



**DATE:** March 17, 2016  
**TO:** Design Review Committee  
**FROM:** Artemio Hoyos, Planner  
**RE:** DRC Case # P16VA00004 Justins RV Park & Water World LLC  
Tax Code #212-35-1300  
**SUBJECT:** Staff Report - Buffer Overlay Zone and Landscaping, Buffering and Screening Standards Review

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**Applicant:** Stacey Weaks (Norris Design)  
**Owner:** Justins RV Park & Water World LLC (Pericles Wyatt)  
**Location:** 3551 S. San Joaquin Road, Tucson, AZ 85735  
**Zoning:** TH (Trailer Homesite) and GR-1 (Rural Residential)  
**Land Use:** Medium Intensity Rural (MIR)  
**Site Size:** Approximately 25.22 acres

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## **I. APPLICANT REQUEST**

The applicant has requested that the Design Review Committee (DRC) review the Desert Trails RV Park preliminary development plan (PDP) at 3551 S. San Joaquin Road for a Buffer Overlay Zone (BOZO) open space requirement exception and Landscape Bufferyard approved plant list relief.

## **II. DRC AUTHORITY**

The DRC is required by Chapter 18.99.030 of the Pima County Zoning Code to review for compliance Chapters 18.67 Buffer Overlay Zone and 18.73 Landscaping, Buffering and Screening Standards; the Landscape Design Manual; and staff comments.

## **III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends **approval** of the Buffer Overlay Zone open space requirement exception from 50% to 38%; and maintaining the dense oleander hedge located along the eastern 10' bufferyard for the Desert Trails RV Park preliminary development plan with the following conditions:

1. The PDP shall be implemented as approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission on January 27, 2016, subject to standard and special rezoning

conditions.

2. Adherence to condition #12 as recommended for approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission: "The seven lots in the northeast portion of the subject site as shown on the preliminary development plan shall be removed, revegetated with native vegetation according to the Buffer Overlay Zone plant list, and maintained as natural open space contiguous with the proposed natural open space in the north/northwest portion of the site."
3. Adherence to condition #13 as recommended for approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission: "A maximum of 205 RV park spaces shall be allowed."
4. Applicant shall provide staff with one hardcopy and one electronic copy of the approved DRC documents for staff sign-off in compliance with the DRC decision.

#### **IV. BACKGROUND**

The applicant is in the process of bringing the existing Desert Trails RV Park into zoning conformance. The RV park has over 200 RV spaces plus recreational and other accessory uses serving the RV park. Currently, the subject site has split zoning; the northern portion is GR-1 and southern portion is conditionally zoned TH. The requested rezoning will create one consistent zoning designation of TH across the entire property. Additionally, a one mile Buffer Overlay Zone abutting Tucson Mountain Park applies to the subject site and includes requirements such as earthtone building colors, screened parking lots, vegetation according to the accepted plants list, special treatment of washes, trails access, and a minimum amount of natural open space. Any rezoning approved after 1998 is required to preserve 50% of the land as natural open space. The RV Park site is at 34%.

On January 27, 2016 the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of the rezoning for the property subject to standard and special rezoning conditions, including these revisions to the PDP:

- The seven lots in the northeast portion of the subject site shall be removed, revegetated with native vegetation according to the Buffer Overlay Zone plant list, and maintained as natural open space contiguous with the proposed natural open space in the north/northwest portion of the site.
- The maximum number of RV park spaces shall be 205, thereby reducing 212 park spaces by seven.

An oleander hedge exists along the east property boundary screening the use from the neighbors. Oleanders are not an allowed plant within the BOZO, Landscaping, Buffering and Screening Standards, and the Landscape Design Manual. The oleanders are currently depicted to remain in the PDP. The applicant will need an exception by the DRC.

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## V. HISTORY

The following is a very simplified history of the subject site:

- Original applicant for a rezoning (Co9-82-98) owned both the subject site and the parcel to the west.
- A water park (Justin's Water World) was developed on the subject site under the GR-1 zone. The use was considered a conforming use and had an approved development plan (CO DW-79-2).
- The subject site including the water park became a partnership including the applicant.
- Over the years, a small RV park that developed south of the water park expanded into a much more extensive RV park. By 2004, staff agreed with the owners that the site needed to be rezoned and made to meet all current County requirements to get the development into compliance.
- In 2007 the water park closed.
- Ownership was then split between the two properties.
- The property to the west of the subject site – San Joaquin RV Park - was developed in compliance with county ordinances.
- The subject site is now being used as Desert Trails RV Park with many of the water park remnant structures used for the RV Park (laundry, recreational, and gym facilities).

The applicant is now wishing to get the subject site into zoning conformance.

## VI. STAFF COMMENTS

Planning staff recommended that the applicant submit a completely new rezoning request rather than try to develop the property with one development plan and two sets of variously aged rezoning conditions. As a result of the rezoning request (currently in process), the BOZO natural open space requirement went from 30% to 50%. Roughly 7.76 acres of the area graded for Justin's Water World was subtracted from the total acreage (25.22 acres) in order to calculate the BOZO natural open space. The required BOZO natural open space is approximately 8.73 acres (17.46 acres X 50%). The PDP is proposing approximately 6 acres (17.46 acres X 34%).

In addition to the existing 6 acres of natural open space, staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission have conditioned that the seven lots in the northeast portion of the subject site shall be removed, revegetated with native vegetation according to

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the BOZO plant list and maintained as natural open space contiguous with the proposed natural open space in the north/northwest portion of the site. The area of the seven lots is approximately 0.6 to 1 acre. This technically will bring the total natural open space acreage to 6.6 acres, or 38%. The Pima County Zoning Code states that functional open space shall “not impede wildlife movement, is part of an interconnected open space system and creates wildlife habitat opportunities.” The abutting property to the north is BLM-owned land and further north is the Tucson Mountain Park public preserve which the BOZO is intended to buffer. Planning staff does not consider any other areas of the site as viable natural open space due to development, grading, and remaining remnants of the water park.

The applicant’s Landscape Bufferyard approved plant list relief request deals with the eastern 10’ bufferyard. Presently, this bufferyard consists of a dense oleander hedge located along the entire eastern property line. Oleanders are not permitted as a part of the county’s approved plant list. In this case, the oleanders have been in existence since the 1970’s. If removed, the RV Park will be extremely visible from offsite locations and adjacent properties. Removal would drastically alter a longstanding and accepted landscaping feature.

**VII. OTHER AGENCIES**

The Planning and Zoning Commission Staff Report for the rezoning is attached.

**VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

At this time, no comments have been received.

w/attachments – applicant packet

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