

**Sturbridge Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 12, 2021
Town Hall**

Present:

Charlie Blanchard
Jeff Adams
Wally Hersee
Dane LaBonte
Sue Waters
Christopher Bouchard
Michael Chisholm
Jean Bubon, Town Planner
Jeneé Lacy, Administrative Assistant



Also Present:

Jeff Bridges, Town Administrator
Tom Chamberland, Trails Committee
Tony Crane, Tree Warden
Tony Lafo, American Sign
John Strzalka, Dragonfly Ibis Sturbridge, LLC
Steve Venezia, Planet Fitness
Josh Cottone, 1 Cedar Pond Road
Errica DeVarenne, Deep Roots Distillery
Keith DeVarenne, Deep Roots Distillery
Tom Crane, Deep Roots Distillery

C. Blanchard called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and read the agenda.

Town Planner Update

J. Bubon discussed the following:

- Next meeting dates:
 - October 26th – Conversion of former Rovezzi's Restaurant into artist live/work studios
 - October 28th – Special Town Meeting
- Updated Zoning Bylaw

C. Blanchard discussed General Code and the updated Zoning Bylaws.

Public Hearing – Special Permit – 178 Main Street – Ocean State Job Lot

S. Waters read the legal ad that was posted in the Southbridge Evening News.

J. Bubon stated that the applicant is requesting a Special Permit for sign relief to allow for a new wall mounted sign that will be 87.5 sq.ft. where 30 sq.ft. is permitted. The DRC has approved the sign design with goose neck lighting. J. Bubon stated that the proposed size of the sign is similar to that of Marshals and Famous Footwear.

T. Lafo discussed the reason for the enlarged sign to be more readable from the street. There were no questions or concerns from the Board.

J. Cottone, 1 Cedar Pond Road, asked for a comparison to other signs in the same plaza. J. Bubon stated that it is probably a bit smaller than the Shaw's sign and discussed some of the other signs in the plaza and signs that will be coming in for approval as new retailers come into the plaza.

Motion: To close the Public Hearing.

By: J. Adams

2nd: W. Hersee

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Motion: To grant the Special Permit for an 87.5 sq.ft. replacement building sign as presented.

By: J. Adams

2nd: W. Hersee

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- *Completed application for Sign Special Permit dated August 25, 2021;*
- *Certified list of abutters;*
- *A rendering of the proposed sign;*
- *Legal Ad;*
- *Memorandum from Jean M. Bubon, AICP, Town Planner to the Planning Board dated October 4, 2021;*
- *Staff comments:*
 - *Building Inspector dated September 21, 2021;*
 - *Fire Inspector dated September 8, 2021*
 - *DPW dated September 9, 2021*
 - *Conservation Agent dated September 7, 2021*

Town Planner Update - Continued

J. Bubon discussed the following:

- Progress report on the New England Cold Storage LLC project at 6 Picker Road.
- Update on Dileo project, discussed site visit with Conservation Agent.

Old/New Business

D. LaBonte and J. Bubon discussed the timing in-between applicants on the Agenda.

J. Bubon discussed the Habitat for Humanity project on Cedar Street and their groundbreaking.

J. Cottone, 1 Cedar Pond Road, asked what the timeline was for the Habitat Project. J. Bubon stated that they were waiting on their building permit and discussed the process.

Public Hearing – Scenic Road Special Permit – 72 Farquhar Road

S. Waters read the legal ad that was posted in the Southbridge Evening News.

Tony Crane, Tree Warden, and Tom Chamberland, Trails Committee, came before the Board. J. Bubon stated that the applicants are requesting a Scenic Road Special Permit to allow for the removal of two trees in the vicinity of 72 Farquhar Road to accommodate a pole relocation that is necessary in conjunction with the construction of the Grand Trunk Trail. J. Bubon stated that she had no concerns with the request.

T. Chamberland discussed the Grand Trunk Trail project, the proposed tree removal, and replicative planting near the Riverlands parking lot.

T. Crane discussed the status of the trees projected for removal.

S. Waters asked about stumps and root systems being near the walking paths. T. Chamberland stated that the paths were not on the same side as the trees so there should not be an issue with roots or stumps.

There were no more questions or concerns from the Board or the public.

Motion: To close the Public Hearing.

By: D. LaBonte

2nd: J. Adams

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Motion: To approve the Scenic Roads Special Permit and authorize the removal of a 24" Red Oak and a 24" Red Pine as designated.

By: C. Bouchard

2nd: M. Chisholm

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- *Completed application for Scenic Road Sign Special Permit dated August 27, 2021;*
- *Certified list of abutters;*
- *Tree Removal Plan;*
- *Legal Ad;*
- *Memorandum from Jean M. Bubon, AICP, Town Planner to the Planning Board dated October 4, 2021;*
- *Staff comments:*
 - *DPW dated September 9, 2021*

- *Conservation Agent dated September 7, 2021*

Waiver of Site Plan – 178 Main Street – Dragonfly Ibis (Planet Fitness)

J. Bubon stated that the applicant was requesting a Waiver of Site Plan to allow for the installation of a temporary office trailer within the existing parking lot along with the placement of a temporary banner on the side of the trailer.

J. Strzalka, Dragonfly Ibis, discussed the trailer placement for gym pre-enrollment.

S. Venezia, Planet Fitness, discussed how the pre-enrollment trailers are usually wrapped completely in a banner that shows images of inside the club and that their signage is critical for pre-sale.

J. Bubon stated that the trailer wrapping signage wasn't allowed in the Town's sign bylaw and the proposed banner on one side of the trailer and wall sign on the other meets the signage criteria, stating that it was important to stay consistent with what was approved for other businesses in Town.

D. LaBonte asked J. Bubon if she was comfortable with the temporary trailer placement in the parking lot. J. Bubon stated that she was since the parking lot will not be utilized while the building is under construction. D. LaBonte discussed with the applicant access to the trailer.

J. Adams asked the applicant how many other Planet Fitness locations there were in the State. S. Venezia stated that there were 51.

S. Venezia asked if an a-frame sign was acceptable instead of a banner. J. Bubon stated that a 12 sq.ft. a-frame sign was allowed.

Motion: To approve the Waiver of Site Plan to allow the installation of a temporary office trailer within the existing parking lot and to allow for a temporary sign and banner on the trailer or a temporary sign on the trailer and a temporary a-frame sign.

By: D. LaBonte

2nd: J. Adams

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- *Application for Waiver of Site Plan Approval;*
- *Survey;*
- *Proposed Trailer Location;*
- *Proposed Banner and Sign Renderings;*
- *Memorandum from Jean M. Bubon, AICP, Town Planner to the Planning Board dated October 6, 2021;*
- *Staff comments:*
 - *Fire Department dated September 29, 2021;*
 - *DPW dated September 24, 2021;*
 - *Building Department dated October 5, 2021.*

Waiver of Site Plan – 559 Main Street – Deep Roots Distillery USA

Errica DeVarenne, Keith DeVarenne, and Tom Crane came before the Board representing Deep Roots Distillery.

J. Bubon stated that the applicants were requesting a Waiver of Site Plan to allow for the operation of a distillery with tasting room on the premises of 559 Main Street. J. Bubon gave a background on the project, discussed the parking requirements for the location and discussed the proposal.

E. DeVarenne discussed the history of the business and their plan going forward.

M. Chisholm asked about the heat caused by the distillery equipment. E. DeVarenne stated that their equipment uses induction so there is no flame.

There were no other questions or concerns from the Board.

J. Cottone, 1 Cedar Pond Road, stated he was a bit concerned about the traffic in the parking lot since his daughter dances in that building. J. Bubon discussed the parking calculations and the times of drop of and pick up for the dance studio stating that the parking lot should have plenty of parking and there should not be any traffic issues.

Motion: To approve the Waiver of Site Plan to change the use of unit 209 located at 559 Main Street to a Distillery and change the floor plan of the space as presented.

By: J. Adams

2nd: S. Waters

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- *Application for Waiver of Site Plan Approval;*
- *Floor plan of the proposed facility;*
- *Parking calculations;*
- *Proposed food menu;*
- *Memorandum from Jean M. Bubon, AICP, Town Planner to the Planning Board dated October 5, 2021;*
- *Staff comments:*
 - *Conservation Department dated September 24, 2021;*
 - *Fire Department dated September 29, 2021;*
 - *DPW dated September 24, 2021;*
 - *Building Department dated October 5, 2021.*

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn meeting.

By: D. LaBonte

2nd: C. Bouchard

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Meeting adjourned at 7:26 PM

Minutes prepared by: Jeneé Lacy