

TOWN OF PLYMOUTH PLANNING COMMISSION
AND ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
JUNE 6, 2023
MINUTES

Acting chairperson, Anne Brown, called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Board members in attendance were Anne Brown, Bruce Pauley, Frank Vetere, Keith Cappellini, and Jay Kullman.

Audience member in attendance was John Murphy.

Bruce Pauley made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2023 minutes. Frank Vetere seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Anne stated the hearing tonight was to consider a Planned Unit Development (PUD) for Farm & Wilderness Foundation lands on Farm & Wilderness Road. Board member, Jay Kullman represented Farm & Wilderness Foundation. He stated he would recuse himself from deliberations after his presentation.

Jay stated Farm & Wilderness Foundation has been an established summer camp for 83 years. They are applying for a Planned Unit Development because they currently exceed the building foot print allowed per the zoning ordinance. For business reasons, they would like to expand their allowable building square footage to provide more employee housing, camp cabin capacity, and increase space for kitchen and dining use.

He explained that Farm & Wilderness operates under state Act 250 regulations regarding stormwater run-off, Public Safety, the Shoreland Protection Act, and the Forest Legacy Program for Conserved Lands.

He explained the Foundation currently owns 4800 acres, of which 3200 acres are Conserved land in the towns of Plymouth, Mt. Holly, Bridgewater, and Chelsea.

The Plymouth campus lot is 588 acres, with 440 acres in Conserved Land. The 148 acres of un-conserved acres are mostly in 3 parcels within the RD 2 and RD 5 zones. The Proximity of Woodward Reservoir and Farm & Wilderness Road present a challenge in meeting required zoning set-backs. The Conserved land is not suitable for building.

The Foundation has identified 4 separate areas of land in which the Planned Unit Development would enable them to meet the zoning regulations required by the town and increase their housing and activity capacity.

Area # 1 includes 3 lots at the north end of Farm & Wilderness Road, each with a 5,000 sq. ft building foot print allowed. They currently exceed the total allowable sq. ft capacity of 15,000 by about 72,000 sq. feet. Approval of a Planned Unit Development is a viable solution for their building needs. They would like to expand year- round staff housing by building an office / dormitory space, expand the Day Camp kitchen space and add centralized food storage capacity.

Their solar array field is in this area and provides 100,000 kilowatts of electricity for camp usage. Jay stated Vermont has the lowest vacancy rate in the nation for rental housing and was third highest last year in migration into the state.

Area # 2 in the Timberlake campus in zone RD 5, located on the east side of Farm & Wilderness Road. They would like to expand the dining hall and camp cabin capacity on this campus and possibly add an activity building.

Area # 3, located south along Farm & Wilderness Road beyond the Timberlake Campus is an alternate location for a dormitory to provide year- round housing for employees. It also can accommodate more seasonal and year- round cabins, possibly replace or add a 1000 to 1500 sq, ft. program building and expand the kitchen. The challenge for summer camps is remaining viable with only summer use and income. They would like to partner with schools to provided year- round use of the facilities and employees.

Area # 4, located primarily in zone RD 5 at the Fire Fly Song Campus, 282 South End Road. needs a new kitchen-dining building and cabins to meet increased capacity requirements. They would also like to replace the activity building with a larger one and include more staff space.

Keith Cappellini asked about their intended timeline regarding building. Jay responded that staff housing is a priority. Activity buildings are also a priority. The Planned Unit Development is for long term projects, but must meet expected timelines with regards to completing the proposed plan. It allows a 4 year time frame with options to extend completion beyond the 4 years. The ordinance does not limit the number of extensions. The time limit states substantial construction must occur within the time frame of 4 years, but does not give a definition of substantial construction.

Jay stated the first thing he would like is to get a permit for a temporary summer cabin that has been constructed, so they won't have to de-construct it.

Frank Vetere asked about the potential for short term rental of housing. Jay stated they can offer overnight housing for agencies and organizations that use their facility for meetings. He stated that while the PUD allows more dense use of available buildable land, all construction must still be permitted by zoning regulations. The Zoning administrator and Planning Commission would still have to approve all construction, as in the past. He also stated a big project, such as a dormitory could take 2 —3 years from conception and design to implementation.

Mr. Murphy, who owns property abutting Farm & Wilderness Foundation read a statement in support of the work the Foundation does and their contribution to the neighborhood along Farm & Wilderness Road, the Town of Plymouth, and the State of Vermont. His family have owned their camp since the late 1950's. He believes the Foundation should be allowed to continue to grow, as they are good stewards of the land. Anne Brown thanked Mr. Murphy for taking the time to speak to the board.

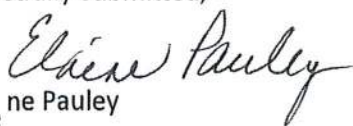
Keith Cappellini asked if there was an alternative to a Planned Unit Development. Jay replied that a sub division was the alternative.

The hearing ended at 7:40 P.M. Jay Kullman left the meeting.

After deliberations regarding the PUD application of Farm & Wilderness Foundation, Anne Brown stated the criteria of standards of the PUD application were met, as applicable.

Bruce Pauley made a motion to approve the application. Frank Vetere seconded the motion. All were in favor. Bruce Pauley made a motion to adjourn at 8:20 P.M. Keith Cappellini seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,


Elaine Pauley Pauley

Appendix B

