



Village of Saranac Lake

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DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 6, 2023 5:00pm

ATTENDANCE

Development Board Members:

Elias Pelletieri, Chairperson, Present

Rick Weber, Present

Dan Reilly, Excused

Meg Cantwell-Jackson, Excused

Bill Domenico, Alternate, Present

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Elias Pelletieri opened the meeting at 5:00pm.

Motion to approve May 2, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes by Rick Weber, seconded by Bill Domenico.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, yes; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, meeting minutes approved.

II. ITEMS FOR BOARD ACTION

1) Application of: North Country Roots, Inc., Special Use Permit, 622 Lake Flower Ave., Suite 7

Eli Emery, general manager, gave an overview of the project. He shared with the Board that North Country Roots is an established recreational cannabis dispensary that currently operates out of Plattsburgh and they are looking to set up a location in Saranac Lake. He stated that they have been issued a conditional license by New York State.

Pelletieri asked if there will be on-site consumption in the same space.

Emery stated that yes, there will be on-site cannabis consumption in a room that will be set up separate from the storefront. He added that they are looking to create a nice, clean, and overall safe space for the community to purchase and try cannabis products.

Pelletieri stated that this is in the plaza at 622 Lake Flower Ave. and verified that the project will be in the far-right retail space without any changes to the exterior.

Emery stated that they included a security plan in the application. He added that they will add a sign to the storefront, but that by following New York State guidelines it will be minimal in nature and only state the name of the business.

Pelletieri asked about any exterior changes to install the air purification system or any other circulation/venting needs.

Emery stated that they may look at the roof for any existing features and there may be a need for an additional roof vent, but that they do not anticipate that at this time.

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

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

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

Liz Pope, Village resident, asked about any plan for a public restroom on site, about any potential for mixed messaging, especially for the youth in the community, how secure some of the equipment or merchandise will be, the potential for an increased Village police presence in that area, and the capacity for an increase in traffic in particular for some of the community events that the applicant had mentioned.

Mark Wilson, Village resident, asked about the established hours and about the on-site

consumption especially with regards to New York State allowing smoking indoors. Jamie Konkoski, Community Development Director, stated that New York State Office of Cannabis Management sets regulations for the cannabis business, including signage and maximum hours of operation. She stated that the Village's local law also outlines allowable hours of operation.

Emery addressed the public comments to state that there is a security plan in place that follows guidelines that New York State has released, and that there will not be a bathroom on site for the public to use, although, with the on-site consumption there has not been much released yet in terms of regulations set by New York State. He added that they intend to follow those regulations when they are released.

Pelletieri addressed the public comment on mixed messaging for area youth given that there are frequently community fundraisers in front of the business at the other end of the plaza, by stating there are other adult-use businesses nearby, including a liquor store and a brewery. Konkoski asked the applicant about the submitted floor plan that shows the on-site consumption lounge directly behind the storefront and retail sales space and if there are plans for any expansion outside of that to submit for an amendment to any approvals granted this evening. She also asked the applicant to share any recently released materials by New York State regarding regulations to on-site consumption within a dispensary.

Emery stated that they will wait on all New York State licensing to come through before any on-site consumption.

Domenico asked for clarification on if the applicant will need to come back to this Board. Konkoski stated that they will not if the floor plan is what the applicant will follow and if the Office of Cannabis Management grants two licenses; on-site consumption and operation of a dispensary.

Pelletieri read two previously submitted public comments from Village residents (written comments are attached to these meeting minutes).

Weber asked about air flow controls between the dispensary space and the lounge where there will be smoking.

Emery stated that the designated on-site consumption area will have air purification and filtration controls, plus, separation from the rest of the building with two doors and a hallway. He stated that no smoke will leave the consumption room by design.

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

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, 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 Domenico, seconded by Weber.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Weber, yes; Domenico, 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 Domenico.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

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

Weber asked about the stated hours of operation in the application materials and the applicant's comment about adjusting those hours seasonally.

Emery stated that the plan would be to further limit hours of operation for both on-site consumption and the dispensary during the fall and spring, similar to any other business cutting back during these times.

Pelletieri stated he does not see a reason to come back before this board if those hours of operation are being reduced.

Konkoski stated that as long as those hours of operation follow the limitations set by the Office of Cannabis Management and what is stated in the Village's local law.

Pelletieri suggested setting a condition on the approval for the hours.

Motion to approve special use permit with conditions, 1) the applicant will submit a copy of the New York State license for a dispensary and for on-site consumption to the Development Code Administrator before opening, 2) a sign permit application shall be submitted before installing any signage, and 3) the applicant will notify the Development Code Administrator if

the hours of operation increase from what is stated on the application by Domenico, seconded by Weber.

Pelletieri asked for a Roll Call Vote.

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

III. OLD BUSINESS

Konkoski shared a list of Development Code amendments, some of which came out of discussions at the Housing Task Force meetings.

Pelletieri stated that they are continuing the discussion of some of the recommendations made by the Housing Task Force.

Konkoski stated that one of goals of the Housing Task Force when going through this exercise was to open up additional areas in the Village for increased development opportunity. She asked the Board if everyone is in agreement on the creation of the two new definitions in the Development Code for multifamily dwellings; for a 3 - 4-unit dwelling complex, and a complex that contains 5 or more units.

Domenico brought up the thought that there are still dimensional standards to meet and that this Board has discretion through the Development Code process to look for the standards that would allow the 3 – 4 units to more readily look in place, rather than out of place, in a residential neighborhood.

Pelletieri acknowledged that while this opened up possibility for more of this type of development in the Village, it may not be a cost-effective approach for the developer.

Weber stated that looking at the Use Table, it is clear where there may not have been this type of development before and asked, other than multifamily dwellings not fitting in the neighborhood, what other pushback they might see.

Konkoski stated that in the recommendations from the Housing Task Force, they did approach this district by district and left it up to the Development Board for the level of approval for each potential new allowed use in the district (new use being the two new definitions created; 3 - 4 unit dwelling complex and a complex that contains 5 or more units).

Pelletieri suggested looking at the districts that were most limiting first and working our way to other districts where that type of development might seem more obvious.

Konkoski stated that for the larger multifamily developments, the Code requires a Special Use Permit.

Pelletieri stated that they should stick with that.

Weber brought up the steep slopes and other concerns for the developable envelope of what is left in the Village right now in terms of vacant land. He did acknowledge that lots can be demolished and this Board may even see lot line adjustments for the creation of parcels that can house that larger, multifamily development.

Domenico stated that is a good point, although, probably few and far in between. He stated that steep slopes in a district such as H will dictate development more than what this Code can.

Konkoski stated that there is a more robust development review that comes with the Special Use Permit for soils, runoff, stormwater and impervious surface.

Weber stated he is more inclined to continue with Special Use Permit for the new definitions.

Pelletieri stated that they can continue to go district by district.

Konkoski suggested moving on to New Business in the interest of time this evening.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

LWRP Consistency Review for Short-Term Rental Law

Motion to find the Short-Term Rental Law 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; and Pelletieri, yes. All in favor, declaration moved.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Pelletieri, seconded by Domenico.

Meeting was officially adjourned at 6:55pm.
Meeting Minutes prepared by Cassandra Hopkins, Administrative Assistant.

Comment on Monday's hearing

Gail Brill <gailbrilldesign@gmail.com>

Fri 6/2/2023 11:42 AM

To:Cassandra Hopkins <comdevassist1@saranaclakeny.gov>

You don't often get email from gailbrilldesign@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Community Development Board, It's wonderful news that cannabis is now legal in NY State. I have seen first hand the positive effects that cannabis has had on relieving pain and insomnia for my family and friends with cancer and chronic pain. What a convenience it will be for so many that previously had to travel long distances to seek a source.

I know Doug Butdorf to be a person of the highest caliber. I hope that you will approve the permit for North Country Roots (aka Elevate ADK) for Saranac Lake.

Thank you! Gail Brill



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Cannabis

Joyce Henklein <joycehenklein@gmail.com>

Wed 5/31/2023 12:18 PM

To: Cassandra Hopkins <comdevassist1@saranaclakeny.gov>

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Dear Development Board members; much has changed over the past years of my long life where years ago I was wary of any kind of drug use, now I am an enthusiastic user of cannabis for sleep and arthritic pain . I will be 95 years old next month, I am a retired nursing supervisor, and I have witnessed much in regard to medications, We can see commercials on TV where the side effects of the RX's are listed, and it's scary. I have never experienced any untoward side effects from using the Cannabis infused gummies,just the magical effect of falling asleep fast and sleeping until dawn.I feel that many folks my age do not realize how helpful and safe cannabis is. I prefer not to smoke the product because I gave up smoking tobacco years ago and I don't like to inhale, so I prefer taking candy or cookies that have been infused. It is wonderfull to know that we will have an agency here in Saranac Lake where our doses can be purchased safely because driving to Plattsburgh or the reservation is impossible as I no longer drive.I hope that you will all look at the opportunity here to bring comfort to many and introduce the notion that this is going to be a successful and welcoming program. Thank you. Joyce Henklein