

TOWN OF COLEBROOK

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

Monday October 23rd, 2023 - 6:30pm Special Meeting

Colebrook Consolidated School – Public Hearing 7:00pm

Regular Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order

Chairman, Martha Neal called the October 23rd, 2023, Special Meeting of the Colebrook Planning and Zoning Commission to order at 6:34pm.

Agenda Item 2: Roll Call

Regular Members of the Commission present: Martha Neal, Kevin Robichaud, Jennifer LaRocque, William Sweeney, Todd Correll

Regular Member Absent:

Alternate Members Present: Duncan McClave, David Goulet

Alternate Member Absent: John Fernandez

ZEO: Alan Drapach

Also present for the public hearing:

Todd Parsons

Haley Ward

John and Deb Auclair

Chris and Diane Johnstone

Scott Patterson

Aden and Linda Ruwet

AJ and Heather Ruwet

David & Beth Kelley

Paul LaRocque

Kate Kennedy

Penny White

Steve Resnick

Ben and Laura Bartlett

Kim and Karl Janak

Chris and Becky Roy

Teddy Bremer
Randy Auclair
Jeanne Jones
Brad Bremmer
Les Bluestone
Sarah Bluestone
Jon Gray
Karen Odell

Agenda Item 3: Agenda Review

Agenda items 5-9 will be discussed prior to item 4d, if time permits, prior to 7pm.

Agenda Item 4: Old Business

a. **Aton Forrest Letter**

Neutral position letter completed.

b. **D. Lill, D. Wilbur land conveyance letter**

Approved

c. **Site Plan, P. Winans, Colebrook River Road**

Approved

Agenda Item 5: New Business

None

Agenda Item 6: Bills and Correspondence

None

Agenda Item 7: ZEO Report

Three zoning permit requests were submitted. All three applications met regulations and were approved.

Agenda Item 8: Approval of Meeting Minutes, September 11th, 2023

No changes

Will Sweeney moved to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 11th, 2023. Duncan McClave (seated for September 11th, 2023, meeting) seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously accepted.

Agenda Item 9: Other Business Legal and Proper

None

At 6:39pm Jennifer LaRocque made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting until the public hearing at 7pm. Will Sweeney seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously accepted.

Agenda Item 4: Old Business

d. Special Exception #23-003, Norbrook Farm Brewery Application – Public Hearing

At 7:00pm Martha Neal called the public hearing to order.

Roll Call was taken again, with no changes.

Will Sweeney recused himself from the public hearing.

Jennifer LaRocque made a motion to seat Duncan McClave in place of William Sweeney. Kevin Robichaud seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously accepted.

Karen Odell is the timer for public comments.

Legal notice read by Martha Neal.

Todd Parsons presented application #23-003.

Martha Neal stated the application has Inland and Wetlands approval, State of Connecticut approval, and Farmington Valley Health District approval.

Martha Neal read letters from Ken Andresen, Cassie Sheffield, and George Neal.

Ken Andresen: Opposes the proposal. Says it is in a residential zone and feels it is a violation of the promise to the homeowners nearby that things would remain residential. By allowing this expansion, it violates that trust.

Cassie Sheffield: Supports proposal. The addition makes sense to support the already approved growth that is in progress. The community is fortunate to have this special space in town. By

showing continued support there is the opportunity to share with others and remain constant with the vision of the business.

George Neal: Supports proposal. Says the facility has provided a wonderful meeting place and recreation for Colebrook residents and thinks a place for special events will be a plus for the town.

7:15pm meeting was opened to questions and comments from the public. Public comments are limited to three minutes for each person.

Scott Patterson: Concerned about increased seating, expansion overall, outdoor events, outdoor music until 10pm, additional food trucks, noise control, and traffic control.

Chris Roy: Property abuts Norbrook Farm Brewery. Believes planes overhead make more noise. Supports proposal, increases people into town, believes it is a good thing for the town.

Kim Janek: Likes small town and dynamics of town, not in favor of expansion. Concerned about expansion in residential area, lighting affecting bird migration, traffic, DJs, and 10pm closing time. Wants a happy medium. Feels they have overall done a good job.

AJ Ruwet: Supports proposal, feels traffic on Rt 182 is no different during the week vs weekends, and believes it is putting Colebrook on the map as a destination, for weddings, bike races, 5K races, and Harvest Host.

Becky Roy: Supports proposal. Says that there is no noise from the brewery, instead they hear noise from Maser Park. Only hear mountain bikers having fun on the trails. You take the good with the bad. States her life has not been impeded by the brewery.

After no further public comments, the Planning and Zoning Commission members started the question portion of the meeting.

Kevin Robichaud: The application is asking for music until 10pm at the pavilion, will that also be 10pm for the already approved music at the brewery. Answer: No

Martha Neal asked for clarification in the application of 4 musicians or 1 DJ. Answer: Pavilion will adhere to the same condition of 4 musicians or 1 DJ.

Martha Neal: Tasting room hours are until 9pm. Will brewery patrons be allowed to move to the pavilion and stay until 10pm. Answer: Anticipate special events will operate in the pavilion until 10pm. It is not the intent that it will be the overflow of patrons just using the brewery. Normal brewery operations will end by 9pm.

Martha Neal: If there are no events taking place in the pavilion will normal operations end at 9pm? Answer: Yes

Jennifer LaRocque: What are your planned months of operation for the pavilion? Answer: Planned months of operation are May – October, but if weather permits, there could be events outside of those months.

Jennifer LaRocque: Are there plans to bring in temporary heating for events? Answer: Yes

Martha Neal: What type of temporary heating would be brought in? Answer: Tent heaters.

John Fernandez: Is it your intent to book as many events as you possibly can within the guidelines, if so, does this potentially lead to multiple events in a given day? Answer: Possibly yes.

John Fernandez: We assume that they will remain good stewards but as this scale of operation is new to us, how do they intend to maintain control? Martha Neal: I'm assuming there has to be something like somebody on site or something that would make sure everything was closed down at 10pm and the music in general was at acceptable levels. Answer: There will be somebody manning the facility, just as there is now. Somebody will have to be there when 10pm comes, to start closing up.

Jennifer LaRocque: Will you be lighting the new parking lot area when not in use and you don't have any events? Answer: Probably not the parking lot. Jennifer LaRocque: So, you will have the ability to turn those lights off independently? Answer: Yes.

Jennifer LaRocque: What is the warming kitchen specifically? What is that going to entail? Answer: So the warming kitchen isn't really for cooking, it's just if there is a catered event it will allow them to have a place to store food temporarily while getting it prepared to serve and bring out. It is more of a holding place than a cooking place.

Martha Neal: The warming kitchen won't have stove tops or ovens or equipment like that? Answer: I'm sure there will be some type of thing that will keep the food warm and cold. Ovens, refrigerators, ice maker. It will not be a commercial kitchen for cooking.

Martha Neal asked if there will be barriers between the pavilion area and the parking spots? Answer: Barriers can be installed.

Martha Neal asked if an AED would be on site? Answer: There is one already on order.

Martha Neal: Four food trucks, if there is not a special event, not something going on in the pavilion, will you still want four food trucks up there, or is that only for the special events? Answer: No, only for special events.

Jennifer LaRocque: I just want to clarify operating hours. Your plan is, if there isn't an event going on, 9pm will be the normal closing time. 10pm will only be for a special event at the pavilion, but not the main portion of the brewery? Answer: 10pm will be only for the pavilion.

Aden Ruwet feels larger bands should be allowed.

Beth Kelly asked if 10pm means 10pm? Answer: Believes that is controllable.

Chris Roy commented about the previous owner having hunting groups and the noise was much worse then.

Scott Patterson asked if anyone has mentioned car noise or the need for security. Martha Neal: No complaints have come to us as a commission.

Scott Patterson: Asked who is in charge? Martha Neal: Property owners are in charge of their property.

Steve Resnick asked if any further development is planned. Answer: Not at this time, no.

Sarah Bluestone asked what the size of the crowd is when events are held. Answer 75 participants for mountain biking and disc golf events.

Martha Neal discussed options. Public hearing can be closed and there can be no more information taken by the commission. We can continue the public hearing for another few days to a week, depending on our availability, in which case there would be additional opportunity to speak or ask questions. Given that nobody is asking anymore questions, and that we have had very little communication, I would think that we might close the public hearing tonight.

Kim Janak: I would suggest that we keep the public hearing open because there were other people who did not know about it, so other citizens can voice their concerns as well.

Duncan McClave made a motion to close the public hearing at 7:49pm. Kevin Robichaud seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously accepted.

Town noise ordinance was discussed.

Conditions were discussed.

Jennifer LaRocque made a motion to continue the hearing until Monday November 6th at 6:30pm. Todd Correll seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously accepted.

Agenda Item 10: Adjourn

Jennifer LaRocque made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:15pm. Kevin Robichaud seconded the motion; the motion was unanimously accepted.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer LaRocque". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer LaRocque