

Neighborhood Meeting Summary

Name: Sandstone Care Facility

Application: Planned Development Text Amendment

Property Owner: Gibson Satterwhite (Under contract with Sandstone)

Meeting #: 3

Date/Time: Wednesday, July 17, 2024 6 pm (Adjourned approximately 7:30 pm)

Meeting Location: Town Council Chambers

Councilmember District: Mayor Pro Tem LaFleur

Applicant's Proposal:

The applicant proposes to rezone the property located at 864 Barranca Drive. The 1.3-acre site is in the Metzler Ranch Planned Development and is zoned to allow nursing home, assisted living and memory care uses. The building was the former location of the Metzler Memory Care facility and has been vacant now for a few years.

Sandstone Care operates several programs in treatment centers located in Colorado, specifically Denver, Boulder and Colorado Springs. The current services offered for teens, young adults and adults include mental health, drug and alcohol rehabilitation and transitional living. The services proposed for the Castle Rock facility would serve only teens with mild to moderate mental health conditions.

The rezoning proposal would retain the current uses and add short-term, in-patient mental health care for youth ranging from 13 through 17 years of age with mild to moderate mental health conditions. Symptoms may include depression, anxiety, and mood disorders. The facility would not accept or treat persons suffering from severe mental health conditions such as psychosis, or suicidal or homicidal behaviors. No outpatient services will be offered. No substance abuse treatment will be offered. A prescreening process is conducted and used to identify whether the services available are suitable for each applicant. More acute cases are referred elsewhere.

The facility is not a halfway house, or a detention facility connected to the Department of Corrections. The program is not available as a court-ordered treatment option, or an alternative to juvenile sentencing. In-patient admission and participation is voluntary, meaning a participant may opt out voluntarily, in which case they would only be released directly to a parent or legal guardian. They would be free to leave the facility on their own.

Onsite security includes mandatory biometric bracelets, 24-hour onsite staff, set interval eyes-on check of the residents. In addition, Sandstone Care LLC is required to draft an Emergency Management Plan with the cooperation of the Town of Castle Rock Fire Department. A minimum of 6 hours each day is devoted to structured counselling and education. Common areas within the facility will be used for games, and other down-time activities. All travel off of the premises is supervised and may include wilderness excursions, and other outside group interactive activities.

Attendees

Sandstone Representatives:

Johnny Gonzales, De Novo Project Manager

Edwin Alvarado, Director of Construction

Marcello La Rocca, Sandstone Care LLC

Jim Houk, Kimley-Horn

Larry Salazar, Kimley-Horn

Public Attendees:

In-person Attendees: Approx. 25 residents

Online/Phone Attendees: 8

Town Attendees:

Sandy Vossler, Sr. Planner Town of Castle Rock

Presentation Description**Applicant's Presentation:**

Katie Coffman and Edwin Alvarado of Sandstone Care, LLC provided introductions, gave an overview of the agenda and distributed copies of the Metzler Ranch Planned Development Zoning Regulations, 2nd Amendment. Their presentation focused on the new text in the zoning regulations that defines the permitted uses and stipulates prohibited uses. Katie pointed out the revisions made to the text amendment based on input from the surrounding neighbors.

The feedback from the residents was a combination of comments, statements and questions; to capture a clear picture of the input received, the comments and questions have been separated below. Overwhelmingly, the residents expressed opposition to the rezoning to allow the facility to be used as proposed by Sandstone. Their opposition was based on concerns expressed at the previous two neighborhood meetings and in email communications, such as the presence of a mental health facility in proximity to their neighborhoods, impacts to property values, patients coming to the facility from outside of Douglas County, increased crime related to patients leaving the facility unsupervised, a lack of trust in the building security, the facility not being fully or partially locked-down, and the facilities proximity to a preschool, schools and parks in the area. New concerns were raised about prohibited treatments being provided regardless of the zoning, and about the presence of patients with mild to moderate mental health conditions who may unexpectedly escalate to behaviors related to severe or acute mental health conditions, or the presence of patients who once suffered with severe mental health conditions any time in their past.

Attendee Feedback:**Statements and Comments Presented to Applicant:**

- Sandstone needs to guarantee that there will be no “escapes” and there will be no patients with or who have had severe mental health conditions.
- I live nearby and want assurance that no one from the facility will “come and attack my kids.”
- We want locked doors or delayed egress.
- We want a guarantee the security system is fail-proof.
- Don’t want patients from outside Douglas County, they don’t have any connection to the community.
- Want a study of impacts to property values.
- This facility should be near the hospital in the Meadows.
- This facility shouldn’t be near the Goddard School.
- This is a jail, a halfway house.
- There’s no outdoor activity area for the kids.

Questions Presented to Applicant:

Q: There will be patients walking around the neighborhood, how will that be prevented?

The kids are not permitted to leave the facility unattended and Sandstone is confident the security system and monitoring requirements allow the staff to control the whereabouts of the youngsters. If someone were to leave the facility without permission, local law enforcement would be contacted immediately. Sandstone will draft an Emergency Management Plan with input from Castle Rock Fire, prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy from the Town.

Q: Why this location, why in Douglas County? If treatment is for mild to moderate conditions, why do they need to be inpatients?

The existing facility was designed and constructed for residential and inpatient skilled nursing and assisted living uses. The smaller facility will allow for one-on-one counselling. The food preparation area, and common space areas meet the needs of a treatment facility such as this. The treatments offered here will serve a population of adolescents who need more than intermittent counselling, but who do not have acute conditions that would qualify them for inpatient psychiatric treatment.

Q: How do we know you aren't bringing in prohibited uses? How do we know that there won't be patients 18 years of age or older?

Sandstone must be licensed by the State of Colorado for the specific care provided, and doing so would jeopardize their state license. There is annual accreditation and Sandstone is accountable to the Colorado Behavioral Health Administration. The facility is audited annually, with unannounced onsite visits. Sandstone is also accredited by, and subject to audits by, the Joint Commission, a private accreditor that evaluates health care organizations. The Joint Commission is the nation's oldest and largest standards-setting and accrediting body in health care. In addition, the uses are regulated by the Zoning. Zoning violations are addressed by the Town of Castle Rock Zoning and Code Compliance Division.

Q: Why don't you accept Medicaid patients?

Sandstone is not opposed to participating in Medicaid in the future, however the application process is fairly involved and not the focus at this time.

Q: What is the number of staff that will be at the facility?

Ms. Coffman indicated that the patient to staff ratio is 3 to 1.

Q: What type of therapies will be offered? Will Prozac be administered?

Therapies may include 1-on-1 counseling by licensed staff, family therapy conducted virtually, experiential therapy. Prozac and other medications may be administered by the onsite Medical Director.

Q: Are these kids going to be attending class at Douglas County High School?

These kids may be students at Douglas County High School and other area schools; however, they are not released from inpatient care to attend class. Onsite education is included in the daily program structure to keep the kids current in their grade appropriate course work.