

Public Comment for Upcoming Commission Meeting

Name

Myshel Prasad

Address

12 Camino del Camposanto
Placitas, New Mexico 87043
United States
[Map It](#)

Email

myshelprasad@gmail.com

Comments:

I am against the ordinance banning the feeding and watering of the wild horses.

I moved here largely because of the extraordinary rarity and beauty of the Placitas horses. There are many many many places in the world where one can live where you will never ever see a wild horse in your yard if that's what you want. But the fact that you can in Placitas makes our community totally distinct and magical.

I should note here that the conversation about whether or not the horses are "wild" or "wild enough" is much more nuanced than is being acknowledged. We have to be realistic about the impacts of modern land use, environmental pressures, and human encroachment (from housing, mining, cattle ranching, and other activities). As the wild lands disappear, our ideals about what a somehow pristinely "wild" horse looks like needs to shift. But we are, I would say, all in this together and the fact that we have a meaningful relationship to them as free creatures is historical and inescapable. How we should honorably conduct that relationship is perhaps a more complicated question but clumsy bans like this do nothing to forward that wider conversation.

But I want to make some additional comments here:

1. How is this ban intended to be enforced? Since the first ordinance was proposed, I've actually had a neighbor film the horses in my yard and film ME when I came out onto my porch to watch them. I'm starting to feel like I'm not free in my own yard. Are we meant to report on each other now? Is this really the atmosphere we want to cultivate?? Also the penalties seem ridiculous. 90 days in jail?? I keep a bucket out for birds and rabbits and cats and the horses as well if and when they show up. I also have a few birdbaths. Are those okay and not the bucket? How do I tell the horses that? If a horse comes and drinks from my birdbath, am I'm going to go to jail for it?

2. Some Commissioners have been using some debasing almost criminalizing language, stating that we have a "people problem" and that people who leave out hay or water for the horses are just being "stubborn," etc. This is very much not conducive to a reasonable discussion on what the real issues and solutions might be. I personally have felt pretty deeply disrespected by that language. I greatly appreciate those Commissioners who have noted the importance of property rights and have shown respect for the views and motives of those of us who love these horses, many of whom are long-term residents with deep roots in the community.

3. If this is really about preventing traffic accidents, then I think we should address the traffic by decreasing speed limits. It is disingenuous to state that the County has no control over speed limits. If the Commissioners put half the effort into working with the state to change the speed limit on 165 that they are spending on this ordinance, I'm sure we could reduce speeding and therefore accidents. There is a school, there is a church, there is a library, there are cyclists and hikers. People also have a lot of pets around here, and many of us saw a bunch of huskies loose on 165 recently (they were adorable). Let's slow it down and see how it goes.

4. I would be happy to find ways to respect the needs of all our neighbors, including those who do not love them. Can we organize weekend clean up crews for manure where it is an issue? Do repairs or raise funds for any damage the horses do to fences or yards in our community? I am willing to commit to participate in finding ways to make this work as a community effort without the Commission enacting blanket and overly-prescriptive bans.

I appreciate your consideration.

