

**Town of Whitingham**

**Zoning Board of Adjustment**

**Planning Commission**

**MINUTES OF MAY 30, 2018 JOINT PUBLIC HEARING**

**Attendees**:

ZBA members: Chair David Dumaine, Marshall Dix, Craig Aekus, Lyman Tefft, Scott Reed, and Troy Felisko.

PC members: Chair Brad Lackey, Phil Edelstein and Peter Barus

Zoning Administrator: Gig Zboray.

Applicants: Laura Dinwiddie and Joshua Perry.

Others: Franklyn Dailey, Patricia Dailey, Lydia Petty

At 7:00pm David Dumaine opened the hearing by reading the legal warning.

**Application overview**: Laura Dinwiddie, 291 Kentfield Road, is requesting a waiver to allow an accessory structure for use by farm workers, a waiver for setback of a high tunnel, added use of agriculture. The applicant also has plans to sell farm products and teach farming workshops on the property in the future.

After introductions were made around the room, Joshua Perry explained their plans for the property. They received a grant from the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to build a high tunnel. Due to ledge and a stream there is a limited area to install the structure. The NRCS oversees the property including the proposed location of the structure, number of trees that can be cut, the conservation of the stream that runs through the property, etc. Gig Zboray noted that she drove by the property and the proposed location of the structure does not appear to hinder sightlines of traffic traveling on Kentfield Road.

Along with building the high tunnel they would like to build a 250 square foot structure to house 1 or 2 farm interns. Because this is a different use than intended by the “accessory structure” allowed in the Zoning Regulation they felt it important to get approval for that use. They have spoken with the state and have hired an engineering firm to upgrade their septic system to include capacity for this proposed building. Gig noted that a separate zoning application would need to be applied for in order to build this structure.

They have plans in the future to sell farm products at a farm stand (probably just a table with an umbrella) and they hope to host farming workshops/classes for approximately 10 people at a time.

The neighbors present asked several questions. Mr. Dailey was curious if the interns would have some sort of contract or lease. Mr. Perry explained that most likely the interns would be short term stays – for a season or so. This sort of housing arrangement is common in farming situations. The interns would not be itinerant workers but interns hoping to learn about farming and willing to work/learn for some pay and housing. Mr. Dailey also asked if the property had been surveyed. Mr. Perry answered that it was surveyed before they purchased it and he is familiar with all the property line markers. Ms. Petty noted that she is thankful that they are bringing new life to the property.

Craig Aekus asked if the neighbors had any issues with their plans. Mr. Dailey was concerned about more people coming into the neighborhood because his property had been broken into in the past. It was noted that the Dinwiddies are live-in neighbors working outside and it would probably protect Mr. Dailey’s property more than if purchased by a second home-owner. Mr. Dailey was also concerned about parking. Mr. Perry feels that there is plenty of parking on his property, he was not aware that parking on the side of the street was an issue.

**Site Plan Review by the Planning Commission**

Although a quorum of Planning Commissioners attended the hearing Brad Lackey had to recuse himself due to conflict of interest. The site plan review which will look at parking, lighting and traffic safety for the proposed uses (farm stand and classes) will be conducted at a later date.

Mr. Dumaine closed the hearing at 7:45pm and the ZBA conducted their deliberation.

**Craig Aekus made a motion to approve the setback for the high tunnel, the construction of an accessory structure to house interns/workers and the added use of agriculture (including farm stand and classes) to the property, seconded by Marshall Dix, all in favor.**

**Craig Aekus made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Lyman Tefft, all in favor.**

Mr. Dumaine adjourned the meeting at 7:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

~*Gig Zboray,*

Zoning Administrator