

**AARC Minutes
January 13, 2010**

Members Present: Skip Phillips, Dianne MacDonald, John Wilhoit

Others Present: Pattie Wilson, Planning Director; Don Fulford, Executive Director of Life Adventure Center; Tracey Wright, LAC Program Director; and Henry Duncan, LAC Board Member.

Chairman Skip Phillips called the meeting to order. ELECTION OF OFFICERS was held with slate of current officers being re-elected for 2010 as follows: Skip Phillips - Chair; Dianne MacDonald - Vice-Chair; and Lori Garkovich - Secretary.

OLD BUSINESS:

Woodford Rural Land Board: Mrs. Wilson reported that Ms. Garkovich indicated that the proposed By-Laws for the Woodford Rural Land Board and the 501C3 paperwork have been forwarded to an attorney and they are waiting to finalize those items.

NEW BUSINESS:

Cleveland Holdings, Inc/Life Adventure Center – 520 Milner Road – A-1 & CO-1 Zoning Districts – Consideration of the application of Cleveland Holdings, Inc/Life Adventure Center of the Bluegrass for an extension of their March 9, 2005 conditional use permit for 520 Milner Rd to an adjacent 245 acre farm purchased in 2006.

On Wednesday, January 6, AARC members (Lori Garkovich, John Wilhoit, Skip Phillips) as well as Pattie Wilson and Paul Noel made a site visit to the Life Adventure Center. During this visit, Don Fulford, Executive Director, drove the existing and the new property to view the areas where eventually programs and facilities for both agricultural and environmental education and other agri/ecotourism activities will be offered. At the conclusion of the farm tour Mr. Fulford met in the farm office with the group to discuss and answer any questions about the AARC application. He also passed out folders to each member of various brochures and fliers about the programs offered.

Life Adventure Center (LAC), at this time, has 575 acres - one half of which is heavily wooded (the 3rd largest wooded area in Woodford County) and the remainder in following agricultural/natural resource activities (115 acres in the Center's Equine Program, over 100 acres leased to a commercial beef cattle operation, 40 acres in a Wildlife Habitat Improvement Programs, 40 acres in Timber Stand Improvement, and 40 acres in the Crop Restoration Program). There are 6 ponds, multiple creeks, and over 10 miles of marked trails on the property suitable for exploring nature, horse riding and hiking. The entire property is a National Wildlife Federation, Certified Wildlife Habitat.

LAC is a 501C3 not-for-profit entity that utilizes diverse sources of revenues (e.g., donations, earned income, in-kind services, interest from investments) to support its hands-on learning programs. In 2009, nearly 6,000 persons from 20 different Kentucky counties visited the farm and over 80% of these are youth who visited with their school or church groups. During the summer, LAC employs 30+ persons (full and part time) and has a 10 person staff at other times.

The members of the AARC made the following observations:

- LAC has developed a long-range conceptual development plan for the property to expand its equine, educational, personal development, family and youth oriented and agri/ecotourism activities without disrupting the continued agricultural production on the best land on the farm

- LAC has established very positive relationships with its neighbors and there is no indication of any complaints about the current operation of the farm.
- The entire property has exterior fencing and over 400 No Trespassing signs have been posted.
- All groups visiting the property, even those for overnight stays, have at least one staff member with them at all times. All staff members are qualified in different agricultural and environmental sciences and are using all opportunities to inform visitors and answer their questions.
- The conceptual site plan indicates a strategic distribution of storm shelters throughout the property to maximize visitor safety.
- The potential sites for facilities and group activities are located so as to maximize distance to adjacent properties and therefore, minimize contact with adjacent properties.
- LAC continuously monitors water quality on the farm as part of its environmental education programs.
- Visitors have access to port-a-potties and eventually environmentally appropriate (e.g., composting toilets) waste disposal systems including on site septic systems, where approved by the Woodford County Health Dept.
- Existing lighting on the property is motion activated whenever possible and new outdoor lighting will be minimal. There will be very high standards for all of lighting to reduce any negative impact on the environment and their neighbors.
- Adjoining property owners in Milner are contacted in advance of major events so that they won't be inconvenienced.

During the Public Meeting on January 13, 2010, Mr. Fulford introduced himself, Ms. Wright and Mr. Duncan to the Board. He then went over the following information:

- LAC is before the AARC requesting the expansion of the current Conditional Use Permit to include the use of additional land purchased in 2006.
- The purpose of this request is to utilize new land to better locate new proposed facilities.
- The plan covers hundreds of acres of development. He then referred to five points to help the AARC better understand who LAC is and what they want to accomplish.
 - First – This is a conceptual plan.
 - Second – This plan could take many years to implement and each step forward will be determined by the complexity of the project, community need and of course financial ability. For example, LAC expects many of the hiking trails to begin immediately while a larger project like the lodge could take several years to design and complete. They expect their first major project to be an educational building which would allow them to open their doors year-around.
 - Third – LAC is very environmentally friendly and all buildings, when built, will meet high standards when it comes to electrical use, foot prints and impact on the environment. For example, the current cabins are not permanent structures thus reducing the impact on the surrounding area.
 - Fourth – There are always traffic questions and this is something that LAC has taken a proactive approach in addressing. Typically two weeks before any major event LAC Staff go door to door and talk with the neighbors about possible traffic issues. (2 sample flyers provided). It is important to everyone at LAC to not only provide information to neighbors but also listen to them. LAC has a tremendous relationship with it's friends on Milner Road and

- even enjoy providing them pumpkins from the farm for decorations, sending birthday cards and inviting them to the many family events.
- Fifth – As previously noted LAC is being environmentally friendly but wanted to make sure that the AARC understands that they have more than 60 acres of WHIP's, HIP's and CRP's on the property with an additional 25 acres expected this fall. Additionally, there are more than 245 acres of wooded area that are part of a TSI and an EQHIP program. On a similar note, LAC will provide environmentally friendly waste disposal facilities for all of the patrons. The pavilion as well as future cottages and the lodge provide a heated restroom with an approved septic field. When larger groups are expected and areas in the rustic setting along with future cabins, LAC will provide portable removable facilities (aka porta potties). Future restroom facilities will include compost toilets, approved septic fields and porta potties.

In closing, Mr. Fulford emphasized how serious LAC is about helping the community, children and our environment. He noted that they employ nothing but the best professionals in each field and are members in good standing with the following:

[American Camp Association](#) – (scored a rare perfect 100%), [American Tree Farm System](#), [Association of Challenge Courses](#), [Association of Experiential Education](#), [Bluegrass Healthy Marriage Initiative](#), [National Wildlife Federation](#), [Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association](#)

At the conclusion of the meeting Mr. Fulford answered several questions from the Board members and Mrs. Wilson regarding relocation of the proposed Lodge facility, notification of events to their neighbors, lighting, posting of the perimeter of the property, and portable cabins. Mr. Wilhoit discussed the possibility of LAC harvesting some of the timber through a management program in the forested areas and then milling it on site as part of their educational programs. The milled lumber could then be used to build some of their facilities. Ms. MacDonald and Mr. Phillips both noted how great it was to see that they worked with the neighbors so well, and what an asset this was to Woodford County. Ms. Wilson noted for the record that on the Decision Tree LAC had earned more than the number of points required.

Mr. Phillips called for a Motion:

Mr. Wilhoit moved to approve the request for Cleveland Holdings, Inc/Life Adventure Center of the Bluegrass and to forward it along with the AARC record to the Board of Adjustment regarding the extension of their March 9, 2005 conditional use permit for 520 Milner Rd to an adjacent 245 acre farm purchased in 2006. Ms. MacDonald seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

(Note: Ms. Garkovich was absent from the meeting but for the record wanted it to be noted that she would vote for approval of the request by Life Adventure Center for the extension of their conditional use permit to the new farm property, however, this can't be considered part of the official vote.)

Mrs. Wilson told the Board she was expecting a new AARC application for Lucy Smith on Clifton and Steele Roads. She would be contacting them about scheduling a Site Visit for the week prior to the next regular scheduled AARC meeting in February if the application gets submitted.

With no other business to be discussed, the meeting was adjourned.