

TOWN OF HOLDERNESS
Planning Board Meeting Minutes: July 18, 2023

Angi Francesco, Chair called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS:

Members Present: Angi Francesco, Chair, Bill Nesheim, Vice Chair, Carl Lehner, Member, Janet Cocchiaro, Member, Ron Huntoon, Member

Members Absent: Clayton Titus, Member, Peter Francesco, Ex-Officio, Christine Renzi, Alternate

Also Present: Lucinda Hannus, Land Use Assistant, Amy Sanders Fuss and O'Neill, Hannah Trull and Robert Fougere, Airelle Properties, additional attendees as indicated on sign in sheet.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June 20, 2023

Angi Francesco asked for any corrections to the minutes. No comments or corrections.

MOTION: "To approve the minutes of June 20, 2023"

Motion: J. Cocchiaro

Second: R. Huntoon

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: 5–Yes 0– No

P. Francesco and Christine Renzi arrived and joined the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: **Case # 2023-06-06 Site Plan Review submitted by Fuss & O'Neil as agent for Airelle Properties, LLC owner of the Manor on Golden Pond, 9 Serenity Lane, Map 102 Lot 033 to add a 2-story function facility w/ basement, add a greenhouse, convert the carriage house to a spa and fitness center, expand the parking area, and add walking paths and a patio in the Commercial District (CD).**

Amy Sanders, Senior Project Engineer for Fuss & O'Neill presented the application for site plan review outlining the details of the proposed project to add an event facility, additional parking, and conversion of the carriage house to a spa and removal of the tennis court and the addition of a green house and gardens on the "Manor" property located at 9 Serenity Lane. Ms. Sanders outlined the site preparation, explained that the facility resembles a restaurant, outlined the existing structures and their future uses, that there are several existing functioning septic systems on the property, there are no wetlands on this lot but there is a small wetland area on the adjacent residential lot.

Ms. Sanders further detailed that it is proposed to be a two-story function facility with a basement and they are adding additional parking areas by expanding the existing lot and adding another lot on the lower area of the property. They are requesting a waiver on the total number of parking space from 94 required (Holderness Site Plan Review Regulations, Appendix 3, Parking) to 71 proposed. Justification for this reduction is the commitment by the owners to require an event that is more than 50 attendees will need to occupy the 20 existing manor rental units therefore reducing the number of spaces needed for larger events. (Traffic Generation Assessment, June 19, 2023 Fuss & O'Neill). There will be a staging area to the rear of the facility to accommodate caterers servicing the event.

Ms. Sanders further explained the hours of operation are to be Sunday thru Thursday 8am – 10pm and Friday and Saturday 8am – 11pm.

As far as utilities Ms. Sanders explained that electrical service comes from Shepard Hill Road, that they will be adding a new septic system for the event facility that is pending approval from NHDES, water will be supplied from the existing water system which is a well near the lake, pumped to a storage tank in the garage, and stormwater will be addressed by the construction of a detention pond and associated rip-rap swales. The new patio is proposed to be built using pervious pavers. Stormwater from the building will be directed to the detention basin which will regulate the discharge velocity and collect sediments before releasing to flow overland on the property. The design is to collect and convey runoff to limit it to pre-development peak flow values for a 2-, 10- and 25-year design storm. (Stormwater Drainage Analysis, Fuss & O'Neill, June 20, 2023).

Ms. Sanders introduced the Traffic Generation Assessment memo dated June 19, 2023 to the board, highlighting the timing of events, that the arrival and exiting of attendees would not be all at the same time and that some will be staying on site.

Ms. Sanders highlighted the landscaping plan to retain as many of the mature trees as possible especially along Shepard Hill Road and that lighting of the driveways, pathways, and parking will be with pole mounted, LED downlighting that is dark light compliant. Ms. Sanders presented the architectural renderings of the proposed building adding that the owners want to build something that compliments the existing manor buildings.

Following the presentation, the chair opened the hearing to questions from the board members.

B. Nesheim inquired as to the number of current inn/cottage rental units.

H. Trull responded that they are currently honoring reservations using all of the 24 units on site, but going forward they are eliminating 4 units in the carriage house when they convert it to the proposed spa.

B. Nesheim stated he did not believe that the existing parking is in compliance with the regulations and requested that the engineer explain the drainage plan.

A. Sanders stated that the overall drainage from the property is partially collected at the swale at the bottom of Shepard Hill Road or otherwise across existing undeveloped portions of the property. Post construction the upper parking lot and gutters from the structure will be directed into the detention pond, the lower parking lot will be dispersed by directing the flows down the existing slopes of the property.

A. Francesco inquired as to the tree buffer that exists along Shepard Hill Road, will the owners be adding more trees?

A. Sanders responded that no, no new trees are planned to be added, that they will maintain the existing tree line as much as possible.

B. Nesheim asked if the patio will be used for outdoor music or dancing?

Amy stated that no, only for cocktails and attendees to enjoy the views and some outdoor space. The area will be properly fenced off from the pool.

B. Nesheim inquired as to the two entrances currently available from Shepard Hill Road and the one from US Route 3 and how they will be used going forward.

A. Sanders replied that the main entrance will be the existing signed entrance at the lower end of Shepard Hill Road. The upper entrance will be a service entrance only however random vehicles may utilize this and the Serenity Lane access occasionally.

R. Huntoon inquired as to the percent of coverage on the lot?

A. Sanders responded that the current lot coverage is calculated at 16% and the proposed will be 21.3% well below the maximum of 35% by leaving large areas of the property undeveloped.

Further discussion of board members as to snow removal, permeable paving and salt and sand controls.

A. Francesco asked for a motion to accept the application as complete.

B. Nesheim made the motion, R. Huntoon seconded. Motion passed 7 Yes, 0-No application complete.

The chair opened the hearing to questions from the audience.

Donna Bunnell stated she has major concerns with drainage as the location of her house is directly across the street from the existing drainage swale and has had flooding in her yard and basement if the drains are clogged or overwhelmed. How will this development not increase that problem?

A. Sanders replied that they cannot increase the flows off site from that which is currently existing, the detention pond and proposed drainage controls will address those concerns. There is a 1' freeboard on the detention pond above the discharge structure which will ensure there is a margin of safety however they cannot fix an existing problem outside of their property.

L. Hannus asked if they would be required to submit their drainage plans to NHDOT for approval. Ms. Sanders replied in the negative.

Mitch Drew asked that the applicant explain what a 2 -year storm is and have they looked into water table levels and how they may affect the detention pond capacity.

A. Sanders replied that they have collected test pit data indicating they will not be cutting into the water table, they have designed the size of the basin to not consider infiltration which increases the storage capacity as a more conservative design. They have not identified any area on the property that currently has standing water.

Brendon Mathews inquired as to where they obtained their peak flow collection data.

A. Sanders responded that they used the higher values in the NH Stormwater Manual rather than the National Climate Data Center information which again is a more conservative design.

Rae Andrews discussed the issue of parking both at this site and the overall parking problems of the area. How is this project going to improve or not negatively impact the existing problem. She feels that an additional 74 cars are a lot, that the downtown at times can be chaotic and does not want to see the problem there exaggerated.

A. Sanders stated unfortunately they cannot address the existing area problems but they feel that the additional parking they are proposing on site will not increase that problem.

H. Trull added that they feel they will have sporadic distribution of their attendees spread out overtime, that they will be retaining some of the traffic by staying at the inn and they do not want to introduce something that is obnoxious but will create a business that will be a welcome addition to the town.

J. Jenkinson read the letter (see file) that he submitted to the board members detailing his concerns and the impacts this development may have on his adjacent property.

The owners responded to his concerns by stating that they are not planning on “flipping” back-to-back weddings, they are looking to keep the numbers at a more manageable count under the 160 mark. They are all about not disturbing others including their own inn guests, they are not proposing any outdoor music. They are thinking that they may have 10 weddings a year, looking to hold corporate outings and training events with much lower number of attendees.

A. Francesco reminded the audience that this is a commercially zoned piece of property and the use is allowed.

P. Francesco asked about enforcement of their own rules.

The owners replied that they want to blend into the area, that it is a historic house with a particular character, that they will screen and have the correct event planners and be up front with clients as to their expectations and limitations of using the property for an event.

Mr. Jenkinson thanked them for their consideration of his concerns and hopes that his quality of life is not impacted by this project.

Molly Mathews, Squam Lakes Inn stated that they too have concerns with noise impact to their customers, that they limit their events to 10 pm and have concerns with noise during construction.

M. Drew inquired as to how much of existing vegetation along Shepard Hill Road will be removed. A. Sanders indicated existing tree lines and proposed tree lines on the plans.

K. Fuller asked if there would be any changes to the existing structures.

A. Sanders replied in the negative other than interior renovations to the carriage house.

V. West asked if the drainage design considered the removal of vegetation. A. Sanders replied in the affirmative by calculating the increase in impermeable surfaces.

M. Drew inquired about controls during construction.

A. Francesco replied that it is a compliance/enforcement issue. Noise or other obnoxious issues can be reported to the police or the compliance officer.

J. Bonan stated he will review the plans for the building for compliance with the state fire codes.

C. Foster stated her concerns about guests that are attending an event but not staying at the manor, where are they going to stay? Parking and the location of the building next to Shepard Hill Road concerns her.

A. Francesco hearing no other comments or questions from the public closed the hearing to public comment.

J. Cocchiaro inquired as to the lighting plan; will they be on timers? What about headlights from vehicles entering and exiting the parking areas?

A. Sanders stated that the lights will be down casting, no light upward, 14'/6' tall poles or granite posts. The parking lots are designed such that the cars will be facing inward when departing away from Shepard Hill Road.

C. Renzi asked if they could add more landscaping buffers.

A. Francesco asked about a fence.

H. Trull stated they would like to avoid a fence and use more natural buffers.

P. Francesco has concerns with the paved parking is it considered a structure in the zoning ordinance, if so then it is in violation being in the setback. Questioned the number of employees during an event. He would like to request input from the town's counsel on the structure question and would think a fence might be needed. Construction times is a temporary situation.

J. Jenkinson stated he would not like to see a fence along the property as it would impede his winter views.

C. Renzi asked if there is anywhere else they could put parking.

A. Sanders stated they are trying to locate near the manor and it would be more difficult if located elsewhere.

B. Nesheim stated his concerns with the parking sites closest to the property line.

A. Francesco hearing no other discussion from the members closed the public hearing.

A. Francesco inquired if there are no major events scheduled would the lower lot be available for public parking especially the Tuesday and Thursday events at the town gazebo?

The owners responded that they would be very open to allowing this for special events but not as ongoing public parking.

B. Nesheim inquires as to the status of existing septic systems on site, are there any constraints in replacing them if needed in the future?

A. Sanders stated that they are not aware of any issues or constraints, that they could replace in kind at existing locations.

C. Lehner stated this is a normal activity in a CD zone within the bounds of the ordinance.

P. Francesco stated this was a normal extension of the current business but he has concerns with the parking.

J. Cocchiaro stated that it was a beautiful proposal but feels conflicted on the impacts, understands that the owner want to use the property to its full capacity.

A. Francesco stated she is willing to grant the waiver on the parking from 94 to 71.

J. Cocchiaro asked if there was any place to park the overflow on site?

H. Trull stated that they did not want parking along the driveways as it is an important aesthetic concern.

B. Nesheim made a motion to grant a waiver on the parking requirements as requested.

J. Cocchiaro seconded the motion

Discussion: None

Motion passed 7 – Yes 0 - No

P. Francesco requests that the question as to a parking lot being a structure is referred to the town's counsel for clarification.

B. Nesheim made a motion to continue the hearing until the August meeting so that the structure question can be addressed, that the board can more thoroughly review the drainage report and the traffic analysis and other documents presented by the applicant.

R. Huntoon seconded the motion

Discussion: J. Cocchiaro would like to walk the property, asked if that was ok by the owners which was acceptable. A. Francesco reminded the board that if they were all to go as a quorum it would need to be noticed as a meeting so members should arrange individually with the owners to view the property.

Motion passed 7 – Yes 0 - No

A. Francesco closed the hearing and announced the application will be continued to August 15, 2023 with no further notification.

NEW BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEXT MEETING: August 15, 2023

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:40 PM, the following motion was made.

MOTION: "To adjourn."

Motion: B. Nesheim

Second: C. Lehner

Discussion: None

Motion Passed: 7–Yes 0– No

Respectfully submitted,

Lucinda Hannus
Land Use Assistant