



**Planning Board
Zoom Hybrid Meeting
Meeting Minutes
May 2, 2023
Approved: June 6, 2023**

Board Members Present: Linda Liddle, Mo Klein, Matt Bishop, Rebecca Schneider, and Chair Pete Angie
Board Members Absent: Elisabeth Garner
Quorum Present

Others Present: Kristin Savard, Jessica Janssen, Bart Gragg
Town Board Members: Rich Goldman, Michael Boggs
Town Staff: Niels Tygesen, Mark Washburn, Mollie Duell
Members of the Public:

Proceedings

Chair Angie called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM at Town Hall.

Approval of Agenda

Motion: Liddle made a motion to approve the agenda draft. Klein seconded.

Vote: Klein, aye; Liddle, aye; Schneider, aye; and Chair Angie, aye.

Motion Carried.

Motion: Klein made a motion to allow Bishop to vote for the evening. Schneider seconded.

Vote: Liddle, aye; Klein, aye; Schneider, aye; and Chair Angie, aye.

Motion Carried.

Privilege of the Floor

The Board was not addressed by any member of the public pertaining items not on the agenda.

Old Business Items

SP2303-02: New Women's Residential Addiction Recovery Center Site Plan - Special Permit Review

The applicant and property owner, Ithaca Alpha House Center, Inc. DBA Cayuga Addiction Recovery Services, applied for site plan and special permit review for the subject site noted above. The applicant proposes to construct a new two-story detached building, approximately 13,385 gross square feet, for use as a 25 bed facility associated with the existing Cayuga Addiction Recovery Services on-site. The A/R zone permits rehabilitation facilities subject to a special permit and site plan review per Ulysses Town Code (UTC) 212-28.L and UTC 212-18.C.1 The Board previously conducted a sketch plan conference for the proposal on March 7, 2023.

Savard briefly reviewed the trajectory of the project through the past years and how plans have changed since previous Site Plan approval in 2019. Savard stated that two variances are being sought from the Board of Zoning Appeals: One to allow for more than one principal building, and one to allow a larger maximum footprint on the site, where 5,000 sqft is the maximum.

Chair Angie explained that because the parcel was rezoned from Residential to Agricultural in 2019, the special permit is now required. Schneider asked if a restricted covenant is already in place; Savard replied that this would need to be determined.

Discussion ensued on features surrounding the property that were not completely visible on the applicant's presentation documents. A stream at the edge of the property requires a buffer where nothing will be permitted to change. Chair Angie noted requirements are different between zones, but the AR zone requires a 50-foot buffer. The Board discussed if a swale would be allowed in this area. Chair Angie clarified for Ulysses, either side of creek setback will be 50 feet, as described in UTC 212-124.

Savard spoke about the climate during the original planning phases and how data was used to calculate figures regarding stormwater. Savard believes the project is well suited to accommodate a 500-year storm, but Schneider noted that the Planning Board would like to be very conservative when making any calculations regarding water, in order to protect natural resources long-term.

The Board raised questions over how the planned increase in water usage would be accommodated. Chair Angie asked if a pond or storage tank was being considered. Savard shared that there were rumors of the water district potentially being extended, but ultimately more information is required before further planning can be done, and different solutions are being considered until options are narrowed. Savard noted that pressure and flow requirements have been identified by mechanics. Schneider noted that a pond could change the layout of the proposal significantly; Savard responded that a pond is not the primary choice. Holding tanks, above or over ground, are preferable options, but a dry pond does already exist. Concern was raised about overflow if the dry pond were to become permanently wet. Savard explained that if this were to develop, the pond would be kept at a level that would allow an adequate supply of water to be available, while also allowing for volume expansion from excessive stormwater. Wells will not support the volume of water used at the facility.

Klein asked about the previous septic area and if there were plans to develop over this. Savard noted this area is now a parking lot. Bishop asked for details about how a bio retention area operates: Savard explained that essentially a large bathtub is formed out of clay, then backfilled with 36-40" of a composite of sand, gravel, and other materials to naturally filter water. The area will have 6" of topsoil and be left to grow naturally with no mowing or landscaping. Wastewater will filter through the mixture of materials and become diluted, before eventually joining the rest of the water system. Pollutants are removed naturally, and in 20-30 years, filter media may need to be replaced. Savard also noted that the soil on the site was previously disturbed.

Bishop noted there is a record number of deaths from drug overdoses, doubling since 2020, and supported urgency in moving the project forward.

The Board reviewed questions in the application. Liddle noted key pieces of information sought by the Board are further details about plans for maintaining the water supply, including fire usage, as well as clarification about the swale in the buffer zone.

Chair Angie asked about the negative impact SEQR and if this was still valid. Water usage, fire suppression, and the swale in the stream buffer zone need to be clarified before finalizing a reaffirming decision. Tygesen reviewed the 2019 negative declaration and asked if the Planning Board would reaffirm this decision, or if they would determine that there are changes or new information substantial enough to warrant an additional review.

Chair Angie asked about timeline expectations. Savard stated that they would like to go to bid at end of July and begin construction at the end of spring, with water approved as a condition prior to obtaining the building permit. A Public Hearing will be scheduled after SEQR determination. Savard was concerned

about the delays that would result from no SEQR determination being made, and stated that the approval of variances should guarantee SEQR is still valid, since the project will be zoning compliant with these variances. Savard accepted that the determination could not be made at this time, but urged for a plan of action to be decided upon. Would a full coordinated review be required again? Chair Angie stated that given the scope of the plans, there is potentially still a negative determination. Klein expressed that he believed comparing changes with the previous plan could be helpful.

Janssen described the communal support that the project has received so far: CARS is now partnered with Cayuga Medical Center, along with other medical facilities across the region; Tompkins County supports the addition; treatment court also urges the need for facility to be opened. Community support is strong, and Savard believes the government is supportive of the project as well. Savard stated that they were confident there is a solution to the current issues and are considering numerous options.

New Business Items

Town Board Local Law “AMENDING CHAPTER 36 OF THE TOWN CODE TO ADD A NEW ARTICLE III ENTITLED ‘TRAINING REQUIREMENTS’”

Schneider provided an overview on the proposed law regarding board member training requirements. Board members who do not complete their required training may be removed from their position as a result of “misconduct”. Discussion ensued over language used in the law, and how using a term such as “misconduct” could be misinterpreted and imply a more sinister violation than failing to complete a training requirement.

Goldman explained the attorney crafted the language in the law, which will be reviewed and changed, and clarified that the only intention of the amendment is to be able to remove board members from their position if they fail to complete their required training.

Angie asked the Board if there was interest in appointing a Vice Chair, and Liddle volunteered to take the position.

Motion: Bishop nominated Liddle to be Vice Chair of the Planning Board. Schneider seconded.

Vote: Schneider, aye; Klein, aye; Bishop, aye; Liddle, aye; and Chair Angie, aye.

Motion Carried

Town Board Liaison Report

Goldman shared that positions in the Comp Plan should be further completed by the next Town Board meeting.

Motion: Klein made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Liddle, aye; Schneider, aye; Klein, aye; Bishop, aye; and Chair Angie, aye.

Motion Carried

ADJOURNED 8:42 PM



Mollie Duell
Planning Board Secretary