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Charlene Tim <charlene.tim@edcgov.us>

## Fwd: Special Use Permit S13-0007/Dieu Nhan Buddhist Convent and Meditation Center

Aaron Mount <aaron.mount@edcgov.us>  
To: Charlene Tim <charlene.tim@edcgov.us>

Fri, May 20, 2016 at 10:15 AM

Item #5 – Dieu Nhan Buddhist Convent and Meditation Center [S13-0007]  
Public Comment Rcvd

**Aaron Mount**  
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**County of El Dorado**  
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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Magneson, Moira** <MagnesM@scc.losrios.edu>  
Date: Wed, May 18, 2016 at 9:45 PM  
Subject: Special Use Permit S13-0007/Dieu Nhan Buddhist Convent and Meditation Center  
To: "aaron.mount@edcgov.us" <aaron.mount@edcgov.us>  
Cc: "thuanthedn@gmail.com" <thuanthedn@gmail.com>, "thuantinh16@gmail.com" <thuantinh16@gmail.com>, "chiendngo@gmail.com" <chiendngo@gmail.com>, "em2magneson@gmail.com" <em2magneson@gmail.com>

May 18, 2016

Dear El Dorado County Planning Commissioners:

I write to urge the Planning Commission to approve Special Use Permit S13-0007/Dieu Nhan Buddhist Convent and Meditation Center.

The Dieu Nhan nuns have spent years planning and preparing for the building and expansion of their convent and meditation center. They have consulted with environmental and building experts in good faith, all to ensure that the buildings, property, and future use will have minimal environmental impact.

I have been a long-time attendee of Dieu Nhan, participating in as many Monday night meditations and dharma talks as I possibly can. Abbess Thuan Tue and the nuns have always been so generous and welcoming with their teachings and instruction, opening their hearts not only to me but to all El Dorado County residents interested in Buddhism. Every time I visit, I am stirred not only by their teachings but by the landscape itself—the grounds are exquisitely maintained and tended to, beautifully blending in with the foothill environment. The nuns are exceptional stewards of their land and as such the convent is a refuge and solace for humans and

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wildlife alike. I, for one, appreciate the opportunity to further my Buddhist practice in my own backyard, rather than making a road trip into Sacramento. I know that there are other Buddhists and practitioners in this county who feel the same way.

I encourage you to approve the Dieu Nhan's Special Use Permit S13-0007. This big-hearted Buddhist sanctuary is a rich, philosophical resource for El Dorado County residents; the thoughtful expansion of the Dieu Nhan convent and meditation center will enable us to deepen our connection to both our spirituality and our foothill community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

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Moira Magneson  
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2 pages

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Rathbone

4240 Duncan Hill Rd

P.O Box 363

Rescue, CA 95672

530-677-0547

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PLANNING DEPARTMENT

May 18, 2016

Members of the County of El Dorado Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my concerns about the Special Use Permit S13-0007/Dieu Nhan Buddhist Convert and Meditation Center.

Our property is adjacent to the property in question, sharing 2 private roads. We have lived on this property since 1999; our home is about 300-400 yards from their existing buildings. Since they purchased the property in 2002, the convent has held several events involving what I estimate to be 75 to 100 or more people. During these events, loud speakers were used, at an extremely high volume, cars and buses were parked on our property and along our shared road making it difficult for all property owners above them to pass through. During these events it was difficult for neighbors to use the road and would have possibly made it impossible for emergency vehicles to pass. We have never been given prior notice to any of these events, nor have we been asked for permission to park on our property or block the road. We have since talked to them about parking on our property and blocking the road, and have had no further problems. They frequently hold events that draw 25 to 30 cars and easily 60 or more people. Loud speakers have are sometimes used during these events as well. The last retreat they held, I was awakened before 5 AM daily by the chimes they used to awaken their attendees. The Project Description states that their schedule is from 4:00AM to 9:30 PM. Are there any activities occurring before 7:00AM that will disturb the neighbors?

Many of the things they propose to do they have been doing since they moved onto their property including the occasional Sunday services that already draw well over 30 people and the large events I have already mentioned. The improvements made so far on this property by Dieu Nhan Convent have been without regard for outward appearance. For several years portable outhouses were placed around the property and after 1 event the yellow caution tape and cardboard signs they used to delineate parking were left for Mother Nature to remove months later.

The total scope of this proposal suggest that this property will be housing more than 28 nuns in the future and the fact that current and prior events already host more people than stated leaves us concerned. There are 4 residences on Duncan Hill Road that pass the proposed convent and we have all been dealing with the increased traffic of the convent since its inception. Although the proposal includes access from Deer Valley Rd and the widening of Penny Lane and Duncan Hill Rd it is a concern residents and emergency vehicles could be impeded by traffic from the convent . It is obvious that the Duncan Hill Rd. access will still be the most commonly used because that is the direct route to parking spaces nearest the main facility. How can the status of private roads be changed to provide public access without the consent of all residents involved? If Penny Ln and Duncan Hill Rd are to become public roads are they going to be maintained by the county and if not who is responsible for the maintenance? Why is there even a need to widen Penny Ln and Duncan Hill Rd if they are accessing the convent from Deer Valley Rd? I would like to see the Duncan Hill Rd access to the convent property closed off or gated for emergency uses only. Will Deer Valley Rd. also be widened and turn lanes installed?

As with all homeowners we are concerned about the effect this project will have on our property value. I can't see a project so imposing having anything but a negative impact. We purchased this property and built our home here to embrace a rural lifestyle and enjoy the peace, quiet and privacy of the surrounding environment. This area is all zoned 10 acres and we thought the zoning would give us a measure of protection against dense population and the noise and traffic that comes with it. Now we feel we may be forced to leave our dream home and possibly suffer a loss in value in the process. We are retired and living on a fixed income and can't afford to relocate.

14 buildings totaling approximately 28000 square feet seems excessive to house 28 nuns and host 3 large events per year and Sunday services for 30 people and I fear these numbers will rapidly grow.

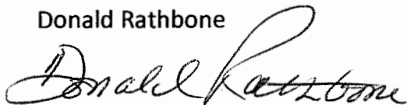
Although this proposal is categorized as a church for planning and zoning purposes, this is a 7 day a week facility with numerous full time residents, daily activities and guest housing which could triple the number of people, as well as increasing the traffic coming and going daily.

Most churches have little activity during the week; therefore they have minimal impact on their neighbors.

We appreciate you taking the time to consider our concerns.

Thank you,

Donald Rathbone



Sondra Rathbone

