

This is a letter of support for Special Use permit, #4665, Riverside Club at 49w226 Jericho Rd., in Big Rock. I attended the 8-5-25 public hearing on the petition and wanted to share my previous experience with Riverside.

My husband and I were the event coordinator for the Marvel Davis barns in 2015-2018 which she allowed Big Rock Historical Society to rent for events, mostly farm weddings. Riverside had 2 annual events in her barns and I admit to initial misgivings about having 50 young boys running about with all the temptations that a farm offers. Those concerns were put to rest at the end of each event. The young men (and I don't recall any girls at that time) were respectful of property and focused on the task at hand rather than adventurous exploring. They didn't wander off to Marvel's home or to the creek. The parents were involved and watchful. The student projects they produced were high quality—a play, poetry reading, nautical reproductions for décor. They cleaned up the inside and outside very well when done.

I attended 2 smaller Riverside events at a neighboring facility- a Bilbo Baggins birthday party where the students were working diligently on a Hobbit cake to serve attendees. The other event was an All Hallows' Eve event where students had been tasked to create a display with a Saint from the Bible using a pumpkin for the head and also create the surrounding scene. That was unforgettable to see Jonah down by the pond with the whale and John the Baptist with his pumpkin head on a platter. The work was creative and installed in a nature walk area. It was sort of a Stroll to the Saints and very well done. Most of the families are Catholic faith so there is a strong spiritual component but no evangelizing or comparing others' religion.

One of the dilemmas that the County is going to have is figuring out a category that fits this enterprise. They are not a school per se but they work mainly with homeschooled youth ages 8-13. They are not a camp where people pitch tents and stay extended lengths. They are an enrichment experience for arts and literature and music and lots of craft experience. I saw an exquisite wooden canoe and paddles that a father and son had created that was a breath-taking piece of art. They freely admit to using the Boy Scouts as a model for much of the crafting experiences. This is an enrichment experience and I believe that will be difficult for you to categorize. A great outcome I witnessed was a high degree of camaraderie among the participants.

There were concerns raised by neighbors on Tuesday evening. Traffic is brisk on Jericho Rd and when we did wedding events, we had a portable signboard alerting people to "Event ahead. Slow Down." Neighbors raised concerns about pesticides and controlled burns affecting the group. Trespassing was a major issue with liability concerns by surrounding landowners but I am sure trespassing will not be an issue once the population is thoroughly aware of the limits of the property. Large farm machinery was mentioned as being a potential hazard but with past experience, these students and parents would be respectful of combines and tractors and not

approach them in neighboring fields. There is hunting season in this area but that is typically weekends for shotgun so perhaps not having sessions on those days is a possibility. Having a shuttle for larger events is positive when parking is at a premium. Peter Searby is willing to listen and cooperative with ideas whenever I've talked to him.

The question was asked as to the value Riverside would add to Big Rock. The group has indicated that they very much want to be involved in the local community in projects of enrichment and assistance. We need the strong values that the group promotes and young men and women need as many strong role models growing up as possible.

Riverside is an unknown factor to the neighbors but I think they will indeed be very good neighbors when they can become part of the community.

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Keith Berkhout
Zoning Planner
Kane County, Illinois

August 6, 2025

Dear Mr. Berkhout,

I am thrilled to hear that Riverside, a club dedicated to fostering adventure and imagination for young boys, is coming to our small town of Big Rock, Illinois! This is such an exciting opportunity for our community, as their program promises to inspire creativity, build camaraderie, and ignite a passion for exploration in our youth. I wholeheartedly support their mission and can't wait to see the positive impact Riverside will have on the boys and families of Big Rock. As a resident of Big Rock I would like to welcome them into our town.

Sincerely,



Nicholas Bostic
President
Nedrow Painting, Inc.