

MEETING MINUTES
VILLAGE OF WOODSTOCK, VERMONT
PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT
31 The Green
Woodstock, VT 05091

VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

The Village Development Review Board held a public meeting on May 8, 2024, at 7:30pm to
conduct the following business:

Members Present: Jane Soule (Chair), Randy Mayhew (Vice Chair), Wendy Spector, Keri Cole
Public Present: Tom Ayres, Ben & April Pauly, Eva Douzinas, Tom List, AJ LaRosa, Laura Powell,
Seton McIlroy, David Hamilton, Peter Raymond, Sophie Wilson
Staff Present: Steven Bauer and Stephanie Appelfeller

Call to Order:

Jane Soule called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM.

Adjustments to Agenda: None.

Public Hearings:

- A. V-0052-24:** Alfonse Sorrentino
Location: 13B River Street
Parcel ID: 20.51.16.001
Review Type: Design Review Approval
Proposed Development: To receive an after the fact permit for 80 linear feet of fencing.

Randy Mayhew mentioned the application is retroactive as the applicant constructed the fence without a permit. The Design Advisory Committee recommended the application for approval with the addition of caps on fence posts.

Wendy Spector motioned to close testimony.

Randy Mayhew seconded the motion.

Testimony closed.

Keri Cole motioned to approve with the condition to add caps to fence posts.

Wendy Spector seconded the motion.

VOTE: Approved. 4-0.

B. V-0051-24: Pleasant Garage LLC
Location: 67 Pleasant Street
Parcel ID: 21.53.12
Review Type: Conditional Use Approval
Proposed Development: To convert use from Retail to Restaurant.

Ben and April Pauly explained that their restaurant Farmer and the Bell plan to open at this location. Items are prepared ahead and will be warmed on-site, and customers can dine in or take away. The building was approved and now a change in use is being requested. The building will have 1800 SF of conditioned space and an 800 SF covered patio. The front entrance leads to a counter and will be a café style model. The back of the restaurant will contain coolers, prep tables, and the kitchen will be open to the front of the house. Seating space on the first level contains 16 seats. Mezzanine has an office, laundry, and 52 seats upstairs. The proposed floor plan will be added to the materials packet.

Ben explained it will have 68 interior and 28 exterior seats, a total of 96 seats and 8 employees. They plan to start smaller at 82 seats and 6 employees but are asking for what is ultimately needed. They will offer breakfast and lunch and may have pop-up dinners and events. Would like to do Fridays evenings during East End Park events. Asking for hours of 7am – 10pm, 7 days a week.

Ben mentioned there will be a commercial hood requiring a vent through the roof at front of building that is still being designed. The on-site parking, curb cut, and entrance will be located off Charles Street. Eva explained that Chief Joe Swanson approved the plan.

Ben and April said the proposed use is most like a bakery/café as no table service. Premade sandwiches and items to go or eat in.

Randy mentioned he has no issue with traffic but is concerned with the curb cut along Charles Street. Keri Cole indicated main traffic issues are from 18 wheelers which have nothing to do with Farmer and the Bell.

Character of area – Mostly surrounded by industrial buildings and gas stations. Steven asked how a 96-seat restaurant fits the character of the area? Ben said it is a good fit near East End Park and will increase walking to the east end and create an anchor. Angor Wat and Ottawaquechee Yacht Club and Maplefields are other restaurants in this area.

Capacity – Sewer permit has been approved at 82 seats and 6 employees and will reapply and increase capacity if needed.

Energy efficiency and natural resources – Ben stated permit has been approved to connect to Aqueduct. There is 3 phase power will be brought in underground. All electric appliances. There will be solar on the roof.

Separate entrance off Hartland Hill Road for loading trucks and trash removal. Soil is being tested and remediated if needed during excavation as it's a brownfield site. Bike parking will be provided.

Existing bylaws – Zoned CLI, Commercial Light Industrial and meets zoning requirements.

Parking - Asking for 100% parking waiver on employee parking and 50% waiver on customer parking. The applicants provided a map detailing off-site parking within ¼ mile. Without the parking waiver, could only have 6 employees and 30 seats, which would not be economical.

Eva reminded the Board that nothing has changed since the December approval other than the use of the space.

Public Comment

AJ LaRosa, an attorney that represents the abutter RL Vallee, presented two main concerns for the VDRB. Traffic – the ITE code for Coffee Shop/Donut Shop use without drive thru is code ITE 936. VT studied this type of use in 2010 and determined it would create 100 new trips in AM peak hour. As such, he suggested a traffic study. Parking – The regulations in Section 517 state off street parking spaces “shall” be provided. He suggested a smaller restaurant rather than a parking waiver. He mentioned the crosswalk needs restriped, there are no flashing lights.

Laura Powell spoke in support of the application due to the shortage of restaurants and this can be an anchor in the East End as it's walkable from the village. The trend is to eliminate parking requirements to reduce carbon emissions.

Seton McIlroy explained that the Village Trustees provided a letter of support regarding the parking waiver and utilizing East End Park for parking as that was the intention for the area. She continued that the trustees are looking at ways to draw people to the East End area. The crosswalk along Rt 4 needs to be repainted in May/June. The goal of the village is to be a walkable town and to support small businesses.

David Hamilton is the designer of Geobarns. He asked the board to grant the waiver and cautioned a traffic study as studies don't always accurately portray the traffic correctly for this type of use.

Peter Raymond represents the applicant and explained the Waiver standard in Section 517G states parking needs can be met through other means. This is applicable as public parking is nearby and this business will draw on non-vehicle-related trips.

Sophie Wilson is a neighbor on Stanton Street. She explained the importance of vibrancy for the Village. Since Abracadabra left East End, there are no activities in this area. Her husband added

that they used to meet other locals and new residents at Abracadabra and the Village needs more places like that.

Eva mentioned a response from her attorneys was provided this evening.

Randy suggested recessing until the next meeting to allow time to read the rebuttal from Eva's attorneys. AJ LaRosa suggested closing testimony and reopening if more information is needed.

Wendy Spector motioned close testimony.

Keri Cole seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-0-1 (Randy Mayhew abstained).

Testimony Closed.

Wendy Spector motioned to move into deliberative session.

Keri Cole seconded.

Board entered closed deliberations.

Approval of Minutes: 4/24/24

Randy Mayhew motioned to accept the 4/24/24 minutes as printed.

Wendy Spector seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 Approved.

Adjournment:

Wendy Spector motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Keri Cole seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 Approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:46 PM.