

**Town of Stuyvesant
Planning Board Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Members in Attendance

Tim Hotaling

Harold Leiser

Joe Belline

Gale Bury

Diane Fingar

Howard Gibbons

Kathryn Schneider

Tal Rapplelea, Esq.

Melissa Naegeli, acting Secretary

**Application Workshop for Rudolph Family Farm/Sharptown Ridge, LLC
384-404 Sharptown Road**

Appearing for Applicant:

Ron Rudolph, Owner/Applicant

Max Mahalek, Cuddy & Fedder, LLP

Walter Chatham, Architect

Pat Prendergast, Engineer

Chairman Tim Hotaling called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hotaling asked Melissa Naegeli to take a Roll Call for attendance. All members were present.

Chairman Hotaling explained that due to staffing problems, the minutes of the previous meeting were not completed yet and would be considered at the next meeting.

Chairman Hotaling read the project summary:

The applicant seeks to develop the 58.48-acre property (comprising of 3 tax lots) for diversified agricultural use, repurposing of an existing residence on the property into a farm stand and accessory office, construction of a new residence for the owners, construction of a new main guest house and the construction of 20 "agricultural tourist units" that may house up to 78 guests on the property.

Chairman Hotaling explained that “agricultural tourist units” was in quotations because there was no such description in our Zoning Law.

Chairman Hotaling turned the meeting over to Max Mahalek, Cuddy & Feder, to explain the project specifications. Mr. Mahalek asked if would be possible to use the thumb drive to put the documents on the large screen. Melissa Naegeli set up the television for the request.

Mr. Mahalek explained the vision of the project to include organic farming, horse boarding and riding, and dwelling units for visitors to learn about agriculture. He explained that these units would only be for short-term stays. He also said that they had met with the Building Department on their plans and the proposed project meets regulations and no variances would be required, per a letter from the Building Inspector. Mr. Mahalek explained the different aspects of the project and said up to 15 full time jobs would be created and that there would accommodations for up to 78 people, maximum. He added that their goals were to preserve open spaces, organic farming, and growing in prime soils.

Mr. Mahalek then introduced the project Architect, Walter Chatham and asked hm to review the drawings and layouts as previously submitted.

After the presentation several questions were raised:

*(**the questions were not necessarily in the order as shown below – they have been grouped to Board and Public Questions)*

Questions from the Board (Applicant responses are italicized)

How will the vehicles get to where the units are?

Existing farm roads will be utilized. They will be regraded and curbing installed as necessary.

When were the perc tests hole dug?

They were dug in March or April. They were covered back over so there wouldn't be a hazard of holes in the open fields.

Will the amenities only be open to guests or to the general public?

The amenities will be open to the public.

What is the expected increase in traffic?

6-8 deliver vehicles/day and parking available for approximately 87 vehicles. A full traffic study has not been done yet. They are looking at the

regulations for mobile home parks and road regulations. All roads will meet spec requirements.

Will there be kitchens in the units?

Kitchenettes are planned.

How will the units be constructed?

Looking at various options, one being contracting with a company for pre-fab construction.

How much of the land will be dedicated to agricultural operations?

There will continue to be a lease on 25 acres for hay, etc. and they are working with the existing lease holder, Bell Town, for organic products.

Due to the working relationship between the Applicant and Bell Town (abutting property owner), Joe Belline recused himself from further discussions on this project. Mr. Belline does work for Bell Town and doesn't want to appear to have a conflict.

Will the 16 horses be there year-round?

Yes

Are there plans for manure management?

Yes, composting and re-using.

Will there be paddocks?

Horses will be boarded as shown on the plan.

Will there be turnout pastures?

We can look at reconditioning some of the property to meet standards for turnout pastures.

Questioned the accuracy of the water use of 1000 gal/day listed in the application.

Questioned the answer to the increase in electrical usage.

Questioned the 1100 gal of petroleum storage shown on the application.

Questioned the use of pesticides affirmative answer on the application.

The parts of the applications that were questioned will be revisited in the long-form application. There is no petroleum storage planned for the project.

When is the project expected to be operational?

2025

Will local builders be used for the construction?

The plan is to use local contractors.

What will the signage be?

Minimal signage and will be within regulations. They would like to keep with the atmosphere of the area.

Tal Rappleyea said sign plans would need to be reviewed by the Board.

Questions from the Public (Applicant responses in italics)

Where will people park?

All units will have 2 parking spaces. There will also be parking for the farm buildings and parallel parking along the farm road.

There are 87 parking spaces included in the plan.

They will keep the roads unpaved and only use curbing as necessary.

What are the square footage of the units?

*600-2000 sq ft range.***

This was later clarified to be 540-1400sq ft range of units

Will the units be 1, 2, 3 season and will there be plumbing?

Ideally, they will be plumbed.

They will be homes?

They will be short-term rentals and the property will not be subdivided.

What happens if the project gets sold or someone wants to stay longer?

A change in use would require a new application process.

What is the length of time for a stay?

There is no regulation in the Code that specifies what short term is but they are willing to work with the Planning Board on conditions.

Is there a plan for erosion control and septic?

Currently working on the plan for erosion control and septic. The property is being checked over for appropriate placement for septic to get a SPEDES Permit.

A Storm Water Permit will be required and would be reviewed by the Town Engineer and also require a State review.

With a Conservation Easement on the property, why is this before the Planning Board and not the Zoning Board of Appeals?

Due diligence was done prior to purchasing the property and there was

noting to ban development of the site.

They spoke with Town Officials and presented their application first to the Building Department. They have a letter that states no variance would be required for the project but a Site Plan Review would be.

What is agricultural about 20 rental units?

The people staying are there to learn and participate in agricultural activities

Can the Planning Board put requirements on what percentage of the project is rental and what is agricultural business.

Chairman Hotaling explained that it will be difficult to classify this business.

Will the people who rent be required to participate in the agricultural activities?

Zoning powers cannot control what the people do. The experiences are offered.

Why would the traffic study be separate? The public would like to see that information.

The estimate of 78 guests is a maximum, 2 people in every bed. That does not necessarily equal 78 vehicles. It's expected that there will be families and ride sharing.

What will the foundations be?

There will be slabs

How many homes per acre will there be?

There are 20 units planned on 10 acres, ½ acre per unit

That area is 5 acre zoning, would it be re-zoned?

The property isn't being subdivided.

Will the distillery be open to the public?

Yes, with one site or local products used.

What is the background of the developer?

The owner has invested in many start-ups, has experience in distillery, and owns and operates many small hotels in NJ and other states with experience in hospitality. He also grew up on a farm and learned about farm operations. His son has experience with horses and operations of horse

businesses. They would like to have a symbiotic relationship between the various operations of the business.

Does the owner currently have other businesses like this?

Has all of the components separately, no business combining them.

Harold Leiser recommended that the Applicant look at collecting the runoff water from the roofs of the units and storing to use on flowers and crops. He said letting it run will contribute to erosion.

Stuyvesant Fire Company Chief Steve Montie asked that the Town Board find ways to have the speed limit enforced on Sharptown Road. He also requested that an alarm system be included in the plans and that the Fire Company be included in access plans for emergency response.

Chairman Hotaling said he is hung up on the accessory unit question although it isn't expressly prohibited. Mr. Mahalek said NYS Law says any ambiguity in code goes to the applicant.

Tal Rappleyea said the Code Enforcement Officer made a determination that the proposed project meets the Town Zoning Code. He further explained that it didn't have to go to the Zoning Board due to the determination of the Code Enforcement Officer.

Mr. Rappleyea explained the process for an aggrieved person to appeal the decision of the Building Department to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Harold Leiser gave credit to Chairman Hotaling for convening the workshop and allowing the public to participate to get information.

Max Mahalek thanked the Board and the public for their time.

Tal Rappleyea said he will prepare the Escrow Agreement and the Applicant will fund the Escrow Account to pay for the Engineer to review the plans.

With no further questions, comments, or business before the Board, Chairman Hotaling adjourned the meeting at 8:23pm.