



Ann Leppanen &lt;ann@townofbluff.org&gt;

## Comments - Edits to Ordinances - DOG KENNELS - from Stephanie DeGeorge and Kenny Lytle

1 message

DeGeorge Stephanie <sdeg\_art@yahoo.com> Wed, Feb 23, 2022 at 1:24 PM  
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February 21, 2022

Dear Mayor Leppanen, members of the Bluff Town council,  
 and the members of the Bluff Planning and Zoning Committee:

**We are writing to express our concerns regarding the permitting of Dog Kennels being currently discussed by the Town of Bluff.**

The "General Plan" created for Bluff, specifically, in several places, states the importance of "Quality of Life" and **Quiet** for the new Town. The very first point in the Vision Statement is:

"... Highly Valued Elements" are:

*"The Landscape—the cliffs, the river corridor and canyons, the cottonwoods, the farmland, the flora and fauna wildlife, as well as **noise levels** and the night sky;"*

Other Examples from the General Plan:

- 2. Strive to provide citizens and visitors of Bluff with a safe and pleasant environment in which to live, work and play.**
- 4. Highway and other noise should be kept to a minimum via ordinance.**

The main residential area of Bluff is less than 2 square miles. The BARC organization is rounding up stray Dogs from as far away as Navajo Mountain. Lately there have been discussions about density in Bluff, but no one has looked at the density of the population of Dogs in this tiny community. **Our primary objection to the Kennels is related to the fact that they will be a source of non stop barking. They should NOT be permitted in any area near residents.**

### **Dog Kennels but no Barking Dog Ordinance?**

The town council has chosen not to move forward with any ordinance to control Barking Dogs. The animal ordinance that the P&Z wrote does NOT address Barking Dogs. The Mayor has made it very clear that she considers it too difficult and too costly to deal with Barking Dogs at all. This has left residents of Bluff without any recourse when dogs left out all day and all night to bark, are preventing the human

residents from enjoying their right to peace and quiet, including a restful full nights sleep. Nor is there really any protection from dangerous dogs at this time, since there is no enforcement structure in place. This is a public health issue, and a public safety issue. To those who continue to say "all you have to do is talk to your neighbors" - we ask "what if you DID that and you got a Hostile response?" What recourse is there? These laws are necessary because people are not all "friendly" or respectful of neighbors. The type of violence that we experienced, here in Bluff, (traumatizing us and leaving us with thousands of dollars in damages) is WHY laws like this must be written - yes even here in Bluff.

We would like to remind the town council that they voted to approve a Resolution, in 2020, to ask P&Z to prioritize this issue - to address the current "lawlessness" around this issue. P&Z has been unable to move forward with any ordinance regarding Barking Dogs because they need the town council to deal with the "enforcement" issue. We **ask the Town Council to prioritize the necessity of creating a process for enforcement for Barking Dogs** so that an appropriate ordinance can be written and enacted. **In our opinion, the Animal Ordinance should be revised to include Barking Dogs. And, the proposed requirement, necessitating a decibel recording device as proof, we believe has no place in a Barking Dog ordinance.**

**We stand now in objection to the special accommodations being given to a private organization that has been bringing more and more Barking Dogs to Bluff.**

The changes being proposed to the Zoning Ordinances now allow more Kennels in more zones. If these Kennels are approved - in ANY zone - they will disturb the peace of anyone living near to the Kennels. Residential zones are consistently adjacent to Agricultural and Commercial zones on the Bluff Zoning map.

There has been no public discussion of what these Kennels will look or SOUND like. Yet those of us who have been adjacent to places where BARC has placed dogs temporarily, know that these dogs are NOT QUIET. Will these dogs be separated from each other? What steps will be taken to restrict the barking? The general public should be informed of the details of the proposed Kennels location and overall setup. Note: Consider the definition of "Kennel" versus "Dog Pound" - a Kennel, with breeding, training, boarding would be much more controlled and attended to than a "Pound" - which is "a public enclosure for stray or unlicensed animals."

Bluff is a Valley - many nights we've listened to dogs barking at their own echo.

We ask that the health and well-being of ALL the residents of Bluff be addressed by the councils, and that they carefully consider how Dog Kennels will change the atmosphere of peace and quiet that was referred to in the Bluff General Plan.

As to enforcement:

Concrete Ideas/Suggestions regarding the process of enforcing a Barking Dog ordinance:

1. Verbal warnings
2. Threat of fines
3. Fines
4. Increased fines for additional violations

We contend that the steps outlined above will act as a deterrent in most cases if people actually do care about their dogs. These 4 steps will mostly only require administrative efforts by the town. In addition, SJC Chief Deputy told US that they WILL enforce whatever the Town adopts as the town Law. So THEY can issue the warnings - and they will do that during the day, when they are in the area. Beyond that, (if impoundment becomes necessary), any costs that are incurred by the town should be paid by the offending party.

**Recently the Mayor pointed out that there is still a surplus in the Town Budget. It is time to designate funds in the budget to address the need for enforcement for Barking Dogs.**

The town has done many "difficult" things since it's formation. The fact that the town now exists is an incredible accomplishment and **we applaud all the hard work done** by those who chose to take that leap. It's time for the Town to act to address this issue that is specific to the current quality of life of the HUMAN residents of the town.

Thank-you,

Stephanie DeGeorge and Kenneth Lytle  
Residents of Cottonwood Addition, 290 S. 5th West St., Bluff

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