

Shelly Montgomery and Rhea Root  
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**RECEIVED**

MAY 27 2008

**Rapid City Growth  
Management Department**

May 26, 2008

Rapid City Growth Management Department  
300 Sixth Street  
Rapid City, SD 57701

Dear members of the Rapid City Growth Management Team:

We would first like to thank you for taking the time to review our request and take into consideration the needs of our business as well as the needs of the residents of Rapid City. Our names are Shelly Montgomery and Rhea Root and it is our intent to open a Doggy Daycare in the city of Rapid City. We are requesting your help for the reason that Doggy Daycares are currently classified under Kennels for the purpose of zoning. We would like to request an addition to the zoning ordinance specifically for doggie daycares. It is our hope that as a rising trend throughout the United States, Rapid City (as many other progressive cities) will come to allow Doggy Daycares within commercially zoned areas in order to provide a service to our residents.

Doggie daycare is a concept that began in San Francisco back in 1987 and has been growing in popularity ever since. Since dogs are social creatures, they naturally need contact with people and other dogs to become well behaved. Doggie daycares are a creative alternative to loneliness for the pets of busy people. With the evolved need for multiple income households, the majority of dogs in our town are left home alone during the day and present as a nuisance to the public. Since more people own a dog than not, we would like to extend this convenience to the residents of Rapid City. It is our hope to help reduce city noise disturbances and destructive canine behavior. As you may know, we already have a very successful doggie daycare on Highway 79 in Rapid City (Safe Haven). Our business plan, however, is

distinguished from theirs in that they are also a kennel with twenty-four hour a day operations. It is our intent to only operate during normal business hours with no overnight care, thus the request for general commercial zoning.

In researching this industry, we recently spent several days in Fort Collins and Denver. We have also spoken to a number of doggie daycare owners in demographically similar areas and would like to share some of our findings. The daycares that we visited were surprisingly quiet and well controlled. The facilities are very much similar to those of child daycares. The dogs are simply dropped off in the morning and left to play in supervised and organized play groups for the day. They are then picked up by their owners in the evening very tired and worn out. All centers have privately fenced and secured outdoor areas where the dogs are also continuously monitored. We did not witness any outdoor barking at any of the facilities we visited (we visited seven centers). The three businesses in Fort Collins are all commercially zoned, and it is interesting to note that one of the centers was located in a strip mall. One of the centers in Denver was located within one block of private residences. Furthermore, in speaking with daycare owners in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Fargo, North Dakota, and Moorhead, Minnesota, we have found all to be located in commercial zoning. Naturally, we are requesting the same consideration as it has been proven that these particular businesses are faring well in commercial locations.

We are hopeful that we can work together in order to provide the city with a much needed service that can make Rapid City a more pleasant and attractive place to live. It will be vital, however to be conveniently located in order to accommodate our residents. Restricting us to Light Industrial presents an inconvenience to the people of Rapid City who would like to use our services. Industrial zoned locations are clearly not accommodating or convenient and would discourage many people from utilizing us. We feel this opportunity is a step forward in our future as a progressive city like those in our neighboring states. We thank you again for your assistance in this matter and look forward to hearing from you.

Very Sincerely,

*Shelly Montgomery & Rhea Root*

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## **Supporting argument for the request of commercial zoning:**

- Our business will be a daytime operation with hours from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday with half days on Saturdays. We will not be open on Sundays. Our main service is to be doggie daycare. We also plan to provide occasional dog obedience classes in the evenings. A groomer will be on the premises during our daytime operating hours and will provide an added convenience to the citizens of Rapid City. Our facility will include a do-it-yourself bathing station for those who wish to use our facility to wash their dogs and get our bathroom dirty instead of theirs. We will also have a retail selection of dog related items.
- The dogs will be monitored and supervised continuously, indoors and out in order to maintain order but still provide healthy activity for dogs who would otherwise be home alone.
- Our outdoor area will be privately fenced and secured with no opportunity for the dogs to view activity outside the area.
- We feel that our business is comparable to many other local pet businesses since we will not be kenneling . Pet stores, veterinary clinics, and grooming businesses are all allowed in commercial zoning.
- As evidenced through our research, commercial zoning is suitable for doggie daycares in geographically similar areas.

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