



# Village of Saranac Lake

39 Main Street, Suite 9 Saranac Lake, NY 12983-2294

Phone: (518) 891 – 4150 x235

Email: [comdev@saranaclakeny.gov](mailto:comdev@saranaclakeny.gov)

Web Site: [www.saranaclakeny.gov](http://www.saranaclakeny.gov)

---

## DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 4, 2023 5:00pm

### ATTENDANCE

Development Board Members:

Elias Pelletieri, Chairperson, Present

Rick Weber, Present

Paul Herrmann, Present until 5:45pm

Meg Cantwell-Jackson, Excused

Bill Domenico, Alternate, Present

Dan Reilly, Alternate, Present

### I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Elias Pelletieri opened the meeting at 5:03pm.

Motion to approve March 7, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes by Bill Domenico, seconded by Pelletieri.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Domenico, yes; Paul Herrmann, yes; Rick Weber, yes; Dan Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, meeting minutes approved.

### II. ITEMS FOR BOARD ACTION

#### 1) Application of: Allott, Area Variance, 644 Lake Flower Avenue

Pelletieri introduced the project and stated that the requested variance is due to the parcel having three front yards and the placement of parking on the site.

Jamie Konkoski, Community Development Director, stated that there are three versions of the Site Plan, one of which the Board has not seen yet. She stated that the first question to address is whether or not to allow parking in a front yard, and the second questions is to look at the placement of those parking spaces.

Pelletieri stated that the alternative is to place parking at the back of the lot in the side yard but that there would be more site work involved with the clearing of trees and that it would actually encroach even more into the Turtle Pond neighborhood. He stated that he is in favor of parking being in one of the front yards.

Domenico stated that the project as a whole is a very soft use, with no full-time employees to be parking on site. He stated that he does not have any issues with allowing parking and that parking on this site will be minimal compared to other allowed uses in this district. Herrmann stated that he is not in favor and that this is not an area variance, but it is a use variance where the standard is inability to get a reasonable financial return on the property or demonstrate that there are other properties in the neighborhood with parking in the front yard. Konkoski stated that this is not a use variance as this is an allowed use and that the location of the parking is what the area variance is for.

Weber stated that according to the definitions, private parking is an accessory use and that the Schedule One Allowed Uses table is for allowing primary uses, so private parking will not be listed and therefore not considered under that schedule. He stated that he agrees with

Konkoski that this is for an area variance not a use variance.

Reilly stated that he agrees as well. He added that it is clear that the use of this site as proposed is allowed, and that the placement of where the parking will go will require the area variance. He stated that the impact of parking is minimal compared to nearby shopping plazas where there is also parking in the front yard.

Weber asked the applicant about the access to the eastern side of the lot and if it is off of Route 86 in addition to access from Turtle Pond Rd.

Stacey Allott, applicant, stated that there is a large shoulder and pull off area there from Route 86.

Weber stated that the traffic at that intersection may be a little bit awkward but that the applicant may seek further review by the NYS DOT and any comments they have may override what decisions this Board makes.

Domenico stated that the prospect of placing parking downhill from the wooded area and the stone wall looks to be good to him.

Motion to find the project in conformance with LWRP policy standards and conditions by Domenico, seconded by Reilly.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Herrmann, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, declaration moved.

Motion to approve area variance by Weber, seconded by Domenico.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Herrmann, no because he sees this application as a use variance where a different set of standards apply; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. Majority in favor, area variance approved.

## **2) Application of: Allott, Site Plan Review, 644 Lake Flower Avenue**

Allott stated that she did read all public comments and has kept those in mind. She shared that there is a new site plan to share with the Board, but she is comfortable with any version presented so far. She stated that this site plan is in part a response to some of the traffic and safety concerns and to keep the site aesthetically pleasing. She stated that the parking has been moved and that any access to the lot is at least 30ft. from any stop signs, that the buildings are now all on the western portion of the parcel against the stone wall. She stated that the water and sewer lines that exist are included, although there are no Village easements.

Domenico asked the applicant about containing parking.

Allott stated that these will be designated gravel areas with some form of retaining.

Pelletieri asked about the reduction in the number of parking spaces.

Allott stated that there will be approximately seven and that the larger gravel parking area is now on the eastern portion of the parcel where the bike shed is now, but the plan is to move it.

Domenico stated that the bike shed could be left as is so as not to cluster as much on the western portion of the parcel.

Allott stated that the intended use of the bike shed is for secure storage for groups staying at the Motel and that it can be left where it is. She added that she would like to have it located with the bike repair station, which is a relatively small structure, and that the intention is to repaint the shed so it does not stick out.

Weber stated that with the potential commercial use on the eastern portion of the parcel and the access from Route 86 it might be a good idea to inquire with DOT if this is a safe approach.

Allott stated that she can do that.

Pelletieri stated that as long as it is safe, he is fine with that Route 86 access to the eastern portion of the parcel.

Domenico stated that the placement of retaining markers for each parking area and also giving direction on the site will help make it safe.

Allott stated that she is open to leaving the bike shed where it is and moving the bike repair station and that she wants this site to look clean and to move traffic cleanly through.

Pelletieri stated that the porta pottie location can be moved to the eastern 'parking' parcel as well. Allott stated that her intent is to have the porta pottie screened from the road and to have it located close to where the action is on the site.

Pelletieri stated that with screening and the flexibility of a porta pottie it can easily be moved if it doesn't work in one spot over another.

Reilly stated that the applicant would be giving up more parking and a turn around area if things get moved back to the parking parcel.

Allott stated that the parking is located far from the property boundaries due to what makes the most sense topographically.

Weber stated that as presented, or with keeping the bike shed on the parking parcel, he is in favor of the site plan that has been presented to the Board tonight.

Pelletieri stated that he is in favor of this site plan as well.

Allott stated that, subject to moving the bike repair station over to the parking parcel, she is good with leaving the bike shed where it is.

Domenico stated that he sees that as still allowing adequate room on that parking parcel.

Weber stated that it would be helpful to see how the applicant envisions organizing that space with parking delineated and where the egress will be. He stated that he is comfortable approving this site plan with the bike shed and bike repair station on the parking parcel subject to the applicant sharing any comments from reaching out to the DOT and a more refined site plan for approval by the Director.

Allott stated that she is open to that.

Motion to issue a negative declaration for purposes of SEQR by Weber, seconded by Domenico.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call Vote: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, declaration moved.

Motion to find the project in conformance with LWRP policy standards and conditions by Weber, seconded by Pelletieri.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, declaration moved.

Motion to approve site plan with the conditions that a revised site plan be submitted showing the bike shed and bike repair station moved to the parking parcel, the applicant submit parking area details to the Director for approval, and a sign permit application shall be submitted before installing any signage by Reilly, seconded by Domenico.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, project approved.

### **3) Application of: High Peaks Church, Site Plan Review, 97 Will Rogers Drive**

Konkoski stated that after referring this project to the Essex County Planning Board no comments came back.

Pelletieri asked the applicant about the proposed bicycle parking and the visual assessment.

Dan Ryan, project engineer, stated that the proposed bike parking is to be located in the corner of the lot, in the side yard of the thrift shop next door so as to be out of the way, but in a good location and will have a capacity of 16 bikes. He stated that a summary report on visual impacts of the proposed development has been prepared and gave an overview of what was done to conduct that from the roadside elevations up to the side of the parcel where development will occur. He pointed out that although steep sloped, the adjacent parcel may be developed and that they could see a lot more along that area.

Reilly stated that it doesn't appear to allow for any visibility of the new construction or existing structure.

Pelletieri asked if the parking area as depicted in the assessment study will have fill.

Ryan stated that is just showing where he took a cross section, but that within the parking area there may be both cutting and filling. He added that with some additional sunlight

penetration some of the undergrowth in that area may grow up and act as an additional visual shield.

Weber stated that this is an important point coming into the Village and that it is good to know that it won't be a significant change.

Pelletieri stated that this is a good project.

Motion to issue a negative declaration for purposes of SEQR by Domenico, seconded by Weber.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, declaration moved.

Motion to find the project in conformance with LWRP policy standards and conditions by Weber, seconded by Domenico.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, declaration moved.

Motion to approve site plan by Domenico, seconded by Reilly.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, project approved.

#### **4) Application of: Alpine Agronomy, Area Variance, 245 Broadway, Suites 1 & 2**

Konkoski stated that this is for the proposed location of the dumpster and that an additional public hearing will open when the Board reviews the special use permit.

Motion to open the public hearing by Pelletieri, seconded by Weber.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, public hearing opened.

Laura Eldred, neighbor at 230 Broadway, asked if the enclosure is to include both the dumpster and additional equipment.

Pelletieri stated that yes, it's a dumpster and other equipment. He stated that NYS dictates a lot of the rules for this project, in addition to what they are going by in the Code with the property fronting on three streets and that the enclosure will be close to a side of the building with an employee door with limited access to employees only.

Chase Schuyler, applicant, stated that he is not looking to share a dumpster with others as this creates a liability. He described the options on the site that were explored for the placement of the dumpster and that this was the best placement with minimal impact to the plaza.

Motion to close the public hearing by Weber, seconded by Pelletieri.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, public hearing closed.

Motion to classify the project as a Type 2 Action, which requires no further review under SEQR by Reilly, seconded by Weber.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, declaration moved.

Motion to find the project in conformance with LWRP policy standards and conditions by Pelletieri, seconded by Weber.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, declaration moved.

Motion to approve area variance by Weber, seconded by Pelletieri.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, area variance approved.

#### **5) Application of: Alpine Agronomy, Special Use Permit, 245 Broadway, Suites 1 & 2**

Pelletieri stated that this project is before the Board for a special use permit per the most recent addition to the Village Code for allowing this type of operation.

Konkoski stated that the local law has been adopted, posted and filed, although, it is not yet in the Development Code on the ecode site.

Motion to open the public hearing by Pelletieri, seconded by Weber.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, public hearing opened.

Michael Coon, project engineer, stated that this is an approximately 8,000 sq.ft. space that will be repurposed for a microbusiness, of which about 1,000 will be dedicated to the retail side, functioning similar to the former use in this space. He stated that the microbusiness license also allows for growing and processing, which will take up the rest of the space in a hermetically sealed environment. He stated that there will be anywhere from 12 to 20 employees, and that parking calculations indicate that there will not be any significant parking conflicts with the existing tenants in the plaza. He stated that the enclosure outside will be dedicated to the dumpster and mechanical equipment for cooling units, including small grade condensers and air chillers, with a 7ft. tall barrier with that siding to match the existing building or a solid wood, depending on what the Board decides. He stated that when he worked with the applicant on the special use permit, they adhered to local law standards and that per NYS, the applicant is following other guidelines such as locking that enclosure and installing security measures.

Schuyler stated that this license type that he is applying for with NYS is a micro license which allows for production and retail at the same location, and overall, a smaller cannabis business. He stated that he hopes the dispensary side will create more of a relationship or a draw for the community rather than just a standalone growing facility which will probably be what we see in this area. He stated that the cultivation process is high tech.

Michael Glass, neighbor at 230 Broadway, stated his thoughts on what was presented in the application and had some questions relating to the expected hours of operation with the allowance for additional hours as late as midnight, he asked if there was any additional information or analysis on the reasoning behind a response stated in the application regarding no significant increases in traffic. He also was concerned for the lack of foresight on including public spaces, such as a park, in a buffer zone just as schools and churches are.

Konkoski stated that the buffer zones, while acknowledged in the local law and some discussion was had at the Village Board level, are mandated by the NYS guidelines that have been released.

Schuyler stated that he does not anticipate being open to the public after 9pm.

Glass asked that the Board consider all of that as they look at this application.

Eldred stated that the traffic at that intersection is a concern.

Domenico stated that as this plaza becomes developed, as they see more and more development across the Village, he hopes the Village does look at traffic more closely. He asked the applicant for more details on the dumpster and mechanical equipment enclosure.

Pelletieri stated that he would prefer to see the solid wood option used as the enclosure material.

Reilly stated he agrees.

Pelletieri stated that they can make that a condition on any approvals.

Schuyler stated that when the time comes to put up a business sign, he envisions using that type of wood. He stated the left side of the building will be dedicated to cultivation, and that the right storefront will be redone for an attractive front façade. He stated that he plans to take out the single pane windows and create a more aesthetically pleasing storefront.

Domenico stated that a design or sketch of the storefront should be submitted to Konkoski to

ensure that it meets the Code's design standards.

Pelletieri stated that they can also make that a condition on any approvals.

Motion to issue a negative declaration for purposes of SEQR by Pelletieri, seconded by Weber.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, declaration moved.

Motion to find the project in conformance with LWRP policy standards and conditions by Weber, seconded by Reilly.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, declaration moved.

Motion to approve special use permit with the conditions that the material of the enclosure will be solid wood, the applicant will submit a final design for the front façade to the Director for approval, and a sign permit application shall be submitted before installing any signage by Weber, seconded by Reilly.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, special use permit approved.

### **III. OLD BUSINESS**

Konkoski stated that the consultants that have been working on the LWRP update have a draft law and will soon be revising the form for projects that will require LWRP review. She is coordinating with the consultants and will share new material with the Board as it becomes available.

Weber added that one of the goals of the update was to look at where the review was being done versus where it is actually needed on types of projects.

Konkoski stated that the update reexamines the LWRP in its entirety, the whole book. She will continue to share drafts with the Board as they become available.

Domenico stated that once its complete, in-house training will be helpful.

### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

The Board discussed the reuse of old, historic signage and when it is appropriate to seek a variance.

### **V. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Reilly, seconded by Weber.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; Reilly, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

Meeting was officially adjourned at 7:31pm.

Meeting Minutes prepared by Cassandra Hopkins, Administrative Assistant.