

# TOWN OF FITZWILLIAM

## PLANNING BOARD

### Minutes

June 7, 2022

**Planning Board Present:** Suzanne Gray, Chair; Paul Haynes, Vice Chair; Robin Peard Blais, Secretary; Barbara Young; Ed Goodell; Tom Rothermel; and Martin Nolan, Selectmen's Representative.

**Planning Board Absent:**

**Staff Present:** Lori Nolan, Land Use Coordinator.

**Guests Present:** Derek Bionelli; Stephen Longley-Martines (remote); David Tighe; Chelley Tighe; Kevin Tighe; Bob Evans; Roxanne Monteverde; SallySue Girolamo; Cyndie Martin; Linda Taylor; Kelly Weeks; Emily Cook; Joshua Brackett; Corinne Marcou; Kevin Love; Susan Love; Deborah White; Tom White; Bob McGonagle; Fallon Ball; John Kadlik; Julie Simpson; Christian Kadlik; Brenda Breen; Charles Troccia; Pamela Troccia; Tony Breen; Kevin Maguirk; Melissa Burbank; Kate Thomas; Ben Thomas; Nancy Stacy; Ron Heroux; Linda Migliozi; Ryan Morais; Mark Methé; Pam Methé; Eileen McHugh; Amanda McHugh; Susan Dmitrovsky; Seth Dmitrovsky; Dennis Berard; Claire Borowski; Cindy Knipe; Kevin Parker; Jeanie Sable; Roger Sable; Nancy Robie (remote); Courtney Kadlik (remote); Karen Craig (remote); Jamie Pouliot (remote); Mike Grab (remote); Jamie (remote); Gina Cranham (remote); Ann McEntee (remote); JEF Craig; Rik Ekstrom (remote); Susan Clickenbeard (remote); Robert Young (remote); Brad Steinka (remote); Marion Wheeler (remote); Charley Kenison (remote); Kathleen Stark (remote); Mary Ann Marion (remote); Christine Onges (remote); Jason (remote); Brooke Snowling; Devan Turnbull; Kerry O'Neill; Brandon O'Neill; Ken Beckwith; Carole Beckwith; Karl Martinson; Renee Martinson; Susan Massin; Christie Filipe; Koleen Marcotte; Ron Pastor; Angela Pastor; Ron Pastor, Jr; Chad Grouix; Sarah Petalas; Seth Petalas; Isaac Morse; Gary Taylor; Chip Baker; Emily Jengo; William Pine; Patricia Pine; Maureen O'Brien; Valerie Gill; Kevin Woolley; Pat Deyo; Luanne Deyo; Elizabeth McGonagle; Maureen Sutton; Dan Sutton; Susan Bemis; Carole Langer; Pam Casavant; Rebecca Lawrence; Cindy Woolley; Susan Silverman (remote); Terry Silverman (remote); Sheena Royce; Lindsay LaPage; and Sarah Short.

Chair Suzanne Gray called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, held roll call, and reviewed the meeting protocol/ground rules. She explained that the meeting was unable to be moved upstairs to the large meeting room due to technology limitations.

**Preliminary Consultation:** Derek Bionelli – Site Plan Review – To permit therapeutic horsemanship lessons at 479 NH Route 119 East. [Map 12, Lot 41-1, Rural District]

Gray welcomed Derek Bionelli to the meeting. Bionelli explained he would like to run horse lessons at his residence. He estimated 10-15 lessons per week would occur. The property has parking for 25 cars and would have no impact to the neighborhood. He is proposing a 4x4 foot sign, which would require a variance. The property would be used to train horses and provide therapeutic riding for able and disabled individuals. The organization, True Hope, will handle all the paperwork and sourcing of the riders. All the riding will be done on property. There will be no employees, outside of the property owners. Bionelli stated they have four horses currently but are looking to add another horse.

Ed Goodell asked who establishes the riding program. Bionelli explained he and his wife run the program. Certifications are needed to teach lessons. Some riders require more help due to disability levels but volunteers are used in those roles. Bionelli has given a couple of lessons as he felt this activity fell under agriculture. They are now temporarily operating in Walpole. The business hours are estimated to be 10am until dusk, including weekends. Due to the length of the sessions (2 hours including prep), he anticipates only a couple of lessons per day. There are handicap porta-potties on the backside of the barn, and water will be provided, but not food. The only lighting will be typical residential lighting on the barn. The sign will not be lighted.

The Planning Board felt this business qualified as a home business, which requires a Site Plan Review. A variance is required due to the sign size. Gray advised Bionelli to work with the LUC to complete the Site Plan Review and ZBA applications.

Bionelli then left the meeting.

**Preliminary Consultation:** Stephen Longley-Martines – Conditional Use Permit – To permit a rear porch within the WPOD at 76 Lakeside Drive (Woodbrook) [Map 42, Lot 2-77 – Rural District]

Gray welcomed Stephen Longley-Martines to the meeting via Zoom. Longley-Martines explained he had recently purchased an 800 square foot camp. He is proposing to fix the interior of the camp, create a screen room, and change the roofline. There is an existing 10x21 foot deck. He recently received approval from Woodbrook. The new roofline will be a multi-grid roof and a shed roof over the deck.

Gray commented that the entire lot is within the WPOD. Martin Nolan commented that this lot is about 6-8 feet above the road in elevation.

Gray advised Longley-Martines to meet with the Conservation Commission. He will also need to go to the ZBA due to the proximity to the wetland. Finally, he will need a Conditional Use Permit with the Planning Board because there are exterior changes to a structure within the WPOD. Gray stated that Longley-Martines can go through the Conditional Use and Variance cases in conjunction. She advised him to work with the LUC to complete the applications. She explained that site walks are usually requested.

Paul Haynes explained that the roof structure is of interest to the Planning Board because of water shedding. Longley-Martines commented that the property is all ledge, a giant boulder. Gray explained they are concerned about run-off entering the pond to protect the waterbody.

Longley-Martines then left the meeting.

**Preliminary Consultation:** Magnolia Holdings LLC – Site Plan Review – To permit a 10-guest sober retreat at 62 NH Route 119 West. [Map 32, Lot 26 – Village Center Business District]

Gray welcomed the property owners, the Tighe's (David, Chelley, and Kevin), and program manager, Bob Evans, to the meeting. C. Tighe began her presentation explaining that the proposed business will not be a sober house or a homeless shelter. They are proposing a 12-step Alcohol Anonymous retreat. It will be a 30-day program for those who are already sober. They will be guests and will be thoroughly vetted for the retreat. It will be for individuals who want to immerse in the AA program using a retreat model. The Inn will provide all meals. The guests will have no cars but will be taken on excursions, which will be led by Inn staff. They will re-open the pizza shop and coffee bar. C. Tighe felt this business will have a two prong benefit – to provide wood fired pizza and preserve the Inn to the citizens but also allowing the guests work experience. The pizza/coffee shop will make no profit. It will be a donation/pay-it-forward based shop with all proceeds going to Town organizations to benefit the Town. C. Tighe explained her son, Kevin Tighe, struggled with addiction so they are aware of the kind of places available after he was in 10 different places. C. Tighe then read the Mission Statement (enclosed).

M. Nolan stated that no alcohol or drugs will be allowed. He asked about smoking. C. Tighe explained that smoking will only be allowed in the covered area in the back parking lot.

Bob Evans, program manager, presented stating that this will not be a shelter, detox, or rehab facility. He then gave his background. To be able to attend this retreat, you must be sober for 60-90 days. Evans will be on site teaching the program five days a week. He will stay every other weekend as well. They have a 6am to 11pm curriculum. The coffee shop will provide interaction with the guys in the program.

Goodell asked how many rooms will be used and what staff is anticipated. C. Tighe stated there are 10 rooms for 10 people. The back part of the Inn has two apartments, which will be available for individuals to stay at the Inn (transient guests, family of program guests, etc). She also stated that staff will be on-site 24/7 and will stay on the floor at night time.

Tom Rothermel asked if the donation based business is just for the coffee and pizza portion. C. Tighe confirmed it is just for pizza and coffee. The guests will pay out of pocket. No insurance or social services will be involved. Evans commented that medical assisted treatment is not allowed at this program. Medical and psychological tests will be done prior to arrival.

Barbara Young asked who will run the coffee and pizza shop. C. Tighe stated that it will be a group effort. K. Tighe will do the pizzas, like in the past, and she will do the coffee. They might need to hire someone. They will also have a chef who will prepare all the meals for the guests.

C. Tighe stated they are only considering male gender. Maybe down the road they could consider allowing women, but at this time, they are only allowing men to stay.

Rothermel asked when they are looking to open. C. Tighe stated as soon as possible.

Susan Curtin asked the professional background of the leaders. Evans explained that everyone has gone through recovery. Staff will be qualified and have gone through the program.

Susan Love asked if this is restricted just to alcoholics or does it include others. C. Tighe stated it is for anyone with addiction. It will be mostly alcoholics but could be others. S. Love asked if this has been endorsed or sponsored by AA or if the program just relies on their material. Evans explained that it is AA as long as you use their literature. AA does not endorse any program.

Carole Beckwith commented that the Inn space is very limiting to guests. She was interested in hearing about treating addiction in a rural environment as her research indicated it may not be a successful environment. C. Tighe explained the property features a yard in the back with picnic tables and a fire pit. Hiking, cultural and community events, and volunteering will occupy their free time. Guests will be occupied but not locked in.

Linda Migliozi asked who does the background checks. Evans stated the facility the guest is leaving will conduct the background checks. C. Tighe commented that guests coming will be no less safe than any of her neighbors.

Lindsey LaPage asked what facility the guests are coming from. Evans stated they first complete a medical detox, then go to CSS/TSS. Each guest will be at least 60-90 days sober. LaPage asked why there will be 24/7 staff. She had concerns about the strain on town resources (fire, police). C. Tighe explained it is normal to have round-the-clock staff at retreats. Evans confirmed that each guest will have been medically released.

Carl Martinson came to hear the facts. He had concerns about dependencies and asked if the guests have jobs. He explained that he doesn't know what this treatment system is and who will be coming to this place. This is a repurpose and not reinvigorating the Inn. It is a historic landmark. He did not have concerns that the guests will break into his house, but 85% of home invasions are by people with substance abuse issues. Gray stated this is private property with a business proposal. C. Tighe explained those statistics represent people who are still active in their addiction. It is a different population. She understands that everyone loves the Inn. But it has been for sale for three years and only received one offer to lease. She waited to present this proposal after there was a lot of interest to buy the Inn at the recent community forum.

Rebecca Lawrence asked what the protocol is when someone relapses. Evans stated that the guest gets released. They are sent back to where they came from. Lawrence asked what happens to the approvals/permits if the property is sold or the owners retire. Gray stated that typically new owners come through the process again.

Susan Dimotrosky asked if drug testing will be done and if this will be a non-profit business to avoid taxes. K. Tighe stated drug testing will be conducted twice a week. C. Tighe confirmed the business will not be a non-profit 501(c)3.

Kevin Love asked if the track records of similar facilities could be provided. Evans agreed to provide the requested information.

Brooke Snowling commented that people going to the Inn will want to be there. Most addicts are poly substance use. Many in the room know someone who is an addict. There is a lot of fear and stigma. But the best way to be successful in recovery is from people who have gone through it.

Gina Cranham asked why the Town cannot purchase the Inn. M. Nolan explained that it has not been brought up to the Board of Selectmen since he has been a Selectman. If there is enough interest, a petition or warrant can be sent to the Town floor at Annual Town Meeting. But he felt there is a lot more that goes into it than most know. He is not sure if he, as a private citizen, would support that proposal. The Inn and restaurant are ideal to him but if it can't make it as that, then the owners need to look into other options. He felt this proposal keeps the character of the Inn intact. The guests will be well supervised, helped along the way, and encourage to volunteer. He does not see the Selectmen taking an active role with this property.

Susan Massin has complete empathy and has had experience with addiction. But detours and setbacks happen. She believes in treatment but did not feel this town could handle this sort of facility as it is normal for there to be weekly EMS calls to sober facilities and they are typically accompanied by the police. She felt this required a change-in-use and a Site Plan Review. This could be the most important application in Town. C. Tighe stated that only 10 people will be attending the retreat.

SallySue Girolamo lives three doors down from the Inn. She commented if this business opens, it will no longer be the Inn. She felt they should not be able to have the sign advertising it as an inn. Her realtor sold her on the Common, the historic character, and the Inn. She had concerns about resale value. She is a year-round resident, unlike the owners. She was sold as Fitzwilliam being a "Hallmark" town and this proposal is not consistent with that.

Josh Brackett asked about emergency services. Is 30-60 days clean long enough? The town cannot handle those level of calls. He did not feel this is good for the Town. K. Tighe commented that he has been an addict since he was 12. He addressed the stigma. Some do not have the support system like he does. He suffered in silence, even with an amazing support system.

Koleen Marcotte asked how guests are chosen. Evans explained that it starts in detox, then a transitional program, and then guests as private pay. K. Tighe explained that priority is given to community members. They will also have a scholarship program.

**Rothermel motioned to categorize this use as a “Motel/Hotel/Inn”, which requires a Special Exception from the ZBA pursuant Chapter 127-11, at 62 NH Route 12 West. [Map 32, Lot 26 – Village Center Business District]. Robin Peard Blais seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

Yes: 7 [Gray; Haynes; Peard Blais; Young; Goodell; Rothermel; M. Nolan]; No: 0; Abstained: 0

Gray advised the Tighe’s that they will need to obtain a Special Exception from the ZBA and go through Site Plan Review by the Planning Board.

At this time, everyone in attendance except the Planning Board and Karen Craig left the meeting.

### **Minutes Review**

**Haynes motioned to approve the site walk notes of April 16, 2022 as written. Gray seconded. Motion passed.**

Yes: 7 [Gray; Haynes; Peard Blais; Young; Goodell; Rothermel; M. Nolan]; No: 0; Abstained: 0

After a brief discussion and several minor edits, **Haynes motioned to approve the minutes of May 17, 2022 as amended. Young seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

Yes: 7 [Gray; Haynes; Peard Blais; Young; Goodell; Rothermel; M. Nolan]; No: 0; Abstained: 0

### **Announcements/Communications**

Land Use Logs: The LUC explained the land use logs, which outline all land use cases and construction permit applications filed.

Third Party Hydrologist: Gray updated the Planning Board that Matt Lundsted of CEI has submitted a proposal as a third party hydrologist for Case 22-01 (John Hunt). The LUC will speak with Carol Ogilvie for advice on protocol. Young would like the applicant to approve the cost of the hydrologist in writing. Gray confirmed that if the applicant denies payment or rejects third party review, the application dies. The Planning Board felt that the proposal covered everything requested. Rothermel asked if the additional culvert was included. Gray stated it was not because it is not part of the application, but part of the project. It is not on the plan and not in front of the Planning Board. Young commented that the agent has been accommodating to what the Planning Board has needed. M. Nolan commented that if the Planning Board does not do anything, it would be considered acceptance. Gray cut off discussion because the applicant was not in attendance, but she agreed that the application should be amended.

**Gray motioned to hire Matt Lundsted, of CEI, as the third party hydrologist for Case # 22-01 (John Hunt). Haynes seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

Yes: 7 [Gray; Haynes; Peard Blais; Young; Goodell; Rothermel; M. Nolan]; No: 0; Abstained: 0

Public Comment: Karen Craig sent a question via “Chat” asking to consider the Permitted Uses. She did not feel the Tighe’s proposal could be categorized as a “Hotel/Motel/Inn”. Gray did not allow discussion as the applicants were no longer in attendance.

With no further items to discuss, **Gray motioned to adjourn. Haynes seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

Yes: 7 [Gray; Haynes; Peard Blais; Young; Goodell; Rothermel; M. Nolan]; No: 0; Abstained: 0

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lori Nolan  
Land Use Coordinator

**Minutes approved as amended on June 21, 2022.**