

Fair Haven Planning Commission

Town of Fair Haven - April 5, 2023 - Regular Meeting

Commissioners Present: Robert Richards - Vice Chair, Deborah Laiacona - clerk, Cindy Pritchard, Linda Sienkiewicz, Lorraine Brown, Patrick Frazier

Commissioners Absent: David Eighmey - Chair due to illness

Others Present: Phil Adams - Zoning Administrator, Jennifer Jackson - minute-taker, Morgan Wade, Harley Rogers, Dylan Blackmer

Agenda

1. **Call to Order:** Vice-Chair Robert Richards called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. **New Business:**

- a. **Application #A2023-011 - Lance Hinckley and Dylan Blackmer proposing Retail Sale/Service use of games, table top, cards, videos, books, etc. Use space for gaming tournaments. New Flush-mounted commercial sign. Property owner: Micheal Davidson. Location: 55 Suite A, Main Street. Tax Map #24-51-66.**

Mrs. Sienkiewicz noticed a type-o with the agenda, both applications were labeled #A2023 - 011. Hinckley/Blackmer was supposed to be labeled ending in 11 while Ruby's Bistro & Bakery LLC was supposed to be labeled A2023 - 012.

Mr. Blackmer spoke first. He explained that Mr. Hinckley could not attend today as he was too far away. He apologized for not being in attendance. They are planning to sell products and games to children. They wanted to start the business as a place for kids to hang-out, play games, and make friends. Mr. Wade explained he was hoping their store would bring kids closer together, away from phones, and to help develop communication skills.

Mrs. Pritchard asked that they keep in mind the parking across the road for owners and employees, but while moving in and carrying larger items it is ok to park in front of the building. Mrs. Laiacona stated that she has lived in areas where there were locations like theirs and they had been successful. Mr. Blackmer stated it took him a while to find a group of friends with similar interests and he was hoping this business would help those kids in need. Mrs. Laiacona explained that when she owned the corner cafe people enjoyed coming in and playing a game at her tables. Mr. Blackmer explained they were hoping to keep the store open from 8am until 9 pm at night seven days a week. Mrs. Brown asked if they thought that was early? Mrs. Pritchard asked if maybe 9pm was a little late. She asked because she didn't want something good to draw unwanted attention. Mr. Blackmer explained that they chose those hours because they want to be open when their age demographic (8 year olds to late teens) are awake on the weekends and want to be open late enough to hold tournaments and competitions, but that their hours may be changing as needed.

Mrs. Pritchard asked about parental control. Mr. Blackmer explained that there will not be video gaming systems, and they will mostly have cards and board games. Mr. Wade

explained that the “video” games they will have will be more like arcade games. Mr. Blackmer explained that they will be able to see throughout the entire store.

Mrs. Sienkiewicz asked what they were planning on selling. Mr. Blackmer explained they were planning on selling pokémon cards, D&D minifigures, and magic the gathering cards.

Mr. Richards asked if there were any questions for or from the ZA? ZA Adams stated he had no questions, just wanted the Planning Commission to be aware that he has spoken to the applicants about parking and that they have applied for a sign, which information is included in the application. Mr. Blackmer explained their name and sign description. They are calling themselves “Goblin Games”. Mr. Richards stated from the application the sign would be 11.5 inches by 53.5 inches. Mrs. Brown asked about coloring. Ms. Rogers explained the sign would be stained and wood brown. Mrs. Laiacona cautioned on wood burning as the sun is strong in that area and can fade the stain. Mr. Blacker stated they had been thinking about adding some black paint but definitely using wood stain.

Mr. Richards called for any other questions or concerns. ZA Adams suggested that the PC follow the format of voting on sight plan review then application. Mrs. Laiacona **motioned to consider the application as a minor change application and therefore exempt from site plan review.** Mrs. Pritchard seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed. Then Mrs. Pritchard **motioned to accept the application as written.** She double checked that the applicants had all necessary state permits. To which they replied they did. Mrs. Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed. Mr. Blackmer stated they were hoping for a May 1 opening date. The applicants left at 7:15 pm.

- b. Application #A2023-012 - Ruby’s Bistro & Bakery LLC proposing the change in use to restaurant and bakery with small retail gift shop. Beer and wine service accompanying meals. Ne FLush mounted commercial sign and sidewalk A-frame type sign. Four new exterior lights. Outdoor seating for 8 customers. Property owners: Jay and Lorraine Brown. Location: 73 Main Street. Tax map #24-51-30.**

Mrs. Laiacona explained that her sister is purchasing the building at 73 Main Street from Lorraine and Jay Brown, but that the sale hasn’t been fully completed yet. Mrs. Laiacona is planning on converting the kitchen into a commercial kitchen so she is able to create fancier baked goods and bistro meals. She is excited about having a space to make items that need more than what a farmers market can supply; like, a refrigerator. She is hoping to be open Wednesday through Saturday for lunch, Thursday through Saturday for dinner, and to offer brunch on Sundays. She will have a nice counter for display in the old bank counter. There will be various seating in the main room. Extra’s they are hoping for are outdoor seating as weather permits, like a French cafe. For a sign they will use the existing light from the bank. They will be putting in a new plexiglass with the bistro’s name. They are looking for additional lighting to be solar powered Victorian style lanterns at the door and one towards the park, all to make the area feel safer in general. They are hoping to add a blackboard sign with a gooseneck solar light on the board. Mrs. Pritchard stated that she might want to check with the town and their lighting project, hopefully there will be new lighting on the sidewalk. She also had questions on outdoor seating and traffic flow. Mrs. Laiacona stated that the tables would be up against the side of the building and used for quick eating. ZA Adams stated that he found out from Town Manager Gunter that there is a permit issued by the selectboard for outside seating. The permit

goes through the town manager. Mrs. Laiacona stated she was planning on seeking a class 1 beverage license because they are wanting to serve wine with dinner. She stated she was planning on another sign leaning against the building with 1 side showing for promotion. ZA Adams asked if it was removable. Mrs. Laiacona stated yes.

Mr. Richards asked if there were any other questions. Mrs. Pritchard **motioned to consider the application as a minor change application and therefore exempt from site plan review**. She then asked about the retail gift shop; what, specifically it was. Mrs. Laiacona explained that she wanted to turn a room in the vault into a gift shop, but will see actually in what location when they get inside the building. She is hoping for more of a gift shop element to the location rather than a specific area of gift shop. She's hoping to be able to have designated consignment opportunities through the farmers market connections. Mrs. Sienkiewicz seconded the motion. Mrs. Laiacona and Mrs. Brown abstained from voting. All others were in favor. And the motion passed. Mrs. Pritchard then **motioned to accept the application as written**. Mrs. Sienkiewicz seconded the motion. ZA Adams double checked on parking and state permits; which was all understood and applied for. Mrs. Laiacona and Mrs. Brown abstained from voting. All others were in favor and the motion passed at 7:45pm. Mrs. Laiacona was hoping to open in July.

3. Review of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

a. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting March 15th, 2023

Special Meeting March 29, 2023 canceled due to lack of quorum

Mrs. Sienkiewicz noticed that on page 2 #2 the last paragraph Mrs. Pritchard's last name was spelled incorrectly. She then **motioned to accept the minutes of March 15th with corrections**. Mrs. Brown seconded the motion. Mr. Frazier abstained from voting; all others were in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. Richards **acknowledged the special meeting minutes of March 29, 2023** and the no quorum notice.

4. Other Business:

a. Review of Mail: None

b. Public Comment:

- i. Mrs. Laiacona explained that she will be leaving the Planning Commission. She explained she will write a formal letter of resignation to pass on to the Selectboard, but she wanted the PC to know that she truly wished she could stay, but with her new adventures, life just isn't allowing it.
- ii. Mrs. Pritchard asked about page 35 of the Zoning Bylaws and the change Mr. Bove was suggesting from Certificate of Compliance to Certificate of Occupancy. ZA Adams stated that nothing was actually changed on March 29th, just discussed as there was no quorum to allow for voting. Mrs. Pritchards then **motioned to change page 35 section 807 to state**

Certificate of Occupancy. Mr. Richards stated he was worried about voting today as the agenda didn't reflect discussion of the zoning bylaws so it takes the public's ability to comment away.

- iii. ZA Adams stated he passed out a packet with the sample Flood hazard regulations, there aren't much differences with Fair Haven's regulations that the states when you take out the river corridor section. Mrs. Pritchard asked if we could just put Fair Haven in and go? ZA ADams stated yes, if the PC wants to change the flood hazard section of the zoning bylaws. The State's model makes the flood hazard regulations more restrictive, but you don't have to be as restrictive. Mr. Richards stated in the back of his mind he wants the ability to have a hydro project in the future. ZA Adams stated that if the PC doesn't do anything, FEMA will let them know if there are issues to be dealt with.
- iv. Mr. Richards told the PC that he asked Glen Traverse to send a formal request for Downtown designation to the Economic Development Committee.
- v. ZA Adams thanked Mrs. Laiacona for her service to the Town of Fair Haven and the Planning Commission. All her hard work and extra hours as the PC clerk were very much appreciated.
- vi. Mrs. Pritchards stated that Jessica Stannard spoke with her about planning an addition to her daycare center. She asked her to ask the Planning Commission if they would formally support her in her endeavors for funding applications. ZA Adams stated he had spoken with Ms. Stannard about her ideas. She stated that the upstairs of Ms Stannards building is a challenge to modify as house revert could become more difficult. She has decided that building a small separate building to replace the age of kids she needed upstairs would be an easier choice. Mr. Richards cautioned against a letter of support as they might need to rule on another zoning request so they can't say they are in favor because they might need to vote again.

5. Adjournment:

- a. Mrs. Sienkiewicz **motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 pm.** The motion was seconded by Mrs. Laiacona. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

**** Next Scheduled Regular Planning Commission Meeting is on May 3, 2023**
(April 19, 2023 regular meeting canceled due to Municipal Building Closure)**

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Jackson, Minute-taker