

August 1, 2025

Dear Mr. Berkhout and Kane County Zoning Board Members,

We are in receipt of the Notice and Petition No. 4665, special use permit for the proposed recreational camp on the property located at 49W226 Jericho Rd., Big Rock (PIN 13-20-400-006) and appreciate the opportunity to comment.

My family has owned, built a primary residence, and farmed the east bordering properties from Hinckley Rd, and south, past Jericho Rd, for over 30 years. We chose Big Rock for the tranquility, beauty and farming opportunities it provides. Preservation of its character is of the utmost importance. While we certainly appreciate the educational aspect of the proposed project, we have major concerns with its compatibility and consistency with the existing uses and zoning of nearby properties and the impact it will have on the surrounding rural community.

The Standard's for Special Use Applications require:

- a. **The establishment, maintenance or operation of the special use will not be unreasonably detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety , morals, comfort or general welfare.** *The surrounding property is currently zoned F, F-1 or E-1. Concerns with the entertainment aspect of the camp as it pertains to traffic, street and adjacent land safety, especially during planting and harvesting periods, lighting and noise, access for fire and police with increased activity, and current character of the area as rural farming. The proposed special use permit suggests an educational purpose, however, literature provided goes well beyond the scope and suggests something more aligned as an entertainment venue with picnics with 400-500 people, annual fundraising events with 150+ guests, birthday parties with 400-500 guests, concerts and overnight camping event.*
- b. **The special use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of the property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.** *The proposed special use may be of some value to children and families, however it is inconsistent with that which is currently zoned and will surely impact the use and enjoyment of the surrounding properties. Increased disruption, levels of traffic, parking, noise, and lighting per proposed events, are great concerns. Neighboring farm properties also utilize farm machinery, combines, tractors, pesticides, fertilizers, etc. These are serious safety concerns for children and adults attending daily and proposed events. We are additionally concerned after reading*

said property's proposed plans for expansion, event barn, 40 additional parking spaces, as per attached flier.

Surrounding and bordering properties are private residences and farmland and would like to be preserved as such. Thus, we are not in agreement that said property will greatly enhance surrounding property values, should special use be granted.

- c. **The establishment of this special use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.** *The surrounding property is currently zoned F, F-1 or E-1. It is zoned accordingly to preserve the character of the farming community. If special use is granted, we view this as a disruption for the bordering properties with influx of traffic, and activity.*

Again, surrounding and bordering properties are private residences and farmland, and would like to be preserved as such.

- d. **Adequate utility, access roads, drainage and/or other necessary facilities have been or are being provided.** *The current utility, sanitation, and drainage is sufficient for current usage only. We do not believe it is sufficient for the proposed special use and expansion, because of the number of people and activities suggested.*
- e. **Adequate measure have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress as to minimis traffic congestions in the public street and roads.** *Jericho Road does not currently have stop lights or stop signs near this property. An increase in traffic by even 12-15 cars, twice daily, with larger crowds such as the 400/500 per proposed picnics/fund raising events, with additional children, etc, creates and poses great logistical and safety concerns, ie: Police, Fire, etc.*
- f. **The special use shall in all other respects conform to the applicable regulation of the district in which it is located, except as such regulations may in each instance be modified by the county board pursuant to the recommendation of the zoning board of appeals.** *The special use permit does not conform to many of the applicable regulations of the district and on its face is contrary to the current character of this rural community. See attached flier.*

Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully,
Kathryn Engel Accettura
Twin Creek Farms, LLC



Berkhout, Keith

From:

Sent: Wednesday, July 30, 2025 9:01 PM

To: Berkhout, Keith

Cc:

Subject:

EX: Input regarding Special Use Permit Request – 49W226 Jericho Road, Big Rock

Dear Mr. Berkhout and Kane County Zoning Board Members,

I am writing as a neighboring property owner in response to the Special Use Permit for education that has been submitted by The Riverside Club for 49W226 Jericho Road, Big Rock Township (PIN 13-20-400-006). As a 50-year resident of Big Rock Township and a steward of our farm, residential, and prairie lands, I appreciate the opportunity to provide input and want to respectfully share my perspective.

Mr. Searby has written of his commitment to being a respectful neighbor and member of the community. I appreciate his outreach, and I have no reason at this stage to doubt his intent or integrity. Activity on the property has been limited to date and not disruptive.

I have reviewed the documents related to this Special Use Permit for education. While I have no current objection to the proposed core tutorial-style educational programming (which is described as serving no more than 36 students per day, with 12 to 15 cars), the same permit request includes a wide array of other activities that vary greatly in size, purpose, and local impact.

Specifically, the Project Narrative submitted includes:

- Multiple overnight summer camps, some with up to 80 campers and multi-night tent camping adjacent to my property (per the map).
- Community events such as art classes, gardening clubs, and workshops, open to the broader public on weekends, with no attendance or time limits stated.
- Concerts on the patio and Ravinia-style musical events, suggesting larger crowds, outdoor music, and evening hours.
- An annual gala event with 400 to 500 people invited, concluding at night and involving a mix of on-site and shuttle parking.
- Plans for a barn / event structure for future large gatherings (a letter has withdrawn the barn, but it is still included on the map and seems to be integral to the overall Project Narrative).

This represents a wide spectrum of uses—ranging from low-intensity, daytime, educational gatherings to large-scale public events—all under one application. While I assume good intent and thoughtful implementation by Mr. Searby, the variation in scale and purpose of activities is substantial. This raises questions about whether all of these proposed uses are truly aligned with the Farm zoning and the educational intent of this application.

Uses involving overnight camping, concerts, and events with hundreds of attendees carry different implications for:

- Traffic and road safety
- Lighting and noise during weekend and evening hours
- Sanitation and fire safety (especially with dry prairie lands near proposed campsites)
- Long-term neighborhood character and property values

If the County is considering approval of this application, I respectfully urge close review of the broad range of proposed activities outlined in the Project Narrative. While the applicant's educational mission is appreciated, some of the described uses appear to go beyond what is typically associated with an educational use in a Farm zone.

It's important that any approval for education includes clear, enforceable boundaries around event size, frequency, and operating hours to ensure compatibility with the rural character of the area. I also believe that any future expansion or new construction should require additional County review and neighbor input so that the use remains transparent, appropriate, and respectful to the surrounding community.

I am hopeful that The Riverside programming can evolve in a way that is positive for participants and respectful to neighbors. Due to the breadth and open-ended nature of the activities in the Project Narrative, I believe that guardrails and clarity are essential to maintaining the character of our rural community and protecting the quality of life and property values of those of us living and working nearby.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.