Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Swanzey Planning Board
Meeting Minutes – February 13, 2025
Whitcomb Hall, Main Street, Swanzey, NH

Note: Draft Minutes are subject to review, correction and approval by the Board. Review and approval of Minutes generally takes place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

CALL TO ORDER:
The meeting of the Swanzey Planning Board was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Chair Scott Self. The meeting was held at Whitcomb Hall and via Zoom software for the public. Members present: Scott Self, Mark Scalera, Richard Lane, Victoria Ames, Brandon Self, Michael York, alternate Jane Johnson. Also present was Town Planner Adam Paquette. The Chair called the roll and read the agenda for the evening. A quorum was present.

Absent:
Alternate Michael Scungio, Alternate Steve Malone, Selectman Rep. Charlie Harbeck

Others Present:
Chad Branon with Fieldstone, Mark Beaudry with CivilWorks, Stephen and Lonnie Giordano, Selectman Jimmy Tempesta

MINUTES:
- York proposes a correction to the meeting minutes of January 23, 2025 to move his name from "absent" to "members present".
- The meeting Minutes of January 23, 2025 were considered. **Motion** was made by **Scalera** to approve the meeting minutes of January 23, 2025. There was a second by **Ames.** All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

REGIONAL IMPACT:
- A motion was made by **York** that there was no regional impact. There was a second by **B. Self.** All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

APPLICATIONS AND PUBLIC HEARING(S), Chad Branon:

PB 25-001 – Site Plan Review: Fieldstone Land Consultants has submitted, on behalf of Pilgrim Pines Camp, an application for the construction of a bath house and associated site improvements at 220 West Shore Road. The subject property is shown at Tax Map 242, Lots 10 & 12 and located in the Rural/Agricultural District.

- Chad Branon goes through application checklist to check for completeness.
- **WAIVER:** Physical features and uses of land within 200' of site. Bath house is centrally located on a large property.
- The Board finds the application to be complete.
- The Board finds that granting the waivers **will not** have any adverse impact. **Motion** by **York** to grant waiver, second by **B. Self.** All in favor. ***Motion passed.***

- **Motion** by **Scalera** that checklist is complete. Second by **B. Self. All in favor.** ***Motion passed.***
- **Public hearing opens** with Branon discussing the details of the site including acreage, layout, road configuration, and building configuration.
- The structure would be 752 square feet and include three parking spaces.
- The applicant is doing some modest grading around the site.
- There is onsite septic and water.
- This would be a seasonal bath house.
- The septic system runs along the east side of the camp access road, they would by tying into that line.
- No state permits are required for this project.
- Branon states that because of the nature of the project, the bath house will not be constructed right away. The camp needs to fundraise prior to construction.
- Branon asks the board to consider extending the approval for up to 5 years, instead of the typical 1 year.
- Self explains that the Board may waive parts of the site plan review regulations on a case-by-case basis. Self says he is in support of a 5-year extension.
- Lane asks if we can compromise for a 3-year extension, Self disagrees.
- Ames states she agrees with Self; a 5-year extension is acceptable.
- **Motion** by **Ames** to waive the portion of site plan review regulations that regulate approval length (Section VII.6.c), second by **B. Self.** At the end of 5 years, it is expected that construction is complete. All in favor. ***Motion passed.***
- Motion by **York** to grant approval for a 5-year period. Second by **Scalera**. All in favor. ***Motion passed***.

Discussions and Other Business:

Chad Branon – Fieldstone Land Consultants: Site plan extension for 115 Old Homestead Hwy

- Lane recuses himself from the discussion.
- Branon states that they are within regulations to request an extension, and they have good cause.
- The funding cycle was missed due to timeframe issues so the client will need to resubmit for said funding, thus the extension.
- The property has been purchased and the client is ready to go pending funding.
- Branon explains the funding cycle and why the client is facing issues.
- The Board and Branon discuss the approval dates and issues that came up with the parking space reduction.
- Self explains the applicant is within their right to ask for the extension
- **Motion** by **York** to grant extension, Second by **Self.** 4 members in favor, 1 against. ***Motion passed.***

Chad Branon – Fieldstone Land Consultants: Site plan extension for Map 209 LOT 4

- Branon is not sure if an extension is required due to site work that has been done, but is asking to be sure.
- **Motion** by **Lane** to grant extension, Second by **B. Self.** All in favor, ***Motion Passed.***

APPLICATIONS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS CONTINUED, Mark Beaudry:

PB 25-002 – Site Plan Review: Black Belt LLC has submitted an application for the construction of a drive-through restaurant facility at the southern corner of Marcy Hill Road and Route 12. The subject property is shown at Tax Map 220, Lot 5 and located in the Business District.

- Mark Beaudry goes through the application checklist to ensure completeness.
- Beaudry states that elevation plans have been amended to show height and measurement of all sides.
- **Scalera** makes a **motion** that the application is complete, second by **B. Self.** No further discussion. All in favor. ***Motion passed.***
- **Public hearing opens** with Beaudry stating that the property is comprised of 15.3 acres. The plan set includes a conceptual subdivision.
- Beaudry states that the owners do not have any tenants lined up to occupy the structure yet.
- Beaudry reminds the board that at the informational meeting in November, it was suggested that the driveways be placed off Marcy Hill Road.
- Beaudry goes over the layout of the driveways, drive-through area, and how that relates to the parking lot.
- Beaudry states that 26 seats were originally considered, with an occupant load of 30 people. Parking spaces exceed the requirement as required by the Zoning Ordinance.
- Beaudry explains they are seeking a special exception for a drive-through facility and a variance for the leech field.
- The drive-through lane meets stacking requirements from the Zoning Ordinance.
- Beaudry states that stormwater requirements are being met.
- There is an above ground propane tank. No underground tanks are proposed.
- Beaudry states that lot calculations will be provided if the subdivision goes forward.
- Beaudry starts to go over driveway location possibilities and presents a new layout to the Board.
- NH DOT supports the conceptual design of the driveways, **although it has not been formally submitted to the Planning Board.**
- With the new driveway design, the number of parking spaces is still exceeding Ordinance requirements.
- Scalera asks what the reason is for two inbound lanes. Beaudry says it's because one is solely for the drive-through. This design should eliminate people wanting to go into the restaurant from getting stuck in the drive-through lane.
- York asks if a traffic study has been done. Beaudry answers that one has not been done because the number of trips per day wouldn't have much of an effect on traffic.
- Lane asks about the conceptual subdivision and if that has been executed. Beaudry explains that it has not been submitted yet.
- Scalera asks about snow storage location. Beaudry states that a snow storage area can be located on the south side of the property or trucked off site.
- Scalera asks where the salt/sand are going to be running off, and Beaudry proceeds to show the grading & drainage plan.
- Scalera asks about access to Route 12 and if cars waiting to make a left turn will be holding up drive-through traffic.

- Ames states that she is uncomfortable proceeding with this plan until an updated plan is obtained and until the Board meets with the Conservation Commission.
- Beaudry responds to concerns that Conservation Commission has by going over the history of the site. He explains that the Wetlands Board in 1987 approved the fill that was placed as it was, with a condition that banks were stabilized and no additional fill occurred. The Army Corps of Engineers approved the filling as it was and did not require an additional application process. Beaudry says that in the span of about 40 years, the fill remained in place due to the state and Army Corps of Engineers' decision.
- Ames asks about the hydrology report that was done per Conservation Commission comments. Beaudry talks more about the sites hydrology and states that they are not proposing anything in the area that is most wet.
- Self and Beaudry discuss culverts and flow directions. Essentially, everything flows onto this property.
- Swanzey Citizen Jill Stubbs asks where the proposed driveway is in relation to the hill. Stubbs talks about conditions on the hill and how it is not plowed well, which could cause issues. Beaudry addresses the concerns by saying there is 300 feet of flat surface prior to the driveway.
- Swanzey Citizen Frank Proulx states that the amount of traffic coming in and out would cause traffic issues.
- Selectman Jimmy Tempesta asks to clarify the drive-through stacking lane. Beaudry answers that they are meeting the requirements. Tempesta also asks about the store hours. Beaudry states that the owners do not have a tenant, so no hours are proposed. Tempesta follows up with what happens if the stacking lane backs up to Marcy Hill Road, and if there is a plan in place if that happens. Beaudry answers that this will be addressed at ZBA, and states that the drive-through follows Ordinance requirements.
- Self reaffirms that the applicant is meeting ordinance requirements.
- Frank Proulx explains that the only issue of the residents is the traffic along the road.
- Swaney Citizen Linda Proulx re-affirms traffic issues in the neighborhood.
- Swaney Citizen Jeffrey Driscol explains that getting in and out of Marcy Hill Road is a nightmare, and the project will make traffic worse.
- Self states that NH DOT will still be reviewing the plan.
- Swanzey Citizen Ella Driscol asks about traffic patterns and asks that a traffic study is done for Marcy Hill Road. She states that we are sparing Route 12 the traffic and putting it on the neighborhood to sustain the traffic.
- York explains that a light can go along NH Route 12 after the Selectman request it. Beaudry explains that you must meet traffic warrants to meet requirements for a light.
- Scalera says that locals might be driving through the parking lot to access route 12. NH DOT feels the same.
- Jeffrey Driscol re-iterates the property is wetlands and says he sees turtles regularly.
- Swanzey Citizen Allan Givets reiterates the traffic issues along Marcy Hill Road. He states that they are not trying to fight a business going onto the property, but there are legitimate concerns for traffic on the hill. He states that traffic will go out to Marcy Hill more often than the applicant thinks.
- Frank Proulx asks where the tractor trailers and large trucks will park. York understands the traffic concerns and states what we do and don't have ordinances for.

- Lane asks about the loading and unloading area. Beaudry explains that there is space within the submitted site plan for loading/offloading.
- Lane asks that we don't proceed any further until we have an updated site plan showing circulation patterns.
- Self explains that we may need a traffic study. The applicant also needs to update the drawings. Lane wants to see the snow storage area on the site plan. Self asks about a potential slip lane along Marcy Hill Road. Jill Stubbs asks about direction of this potential slip lane, and self says it would only be on the applicants property.
- Stubbs reiterates the need for a traffic study, and Beaudry explains that the site plan was made with peak trip generation in mind. Self explains that a traffic study and trip generation are different. Stubbs would like to see a study done in the summer months.
- Tempesta wants to stress the slip lane along Marcy Hill Road to alleviate traffic issues. He says it's reasonable to consider long lines at the drive-through restaurant. Beaudry reiterates that the plan meets ordinance requirements.
- Ames wants to nail down opening hours and how it relates to trips-per-hour. York says you can't always work within averages, and states there is more in the morning and afternoon. Jill Stubbs says that a slip lane isn't necessarily going to alleviate the traffic, and most cars will be coming off NH Route 12.
- Stephen Giordano asks why the Town didn't address the wetlands concerns during the time the Town owned the property. Giordano says a slip lane will be much more effort than anticipated. He says he's been taking the advice of all parties involved and wants to come to a consensus with everyone to make the business work.
- Scalera wants to continue the meeting past the ZBA meeting.
- **The board unanimously asks for the following items to be addressed:**
    - **Traffic Study**
    - **Show the snow storage area on amended plans**
    - **Trash vents/screening**
    - **Exit onto Route 12 on amended plans and approved by NH DOT**
    - **Consider a slip lane along Marcy Hill Road**
- Beaudry and Self talk about driveway locations.
- **Motion** made by **York** to **continue the public hearing** until the 27th, Second by **B. Self.** All in favor. ***Motion passed.***

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by **B. Self.** There was a second to the motion by **York** with no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.*** Adjournment occurred at 8:12 p.m.

Next Meeting: February 27, 2025

Respectfully Submitted,
Adam Paquette, Town Planner