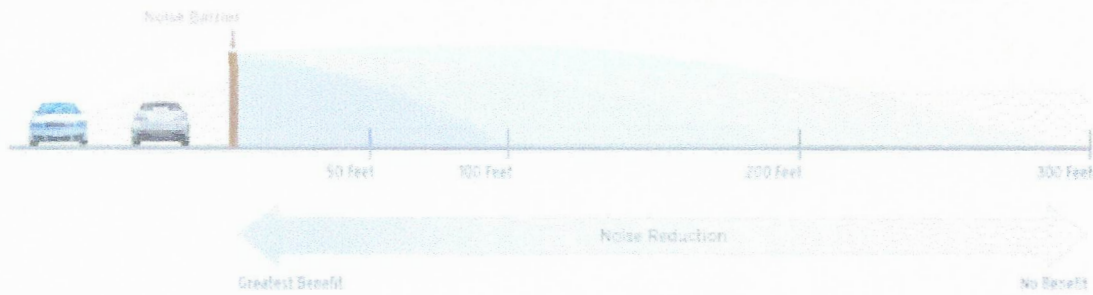
Amphitheatre topography: Over ½ of the 212 vacation rental houses and apartments in Coral Bay are within the Amphitheatre area. This is 500 tourists a week during high season. At least an equal number of residents' homes are impacted.





Here is a chart showing that the noise barriers, like walls do not stop the sound from traveling up or long distances:

### Noise Barrier Effectiveness



Sound moves in not-so-mysterious ways, meaning that typical sound barriers have only limited effectiveness. *Visual: Wisconsin DOT*

Thank you for reading and including these thoughts in your analysis.

Sharon Coldren

President

Coral Bay Community Council

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[www.CoralBayCommunityCouncil.org](http://www.CoralBayCommunityCouncil.org)

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*To serve our community by protecting the environment, improving infrastructure, supporting education, encouraging social progress and planning for appropriate low-impact development.*

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[EXTERNAL MAIL]NAJ-20-5

Gordon Moore <gordon.e.moore3@gmail.com>

Thu 10/1/2020 9:13 PM

To: Leia LaPlace <leia.laplace@dpr.vi.gov>

Hi Leia,

I am writing in concern of the rezoning of 14-rem Carolina. I am a land owner in coral bay. And I have lived on gerda marsh for 7 years. The wind and the shape of the valley really carries noise from that area. I can here cricket games in the ball park. Or music from anywhere in the bay area. A lone dog barking.

I am worried that this dog pound will hurt the economy of this area. I know it is hard to speak up against an organization that does so much good work. But I have great hope for the future of coral bay and its community. And I fear this has the potential to cripple that future.

The sound travels from upper Carolina to gerda marsh. There are likely close to a hundred short term rentals in ear shot. Many of these people rely on this income to make their mortgage. And there is the negative effects to people quality of life as well. And property values.

Most of the people in support for the rezoning do not own land or businesses nearby. We have spent a lifetime building a future here. I hope that you take that in consideration when you make your recommendation.

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[EXTERNAL MAIL] Zoning application for parcel # 14 REM Estate Carolina, St John, VI

Jack Royal <captjackroyal@yahoo.com>

Tue 10/13/2020 10:43 AM

To: Leia LaPlace <leia.laplace@dpr.vi.gov>

Good day. As a property owner in Coral Bay for 22 years, I enjoy the peacefulness and quiet for which I chose my location in 1997. My address is 6-1-3 Carolina, directly in full view and sound of the proposed ACC location.

First, may I say that my family in Delaware is heavily involved in pet rescue, co-founders of Sussex County Animal Rescue, and we all have and love pets. Believe me, I know what barking dogs sound like, and in Delaware it's on flat land, not like here in Coral Bay where we live in an acoustic amphitheater.

Walls would never remotely help reduce the barking noise unless you were directly on the other side at the same exact ground level. Most of us live uphill.

To me, what it comes down to is PEACE. PEACE AND QUIET. No air conditioner, no closed windows, just a nice peaceful, quiet place to call home.

And there is NO WAY this proposed location for the ACC and its kennels would not DISTURB THE PEACE.

Thank you for your time. I am just one of many very concerned residents that our "way of life" is going to go to the dogs.

Sincerely, Captain Jack Royal

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad](#)

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[EXTERNAL MAIL] ACC

Michael Haas <mphaas@ralphhsimpsonco.com>

Sun 10/4/2020 7:07 PM

To: Leia LaPlace <leia.laplace@dpnr.vi.gov>

Where will the animal waste go?

It's a low lying flood plane that flows into the bay

Michael P. Haas

Cell 773-491-3373

Office direct 630-333-4583

Office general 630-782-9007

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