

Woodstock Planning & Zoning Commission

MONTHLY SPECIAL MEETING

Thursday, January 4, 2024

7:30 PM

WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL, MEETING ROOM 1 & VIRTUAL via Zoom

The state statute currently allows for in person meetings unless quorum or more requests virtual meetings. Because of virtual attendance, this meeting is being recorded. This procedure has been reviewed and approved by Town Attorney Richard Roberts.

1. Call to Order- Chairman Jeffrey Marcotte called meeting to order at 7:36 pm

- a. Roll Call- Noted for record: Quorum

Members Present- Jeffrey Marcotte (Chair), Joe Polulech, Dean Gould, Joseph Adiletta, John Day, Aaron Farbo, Dwight Ryniewicz, Syd Blodgett, Timothy Young

Members Present via Zoom - David Morse

Members Absent- Mark Blackmer, Doug Porter

Others Present- Delia Fey (Town Planner), Cameron James (Assistant Planner), Lisa Dalterio, Laura & Ray Curley, Jean Pillo, Mary Weaver, Norm Thibault, Gary & Trish Renaud, Jessica Weaver Boose, Ken Rapoport, several other members of the public and Recording Secretary Amy Monahan. Public attendance via Zoom: Rich Roberts, Leila Philip, Jenna Gormley, Jim Dunlea, Pete Parent, Jay Swan, Suzanne Cimochowski and others.

- b. Designation of Alternates: John Day and Dwight Ryniewicz were seated

- c. Pledge of Allegiance: Jeffrey Marcotte led the Pledge of Allegiance

2. Chair's Report

- a. Chairman Marcotte wished all a Happy New Year and thanked all for coming to this meeting.

3. Citizens' Comments

- a. None

4. Meeting Minutes

- a. December 7, 2023

- i. These Meeting Minutes will be addressed at the next meeting.

5. Public Hearing

- a. #SP660-10-23 Woodstock Sustainable Farms, Kenneth Rapoport, 211 Pulpit Rock Rd (map 7278 block 32 lot 25, 25-1 & 25-3) – event & wedding facility promoting agritourism

- i. Jeffrey Marcotte opened the public hearing at 7:45 pm for additional discussion.

- ii. Aaron Farbo inquired about questions asked in Delia Fey's memo to the applicant. Delia noted that the questions will be addressed this evening.

- iii. Ken Rapoport shared that they are prepared to share specific activities this evening. He wanted to share that he cares about land conservation and has invested approximately \$1.5 million on his property and agricultural activities. The primary focus for Woodstock Sustainable Farm is education about sustainable and regenerative agriculture. He is working with Tufts University using a hub and spoke model of agriculture to promote regenerated sustainable agriculture and focus on the impact of food as medicine.

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- iv. Norm Thibault is representing this application. He addressed the main concerns from the last meeting- The proposed activities are:
 - 1. Up to 12 events per year including up to 75 people
 - a. Inquiries for events from several (8) universities and organizations to hold fundraiser events for up to 75 people
 - i. This will leave the option for 4 weddings to keep the events under 12 per year.
 - 2. Up to 12 events per year including up to 35 people
 - 3. Up to 24 student bus tours per year
- v. Traffic was another concern to be addressed. Using a 2.5 person per car average, the maximum traffic count would be approximately 30 cars staggered over a period of time. Traffic suggestions are to use Meehan Road to reduce travel on the scenic dirt road and not exceed 10 mph.
- vi. Noise was a concern to the public. It should be noted that the property has significant distance, slope and wooded area that would act as a buffer to most noises. The Town of Woodstock does not have a noise ordinance. Norm Thibault explained how noise is categorized and changes with distance.
- vii. Delia Fey requested that Norm Thibault review the questions of her memo. It should be noted that camping is no longer a consideration and that NDDH approval is not required for any proposed activities. Delia Fey did note that proof of notice to all abutters was provided.
- viii. Delia Fey noted that offsite directional signs all allowed under town sign regulations and temporary directional signs could benefit traffic flow for the events.
- ix. Aaron Farbo addressed concern with allowing open bar at any wedding or event. Ken Rapoport noted that any alcohol would be served by TIPS certified bartenders.
- x. Aaron Farbo (20 years plus as an acoustical consultant) noted concern with the noise calculations presented and the 11 pm music end time. He would like a detailed noise calculation done because of the quietness of this area.
- xi. Joe Polulech inquired if any people at these events would be staying overnight. Ken Rapoport stated that no visitors from the proposed events would be staying overnight.
- xii. John Day inquired if the applicant would consider reducing the number of events planned to see how the events play out in the community and then increasing the number later if no concerns were raised. Ken Rapoport noted that he has a demand for these events at this time and does not wish to further limit the number of events.
- xiii. Timothy Young stated that this is a really good cause. Unfortunately, the cause does not widen the road to make it safer or address noise. These are the issues that need to be addressed.
- xiv. Kathy Yokum is concerned with Pulpit Rock Road conditions (narrow, dark and rutted)- she does not want to see it paved or altered.
- xv. Don Robinson noted that in addition to the people at the events, there will be considerable traffic from the caterers, musicians, etc.
- xvi. Jean Pillo mentioned the Nelson Douglas subdivision and the Devon Point Farm to refer to adversity to traffic on Pulpit Rock Road. She is concerned with the permit staying with the land if Ken was to sell the property and not knowing how the next owner would handle the permit allowances.
 - 1. Jessica Weaver Boose asked Delia Fey if the limits would stay with the permit if transferred to a new owner. That was confirmed.
 - 2. Jessica Weaver Boose noted that our farms need to hold events at times to stay running and succeed. She feels that agritourism is a great opportunity for the Town of Woodstock.

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- xvii. Ken Rapoport noted that the total proposed number of events is 24 per year. The educational bus tours are agricultural operations.
- xviii. Peter Cristo wanted to know how many busses have been to his farm in the past (he stated that he has never seen a bus or grain truck in his years as a resident). Ken Rapoport stated that 6-7 bus loads have been up in the past year. He wants to increase this activity in the future.
 - 1. Dennis Manilow also has not seen any busses on Meehan Road and does not want to see this activity begin.
- xix. Karen Riker wanted to know if the commission could give a limited time permit and then reconsider after the time period expires. Jeffrey Marcotte noted that a limited time permit could be given but it would be at additional cost and time to the applicant.
- xx. Leila Philip is a farm owner in the Hudson Valley, an environmental reporter and resident of Woodstock. She is passionate about regenerative agriculture and does not think that wedding venues are good for agriculture or qualify as agritourism. She noted that agrotourism is meant to support agricultural activities. Additionally, wetlands on Pulpit Rock Road should be considered and all actions taken to keep the wetlands safe and clean. Lastly, safety on Pulpit Rock Road with people who are not familiar with the road is an issue.
- xxi. Jim Dunlea noted that the value of Woodstock is what Woodstock isn't- it is the rural community, natural elements and open spaces.
- xxii. Gary Renaud asked about enforcement of a permit of this type with limited activity. Delia Fey noted that enforcement would be overseen by the Zoning Enforcement Officer.
- xxiii. Norma Jean Loftis stated that scenic roads are a way to protect our town the way that we love it. Pulpit Rock Road is a result of the drumlands and a tale of history. She is concerned with site lines on the part of Pulpit Rock Road that would be used to access the property in question. The road will be negatively impacted by a business with a set amount of foreseen traffic.
- xxiv. Jeffry Marcotte suggested continuing this public hearing at this time.
- xxv. Timothy Young made a ***Motion** to continue this public hearing on January 18, 2024 at 7:45.
***Seconded** by Dean Gould. ***The motion passed unanimously.**

6. Old Business

- a. #SP660-10-23 Woodstock Sustainable Farms, Kenneth Rapoport, 211 Pulpit Rock Rd (map 7278 block 32 lot 25, 25-1 & 25-3) – event & wedding facility promoting agritourism
 - i. This agenda item will be addressed on January 18, 2024

7. New Business

- a. #SP565-07-05M Woodstock Academy – 150 Rt 169 (map 6395 block 64 lot 11) Special Permit Modification for construction of 4 tennis courts to replace soccer fields at WA South Campus (requires public hearing)
 - i. Joe Adiletta made a ***Motion** to schedule a public hearing for agenda item #SP565-07-05M Woodstock Academy – 150 Rt 169 (map 6395 block 64 lot 11) Special Permit Modification for construction of 4 tennis courts to replace soccer fields at WA South Campus on February 15, 2024 at 7:45 pm. ***Seconded** by Timothy Young. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
- b. #356-93-05M David & Kerri Mullen – 135 & 145 Perrin Rd (map 5787 block 43 lots 05-1 & 05-1B) for subdivision modification for boundary line adjustment
 - i. Paul Archer is representing the applicant. This subdivision was approved in 1993. The owners would like to add additional acreage to the farming parcel. Both lots will still meet minimum lot requirements after the lot line adjustment.
 - ii. Joe Adiletta inquired about the note referenceing not being a separate building lot. Delia Fey explained that this application does not create a separate building lot and is allowed at this time.

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- iii. Timothy Young made a ***Motion** to approve #356-93-05M David & Kerri Mullen – 135 & 145 Perrin Rd (map 5787 block 43 lots 05-1 & 05-1B) for subdivision modification for boundary line adjustment as presented. ***Seconded** by Dwight Ryniewicz. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
- c. #SP661-01-24 Dario Ciovacco, 170 Joy Rd (map 7278 block 32 lot 06C) – Activity on a Scenic Road for driveway relocation (requires public hearing)
 - i. Joe Adiletta made a ***Motion** to schedule a public hearing for application #SP661-01-24 Dario Ciovacco, 170 Joy Rd (map 7278 block 32 lot 06C) – Activity on a Scenic Road for driveway relocation on February 15, 2024 at 7:45 pm. ***Seconded** by Timothy Young. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
- d. Proposed Text Amendment: Subdivision Regulations, Ch. V – Application Review, Decision and Post Approval Process, Section 2.D (application notice requirements)
 - i. Delia Fey noticed that wording was unclear in regulations and proposed changes were distributed to the commission for review.
 - ii. Joe Adiletta made a ***Motion** to schedule a public hearing for the Proposed Text Amendment: Subdivision Regulations, Ch. V – Application Review, Decision and Post Approval Process, Section 2.D on March 21, 2024 at 7:45 pm. ***Seconded** by Dean Gould. ***The motion passed unanimously.**

8. Review of Home Occupation Permit Applications

- a. Karl & Hayley Kuhn, 23 Holmeslea Ct (map 5779 block 52 lot 39A) – Home Improvement / Renovation business
 - i. Joe Adiletta inquired about question number 5 and noted that if more than 4 vehicles, this application would not be suitable for a home occupation. The applicant was confused by the wording of the application.
 - ii. David Morse noted that the question should not be on application- it should be stated. Several items on the form were suggested to be revised for better understanding by the applicant.

9. Non-Residential Zoning Permits

- a. None

10. Plan of Conservation & Development Update

- a. No discussion

11. ZEO Reports

- a. Office- No discussion
- b. Permits- No discussion
- c. Enforcement- No discussion

12. Budget Review & Bills

- a. No Discussion

13. Citizens' Comments

- a. None

14. Correspondence

- a. Tracy Giarrusso asked that everyone send her their correct mailing address.
- b. The next Planning & Zoning Meeting will be on January 18, 2024 at 7:30 pm

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15. Adjournment

- a. Tim Young made a ***Motion** to adjourn. ***Seconded** by Dean Gould. ***The motion passed unanimously.**
The meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Amy Monahan, Recording Secretary. DISCLAIMER: These minutes have not yet been approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission. Please refer to next month's meeting for approval/amendments.