

Town of Rockland Planning Board
Public Hearing April 18, 2012

Present: Chairman Thomas Ellison, Richard Barnhart, James Severing, Chris Andreola, Carol Park and Phil Vallone. **Absent:** Nancy Hobbs
Also present: Charles Irace, Code Enforcement Officer, Thomas Ward, Engineer for the town.

Chairman Ellison opened the meeting with the pledge to the flag. On a motion by Phil, seconded by Carol the public hearing for the Sweet Mountain Berry Farms change in use application was opened at 7:00 pm.

Mr. Rick Bishop presented an overview of his projected use for the old CRMC clinic building on Rockland Road, Roscoe. Part of the building would be used for farmer housing, part for coolers and wash station and part for potato chip processing. He currently has five workers living at the Rockland House and operates his potato chip process at the Tennenah Lake Golf Course kitchen during the winter months.

The building is approximately 2400 square feet, has sufficient parking and turn around area for truck delivery. Mr. Bishop sells his produce and potato chips at the city green market. They have strict guidelines, inspections, licenses and insurance for the products sold. The fryers are comparable to McDonald's in size. He would be operating them two days per week to start and hopefully business will increase. If odor is a problem additional equipment would be installed to mitigate the issue.

Chairman Ellison paused the meeting to allow the public present to view the site plan.

Mr. Perry Kuehn addressed the Board.

- Does light manufacturing set a precedent for other operations to locate in the area? The proposed operation is an agriculture permitted operation. The application gets a little complicated with the addition of housing and processing but the Planning Board determined that this was an agricultural activity and would not set a precedent for light manufacturing. The potato chip process is an accessory use to the agriculture activity, not allowable as a stand alone operation.

- Does the Board have an 'after' authority over the project? No, but the board may set conditions such as hours of operation and truck deliveries with future growth in mind.

Mr. Robert Eckert addressed the Board.

- While in favor of the operation his concerns were with the additional traffic in and out of the property and the children in the neighborhood as well as the early hours of operation. As farming is an early in the day business this was expected and the day may start as early as 4:45 am in the summer months. Truck traffic would be more limited and be during business hours.

Ms. Mary Mullig addressed the Board.

- Which agriculture district is this in? There are no special agriculture district designations in the Town.

Mrs. Gloria Neer addressed the Board.

- Concerns with storage of farming equipment and supplies becoming unsightly in and around the property. Perhaps storage containers could be utilized for the excess equipment and

supplies. The green houses would be used as storage during the winter months. The equipment used daily would be parked nearby for easy access.

Ms. Jeannette Hubert addressed the Board.

- Where would the extra water for the green houses come from? Municipal water is available at the site.

On a motion by Phil, seconded by Richard the public hearing was closed.

Chairman Ellison addressed the public stating that the purpose of the public hearing was to hear the questions and concerns of the public and find ways to mitigate potential problems to the satisfaction of all parties. The Board will take another look at the site plan and ask that locations for storage be designated on the plan.

Possible conditions to address:

- Hours of operation
- Pre-empt any problems with odor by installing adequate ventilation/equipment
- Traffic patterns
- Equipment storage

The meeting was adjourned.