

TOWN OF SOMERS - ZONING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 6, 2020
6:30 PM – TELECONFERENCE
Meeting ID: 891 7697 2731

CALL TO ORDER Meeting was called to order at 6:39pm Members present Jill Conklin, Karl Walton, Dan Fraro, Lucas Cherry, Paige Rasid and Alternate Bill Shapiro. Also present, Jennifer Roy, Staff Liaison, Attorney Carl Landolina and Attorney Evan Seeman.

PUBLIC HEARING continued from 6/1/2020:

#20-006: The Union Agricultural Society of Somers, Enfield, Ellington and E. Windsor, Inc., 56 Egypt Road, Somers. Special Use Permit application in accordance with Zoning Regulations sections 214-87 Alcoholic Beverages and 214-93 Temporary Commercial Uses to allow agricultural events/shows, public and private events, car shows, fairs, festivals in the Industrial zone.

Stu Grant present to speak for the Union Agricultural Society. Mr. Grant and the Union Agricultural Society received a letter from ZEO stating that based on documentation and signed affidavits, the current use of the property located at 56 Egypt Road dates back to the early 1950's and 1960's is a legal non-conforming use; therefore, no Special Use Permit is needed. Application is withdrawn.

OLD BUSINESS: Discussion/Possible Decision

#19-012: Hillsdale College, 33 E College Street, Hillsdale, MI. Pursuant to section 214-98 B (3) of the Zoning regulations, applicant is seeking a Special Use Permit to allow operation of a religious institution at 700 Hall Hill Road, Somers, CT.

#19-013: Hillsdale College, 33 E College Street, Hillsdale, MI. Pursuant to section 214-98 B (3) of the Zoning regulations, applicant is seeking a Special Use Permit to allow operation of a religious institution at 708 Hall Hill Road, Somers, CT.

#19-014: Hillsdale College, 33 E College Street, Hillsdale, MI. Pursuant to section 214-98 B (3) of the Zoning regulations, applicant is seeking a Special Use Permit to allow operation of a religious institution at 732 Hall Hill Road, Somers, CT.

#19-015: Hillsdale College, 33 E College Street, Hillsdale, MI. Pursuant to section 214-98 B (3) of the Zoning regulations, applicant is seeking a Special Use Permit to allow operation of a religious institution at 740 Hall Hill Road, Somers, CT.

Attorney Carl Landolina addressed the commission, explaining outlines of possible conditions that he and Attorney Seeman have provided to guide the commission.

Discussion was held among the commission members regarding number and size of events they would permit at 732 Hall Hill Road. Jill Conklin suggested just allowing one-time large event; the "Thank you"

party for the Blake's, and allowing some time to hold this due to COVID 19 restrictions currently in place.

Commission recessed at 7:41pm – returning at 7:59pm.

Karl Walton made a motion to approve application #19-014 Hillsdale College, 33 E College Street, Hillsdale, MI. Pursuant to section 214-98 B (3) of the Zoning regulations, a Special Use Permit to allow operation of a religious institution at 732 Hall Hill Road, Somers, CT, and application #19-015 Hillsdale College, 33 E College Street, Hillsdale, MI, Pursuant to section 214-98 B (3) of the Zoning regulations, a Special Use Permit to allow operation of a religious institution at property formerly known as 740 Hall Hill Road, Somers, CT now merged with 732 Hall Hill Road, Somers, CT; with the following conditions:

1. All exterior lighting shall be certified “dark-sky compliant” and shall be minimally invasive.
2. Any van owned and kept on site shall be garaged or screened from view from Hall Hill Road.
3. The Applicant may at its discretion allow passive public recreational use of the 732 Hall Hill Road by implementing a “use by permit” system whereby would-be users of the property will be required to seek and obtain permission from the Applicant. “No trespass” signs will be placed in key locations throughout the property. No more than 20 visitors at a time who are on the premises for recreational use shall be allowed.
4. The Applicant shall be allowed one (1) special event at the property to be held within three (3) years of the date of this approval and shall notify the Zoning Enforcement Officer of the event not later than 60 days prior, with details as to the nature of the event, time, place, security, traffic control, parking, number of participants expected, accommodations including restrooms, details on the use of any tent or other temporary facility or any other information requested by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. The Zoning Enforcement Officer shall coordinate town staff reviews and provide guidance to the Applicant on the appropriate arrangements to protect the public's health, safety, and general welfare. Prior to holding this event Applicant shall submit temporary parking plan to Zoning Commission or its agent. All such parking shall be appropriately screened or not otherwise visible from Hall Hill Road.
5. The Applicant shall not charge for expenses resulting from the lodging of speakers, clergy, invitees, or other special guests at the properties.
6. Parking by staff shall be garaged or otherwise screened from Hall Hill Road.
7. Chapel in Monticello Building.
 - a. The Applicant may at its discretion invite staff, guests, neighbors, and visitors to use the chapel for prayer, worship, Bible studies, vespers, sacred music, and other devotional activities. Other Christian clergy members, including from the local community, may be invited to preside over services and liturgies at the chapel.

8. Standalone Chapel (formerly on 700 Hall Hill Road; now on 732 Hall Hill Road with Monticello).
 - a. The Applicant may at its discretion use this chapel as it uses the indoor Monticello chapel.
 - b. The Applicant may at its discretion host religious services at the chapels, including sermons, retreats, and group prayer liturgies, such as vespers (evening prayer).
9. Continuing-Education Seminars
 - a. The Applicant may at its discretion hold no more than nine three-day seminars per year, which seminars are expected to be held in June, July, and August, will be led by a professor of the College or other guest lecturer, and will be attended by guests of the College. Guest attendance at such programs shall be limited to 50.
 - b. The Applicant may at its discretion hold no more than two four-day seminars per year, which seminars are expected to occur during College's fall and spring breaks, will be led by a professor of the College or other guest lecturer, and will be attended by select alumni of the College's online courses. Guest seminar attendance shall be limited to 20 persons.
10. Lecture Program
 - a. The Applicant may at its discretion host speakers for lectures, holding no more than three such lectures in the year. Lectures are expected to be scheduled for weekday evenings or weekend afternoons or evenings. Attendance at such programs is expected not to exceed 75.
11. Annual Admissions Event
 - a. The Applicant may at its discretion hold one annual admissions reception for prospective students and their parents. Guest attendance is limited to 75.
12. Annual Local Alumni Reception
 - a. The Applicant may at its discretion hold one annual local alumni reception. Guest attendance is limited to 40.
13. Education Training
 - a. The Applicant may at its discretion host two training sessions in the summer months for regional boards, heads of school, and teachers of K–12 public, charter, and private schools. Training sessions are limited to 30 educators per training session.
 - b. The Applicant shall install additional landscaping, relocate pathways, erect a fence, and post “no trespassing” signs.

14. Any event held outdoors shall end by 9:00pm.
15. Applicant shall submit an annual report to the Zoning Commission outlining dates and number of, and attendance at, each of the above-referenced events.

Lucas Cherry seconded the motion, all in favor, motion carried by unanimous vote.

Karl Walton made a motion to table the discussion/decision for applications #19-012 and #19-013 Hillsdale College, to a special meeting to be held Monday, July 13, 2020 at 6:30pm. Lucas Cherry seconded the motion, all in favor, motion carried.

Karl Walton made a motion to add an agenda item, to discuss possible text amendment for farm wineries. Lucas Cherry seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Discussion was held regarding farm wineries. The commission tentatively planned a special meeting on Monday, July 20, 2020 to discuss text amendment to allow farm wineries in all zones.

MINUTES APPROVAL: May 4, 11, 18, 2020; Karl Walton made a motion to approve May minutes as written. Dan Fraro seconded the motion, all in favor, minutes are approved.

June 1, 15, 22, 2020; Karl Walton made a motion to approve June minutes as written. Dan Fraro seconded, all in favor, minutes are approved.

ADJOURNMENT Karl Walton made a motion to adjourn, Dan Fraro seconded, meeting adjourned at 8:53pm.