Special Use Permit Narrative

Project Name: Crozet Independence Day Celebration

- **Project Proposal**

  - King Family Vineyards would like to host the Crozet Independence Celebration, which would be run by the Crozet Community Association in conjunction with the Crozet Board of Trade, two local non-profit organizations, to ensure that Crozet is able to continue its tradition of having a fireworks display. While this event in the past has typically drawn about 1,500 people, future events could draw more than 2,000. This event would have outdoor amplified music and a fireworks display.

    Background: Tim Tolson, who is President of the Crozet Community Association (CCA) in Crozet, Virginia, along with many other local Crozet residents on the July 4th Fireworks Committee, have worked diligently for over a decade to ensure that Crozet has a robust July 4th Celebration to commemorate the birth of our nation.

    The fireworks display and the parade that precedes it are the only events during the year during which all members of the Crozet community can gather in one place together as a community. It is a wonderful event that brings people together, both young and old alike and most importantly, it is an opportunity for people that have lived in Crozet for their entire lives and those who may have just moved to the area to share a common space and make memories together. It helps blend and bind us with one another as Crozetians. In a day and age when there is so much division, it truly is a special time that we can share to come together to celebrate the things that we have in common. We love the place where we live, work and play. We all love Crozet, the place we call home.

    While the committee worked hard to try to find a solution to ensure the fireworks could continue, there were several factors, outlined in Lisa Martin's October 7th, 2022 Crozet Gazette article, *Crozet Fireworks on the Ropes*, that made it nearly impossible to have them. Within the same article, Tim provided some ideas that might provide solutions for next year's event, one of which being the fireworks could potentially take place on a larger, private piece of property.

    In late June of 2022, Leanne Knox, who is the Water Rescue Captain on the Western Albemarle Rescue Squad (WARS) connected James King, Co-owner of King Family Vineyards (KFV) to Tim, Mike Marshall, who runs the Crozet Gazette, and David Ferrall, who is an Associate Broker with Nest Realty to say that King Family Vineyards was willing to be a possible venue solution.

    James reached out to Tim and finally met with him and Mike on Tuesday, October 11th, 2022 to discuss the preliminary details of KFV possibly hosting the 2023 Fireworks Celebration. While an interim solution was found for 2023 at the Barnes Lumber Yard, which is planned to be developed, KFV is the proposed venue for 2024 and beyond.

While the display of fireworks to celebrate is by no means a need, I believe it is a small, but important part of what makes us Crozetians and I would consider it a public benefit.

Scheme of Maneuver: A professional fireworks company, Pyrotecnico, in conjunction with the Albemarle County Fire Rescue and Fire Marshal's Office, would launch fireworks from Yonder Hill Farm (which is just north of King Family Vineyards) for 15 minutes at approximately 9:30 pm on the Saturday prior to July 4th (June 29th, 2024). Pyrotecnico is a licensed fireworks company and has done a site visit of King Family Vineyards and Yonder Hill Farm to confirm the best location to ensure safety and public enjoyment. The proposed 5" mortars to be used in the display would have a 500' burst radius. The local ordinance states that the burst radius must not fall over inhabited dwellings and Shawn Marshal, who is the Captain and the Assistant Fire Marshal, has confirmed that the nearest inhabited structure is more than 900 ' from where the launch location would be. To ensure fire safety the Crozet Fire Department will be onsite.

Time of Event: Upon the conclusion of the Parade around 5:30 pm, residents could begin heading to KFV and an official start time of 6:30 pm and be completed at 9:30 pm; however, King Family Vineyards will be open for normal business from 10:00 am until continue to operate until 8:00 pm in terms of wine and beer sales.

Parking: KFV has used Lenoir Parking LLC to park vehicles during its Roseland Polo matches. Brandon Black, a local Crozetian himself, knows the property and his business well and would be perfectly suited to park the amount of vehicles for the event as he has done so many times before at Claudius Crozet Park for the Independence Day event as well as for Roseland Polo matches on Roseland Farm.

Collecting Donations: As this event would be run by the Crozet Community Association, a local non-profit organization, whatever best practices that the Crozet Fireworks Committee would like to use to collect donations either before, during, or after the event would be fine.

Shuttle Service: While KFV can park over 1,000 vehicles, Shawn Bird with Crozet Trolley has offered to help shuttle guests from various centralized locations (Grit Coffee in Old Trail, Claudius Crozet Park, etc.) to help minimize the vehicular impact to the property and reduce traffic and help with overall public health, safety and welfare.

Food Trucks: It was recommended that (10) food trucks be on-site for the event. They can be located on or near the asphalt near the Horse Barn on Roseland Farm, which is located just west of the Tasting Room.

Stage: (1) 16' x 20' stage will be needed for the bands to perform. This can be located at the north end of the David L. King field, where it will have access to power the appropriate amount of power.

Music: The same three local bands that have played at the Crozet Independence Day Celebration in Claudius Crozet Park over the last decade are willing and able to come out to play again. The musicians are local and play family-friendly sets of music which would be from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm just before the fireworks are set off. Sound is being engineered to allow for a 150 yard by 150 yard "box" on the south side of the stage and would be directed towards the southern half of Roseland Farm, which backs up all the way to I-64 (meaning music will not be directly facing a nearby neighborhood or neighbor.

Wine & Beer Sales: Wine and beer sales locations will be located throughout the event in various locations and staffed by trained KFV team members to ensure no underage or visibly intoxicated guests are served alcohol as per ABC law. KFV wines, along with whatever beers the Crozet Fireworks Committee determines are the best sellers from past events can be purchased by KFV through a Manufacturers License (this allows KFV to sell beer on site for a single day of the year and is regulated and monitored by Virginia ABC). KFV will reach out to Jonathan Pine, our local Special Agent with the ABC to get this license well in advance of the event.

On Site Vendors/Activities: If desired by the CCA, a variety of activities for both kids and adults alike could be programmed on or around the polo field including, but not limited to kettle corn sales, face painting, kids' crafts, corn hole tournament, inflatable pony hop races, ring toss and dunk tank.

Fire/EMS: The Fire Marshall will likely have to inspect and approve the location of the fireworks display. Crozet Fire Department will be on location. WARS personnel are on site for every Roseland Polo match and will be parked just west of the stage.

VDOT: Communication with VDOT about this proposed event has already taken place and if approved will work closely together to ensure the proper procedures and protocols are put in place to ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety coming to, parking and leaving the event. This will include coordination with the police department and parking team as well as internal KFV team members.

Safety: Albemarle County Police Department (ACPD) will be on site not only for their presence to let people know that they are at the event, but also to include them for everything they do for our community to help keep us safe. KFV personnel serving alcohol will need to ensure everyone who is consuming alcohol on site is 21 years of age or older, so rather than slow up the purchasing lines by checking ID's we'd recommend some tents/tables set up at which guests could purchase a wrist band.

Lighting: Additional lighting will be required in parking areas to ensure good visibility and safety. These can be rented rather inexpensively and delivered and set up the day prior or day of the event.

Handicapped Parking: We will ensure there are multiple handicapped parking spaces located very close to the stage and the viewing area to limit the amount of distance needed to travel to have a great viewing experience.

Optional VIP Parking/Seating: If desired by the CCA, optional VIP Parking/Seating locations could be purchased in pre-event sales online.

Health Department Coordination: Along with established indoor bathrooms, additional Port-a-Johns and/or bathroom trailers will be rented and staged for the event. After speaking with the Health Department, while we would not have to adhere to the 1 bathroom per 100 people requirement due to the existing onsite plumbed toilets, we will ensure there are enough bathrooms across the property to ensure proper hygiene and low wait times for bathrooms.

Trash Cans: Additional trash cans will be rented and staged around the property for the event.

- **How will the special use not be a substantial detriment to adjacent lots,**
  Direct adjacent lots to Roseland Farm would include Yonder Hill Farm, which was recently purchased by Roseland Farm and part of the Fireworks display. Other lots are either owned by members of the King Family or are close neighbors who will be attending the event itself. While the outside amplified music will likely be audible slightly beyond the property lines of Roseland Farm, our hope is that many if not all members of the local community will be at the event enjoying the music and the fireworks display. The music will be appropriate in terms of volume and lyrics and only run from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm. Fireworks will be for 15 minutes from 9:30 pm to 9:45 pm. While some may argue that this collectively be an inconvenience or disturbance, I think it would be difficult to categorize them as a substantial detriment.

- **How the character of the zoning district will not be changed by the proposed special use,**
  The land on which the event would take place is in Conservation Easement through both Virginia Outdoors Foundation and the Albemarle Conservation Easement Authority. The land is rural in nature and has a great view of the Blue Ridge Mountains, which make it, at least in my mind, a wonderful backdrop to watch fireworks. Residents have been visiting King Family Vineyards to taste wine, enjoy a free Roseland Polo match, or just walk with their families and friends around the farm taking in the beautiful scenery for over 20 years. The Crozet Independence Day Celebration isn't a new event, but is simply needing to find a new home nearby, so proposing to move it from Claudius Crozet Park to King Family Vineyards seems like a fairly seamless transition.

- **and how the special use will be in harmony with the following;**

    - **the purpose and intent of the Zoning Ordinance,**
    - **the uses permitted by right in the zoning district,**
    - **the regulations provided in Section 5 of the Zoning Ordinance as applicable, and**
    - **the public health, safety and general welfare.**

    I have read Section 5.1.27 of the Zoning Ordinance titled "Temporary events sponsored by local non-profit organizations," and believe with the plan that we have in place and the experience people executing the plan in coordination with local county organizations will be in harmony with both the purpose and intent of the Zoning Ordinance and meet the regulations provided by Section 5 and ensure the public health, safety and general welfare.

- **Consistency With Comprehensive Plan**

    The land on which the special use would occur is Conservation Easement. I believe that when we spend more time in nature and open spaces that we appreciate both more. Having this event in a place where guests could gather to admire the Blue Ridge Mountains and scenic views could foster this appreciation.

    Additionally, Roseland Farm is also home to a wetland restoration project which was completed in 2007 with the coordination of Ducks Unlimited and The Virginia Outdoors Foundation. Since working to restore this wetland, over 148 different species of birds have been observed there by numerous bird lovers and wildlife enthusiasts. This fits nicely into the Albemarle County Biodiversity Action Plan, which was established in June of 2018 and is part of the Comprehensive Plan.

- **Impacts On Public Facilities & Public Infrastructure**

    This event would take place on private property, rather than the public Claudius Crozet Park, so it would be easing the impact on a public facility although it would likely be rerouting the current vehicular traffic that has driven to the park in the past. Due to the park's urban location, I do believe it would increase vehicular traffic slightly on Jarmans Gap Road, Half Mile Branch Road, and Hillsboro Lane as many local residents who live around the park, who normally walk to the event, would now be required to bike, take a shuttle, carpool (which will be encouraged), or drive their privately owned vehicle.

- **Impacts On Environmental Features**

    The 15-minute firework display, which would take place on Yonder Hill Farm would occur on land that has previously been a cow pasture and is now being converted to vineyard and horse pasture. The blast radius of the fireworks would not be over or near the Water Buffer area that is around Lickinghole Creek or its tributaries or the 100-year flood area,

which can be found on GIS. Any small cardboard trash will be required to be picked up after the show by Pyrotecnico. KFV family and team members will ensure that a thorough clean up of the entire farm is done the following morning to ensure anything that wasn't picked up and visible the night prior is cleaned up. I have also contacted a member of the Pyrotecnico team to ask about environmental concerns and have included his letter in this submission process.

November 15, 2023

King Family Vineyard
Mr. James King, General Manager
6550 Roseland Farm
Crozet, Virginia 22932

Dear Mr. king,

I am responding to your question concerning the environmental impact of aerial display fireworks. I would like to respond first by giving you my experience in the almost thirty-nine years of owning and managing a firework display company. The firework industry is very highly regulated by many regulatory agencies such as Fire Marshals, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, Local City, Town, State, and Federal Management (such as Risk Management), U.S. Product Safety Commission, The United States Department of Transportation, and The United States Coast Guard anytime fireworks are launched over waterways (which are many times) the company will have to have a special Coast Guard permit. As a firework company we are required to have a minimum amount of liability insurance for all programs. Whenever there is a firework program there is a pre-show inspection at least by the Local or State Fire Marshal, and after the program there is always a post-show inspection to make sure everything on site is safe. When the firework program is complete the most debris on the ground is some very thin paper which the firework is wrapped in to hold it together as it leaves the mortar launched into the sky. This paper is biodegradable after a short period of time. I know firework companies has performed in many different locations both on land and water as long it was safe.

It is now very important to mention after well over a thousand firework programs my former company, "never had any complaints in reference to any pollutants on the ground, in water, or in the air".

Please feel free if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

W.G. Bulifant

W.G. Bulifant
Former Owner
Dominion Fireworks, Inc.

Former Member: American Pyrotechnics Association
Member: National Fire Protection Association Standards Council on Pyrotechnics