

Thursday, November 20, 2008

## Coto's proposed polo arena delayed

Some residents raise concerns about the impact of the facility.

By MARK EADES  
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Plans for a proposed polo arena in Coto de Caza are being delayed after a public hearing held by the OC Planning Department.

The arena was proposed by the Silver Bronze Corporation, which owns the land where the proposed arena would be located. The site is adjacent to the Coto de Caza Equestrian Center.

Silver Bronze was approached three years ago by members of the Orange County Polo Club, which lost the arena where they used to play polo. That arena was located in the now-closed El Toro Marine base. The plans for the Great Park did not include any equestrian elements and the club was asked to leave.

Rose King, president of the Silver Bronze Corporation, said during the hearing that money earned from leasing the arena to the Polo Club would help pay for improvements to other Silver Bronze properties in the area.

During the hearing held Thursday afternoon in Santa Ana, Michael Wellborn, county zoning administrator, delayed making any decision on the project and asked that the OC Planning staff provide some additional information on several issues raised during the hearing.

Those included access by emergency vehicles, control of dust, plans for dealing with sensitive habitat, night lighting and the impact of a retaining wall.

There were 22 people at the hearing. Some of those speaking against the proposed arena live on Via Alondra in the Village area of Coto de Caza. Some houses there have a view of the proposed site; there is a grassy park and another road between those residents and the proposed arena.

Tim Kerwin lives on Via Alondra and spoke against the project.

"This project opens the floodgates to other projects that I feel don't fit the uses the area was designed for," Kerwin said.

Larry Christensen, a homeowner from the Estates section of Coto de Caza, said he represented the three residences right next to the site of the proposed arena and said all three homeowners supported the project.

"I believe it would enhance the area," said Christensen. "According to the Coto de Caza specific plan, it is one of the uses designated for the area."

The next review of the project is set for 2 p.m. on Dec. 18, in room B10 of the H. G. Osborne Building, 300 N. Flower St., Santa Ana.

Contact the writer: [meades@ocregister.com](mailto:meades@ocregister.com) or 949-454-7352



The entrance to the Coto de Caza Equestrian Center, which is near the site of the proposed horse polo arena.

MARILYNN YOUNG, THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER