

Town of Northumberland
Public Hearing
May 13, 2021

Supervisor Willard Peck called the Public Hearing to order @ 7:00 PM. Those attending included Supervisor Willard Peck; Councilman Paul Bolesh; Councilman John DeLisle and Councilwoman Patricia Bryant. Also attending was Clerk Denise Murphy; Town Attorney David Brennan and Building Zoning Administrator Richard Colozza.

Supervisor Willard Peck stated that the Public Hearing was regarding a proposed Local Law entitle "A Local Law Amending the Town of Northumberland Zoning Ordinance to Establish a Planned Unit Development District for Stonebridge Farm". Supervisor Peck stated that the proposed Local Law amends the Zoning Ordinance and Map to create a Planned Unit Development District (PUDD) for Stonebridge Farm which is located at 125 Sherman Lane. The purpose of the zoning change is to allow Stonebridge Farm to utilize portions of the property for a commercial use consisting of an Agricultural Event Venue, Commercial Kitchen and Parking for events such as weddings, retreats, seminars, bridal/baby showers, family reunions and similar large gatherings. Daniel Farnan, Project Engineer with Colliers Engineering gave an overview of the project. The PUDD would enable commercial uses on 14.21 acres and the remaining 72.07 acres would remain agricultural. The PUDD would have allowable uses within the Commercial Use area which would include Agricultural Event Venue; catering kitchen, parking and any allowable uses in the Agricultural Use area. Currently, Stonebridge Farm obtains a "Special Use" Permit for any event at the Farm. The Building and Zoning Administrator Richard Colozza suggested a PUDD which would allow a mix of Agricultural/Business/Commercial Uses. Mr. Farnan provided a map which reflected the Agricultural Uses (in Blue); Commercial Use (in Yellow) and Dual Use (In Green). The Green area is the paddocks and would only be used for a large event that required more parking. Mr. Farnan stated that all events will conclude no later than 10:00 pm, which is stricter than the Town's Noise Ordinance of 11:00 pm. Traffic in and out of the site for event purposes will primarily be from Austin Road. There will be a fully equipped kitchen area in which food and beverage service providers hired for an Event may use to prepare food and beverage. Portable Toilets are brought in by the people that are using the venue. They will be removed at the end. Mr. Farnan stated that today that he received an email from the NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH). They stated that two of their engineers in the NYSDOH have determined that Stonebridge Farms does not meet the definition of a public water supply if the facility is operated in accordance with the letter. NYSDOH strongly recommends testing the drinking water supply routinely and recommends installation and maintenance of a treatment system. At this point, Mr. Farnan, handed the letter to the Town Clerk to be entered into the official minutes. At this point, the Public Hearing was opened for comments.

Carol and Merrill Sherman, Austin Road, asked about the Yellow Zone. Mr. Sherman wanted to know if that was the only area that would be used for Commercial use. Mr. Farnan stated yes. This area was chosen since it would have the least impact on the horses. Mr. Farnan stated that Stonebridge Farm is still a working horse farm. Mrs. Sherman asked if a hotel was being considered for this site in the future. Mr. Farnan stated there is no plans for a hotel. Supervisor Peck stated that any change would require the Applicant to come back to the Town Board for a review and modification of

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the Local Law. This would require another Public Hearing for the residents to have a say. Mr. and Mrs. Sherman stated that they have no problem with the proposed project.

Edison Cook Jr, Austin Road stated that he had a few concerns. The Local Law states that all music must stop at 10:00 PM, how would that be enforced. If there were numerous violations, how would they be addressed. Supervisor Peck stated the Code Enforcement Officer would investigate and report to the Town Board. Mr. Cook also stated that if events are held with 500 people, that is a lot of traffic for Austin Road. Mr. Cook stated that he wasn't sure if Austin Road would hold up. Mr. Farnan stated that it would be extremely rare to hold numerous 500 attendance events in any given year. Mr. Farnan stated that even if they did, there would not be 500 cars. Again, it is a working horse farm and the horses can get spooked, so that is why they chose Austin Road, since it is the farthest point from the horse stables. Mr. Cook asked if a Traffic Study was conducted. Mr. Farnan stated no, he didn't feel it was warranted.

Nicholas LaFountain, 768 West River Road, asked again about the parking area for over flow. Mr. Farnan stated that the goal is to have all vehicles park on the pavement area within the property. If there was a large amount of people attending an event, they would park on the grass paddocks. If the grass is ripped up, the area would be fixed by Stonebridge Farm since the horses use that area. Mr. LaFountain asked if any additional lighting would be installed. Mr. Farnan stated that no additional lights would be installed. Mr. LaFountain asked about any new construction in the Commercial Use Zone (Yellow). Can the owner build anything they want to? Supervisor Peck stated that again, any new construction would require a Building Permit and possibly it would require an amendment to the Local Law.

Paul Woolley, 646 Stonebridge Road, stated that he had some concerns regarding the proposed Local Law. Under Section 5. Allowable Uses - #7 - #12 are different then in the Town's Zoning Book – Article VI Agricultural Protection District. Farm employee dwelling units, Bed and Breakfasts, Agribusinesses, and Riding stables are listed as "Special Permit Uses". Boarding, Lodging or Rooming House and Horse Boarding are not addressed in the Agricultural Protection District. Mr. Woolley felt they should mirror each other. Mr. Woolley likes that any changes would require the owner of Stonebridge Farm to come back to the Town Board for an amendment to this proposed Local Law. Mr. Woolley stated that Stonebridge Farm has been a great neighbor. Mr. Woolley stated that he can support this project with some minor changes to "Allowable Uses" language along with minimizing any possible expansion of the Commercial Area.

Supervisor Willard Peck stated that we have not heard from Saratoga County Planning regarding this application. They meet on May 20th. This Public Hearing will be held open until the next Town Board Meeting which is June 10th @ 7:00 PM. Town Attorney David Brennan stated that he will review everyone's concerns regarding the proposed Local Law and the Agricultural Protection District as outlined in the Town's Zoning Book.

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At this time, the Public Hearing adjourned@ 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Murphy
Town Clerk