

Town of Rockland Planning Board
April 4, 2018

Members present: Chairman Thomas Ellison, Richard Barnhart, James Severing, Chris Andreola, Nancy Hobbs and Joy Wood. Absent Robert Eckert. Also present, Supervisor Robert Eggleton, Code Enforcement Officer, Glenn Gabbard, Highway Superintendent, Ted Hartling and engineer Wes Illing.

Aslan Project, Terwilliger Rd, Livingston Manor

At 7:00 p.m. Chairman Ellison opened the public hearing on the Aslan Project. Chen Yerushalmi presented an overview of the project - clusters of geodesic domes surrounding a small pond in the middle of approximately 72 acres of land. This would be a private campground of individually owned domes, 12 - 60 domes in total at the end of the project. Cooking facilities would be limited to one central building, not at the individual units. He felt they needed to hold a public hearing early on in order to address any concerns as they formulate the plan.

Ted Hartling - Highway Superintendent discussed the entry road, calling it a 'road by use'. This is 12-15' wide with no base and is unpassable at times. It would not be fair to expect the taxpayers of the town to make improvements to this road to accommodate traffic for this project. There is also a barn situated very close to the road that would inhibit widening the road.

Fred Moore - a member of the hunting club that borders this project site asked about the sewage treatment for this type of project.

William Moore - stated that not only is the hunting club adjacent to this property but also state lands border it and between the two there are a lot of hunters in the area.

Robert Eggleton - Supervisor for the town stated that he feels this project is more like a club or cluster driven project than a normal campground according to the DOH definition. He also asked if there were any deed restrictions on the property.

Margaret Clark - property owner adjacent to the site. Ms. Clark stated that the property sits in a 'bowl' and as such sound is reflected back significantly. Twelve domes would be acceptable but sixty would be a frightening number. This property is also very wet and draining it to build on would be a challenge. The roadway is steep and hard to travel at times.

Greg Knox - asked if the individual domes would be rented out to others by the owners.

Tom Ward, engineer for the project, stated that the roadway would be improved at their expense, not the taxpayers, parking would be located at the top of the property and golf carts used to access the domes. The project is in it's early stages and the developer wanted to hear comments and concerns from the neighbors as well as the board. Many items will be addressed as the plans progress - roads, water, sewer, lighting etc.

Chairman Ellison stated that two written comments were received via e-mail and stated similar concerns. The public hearing will be recessed and not closed as the project will continue being reviewed by the board. The public will be notified at a later date when the hearing is re-opened.

Chairman Ellison opened the regular meeting of the planning board with the pledge to the flag. On a motion by Richard, seconded by Joy the minutes of the March meeting were accepted as distributed.

Tom Ward presented the clerk with the special use application and proof of mailings for the property owners adjacent to the project site. He stated that all the proper infrastructure will be shown on the site plan (roads, water lines, sewer lines, lighting, etc) and approvals from various agencies will be submitted. Chairman Ellison asked that a copy of the deed restrictions be submitted for review as well.

Firelight Camps, Little Ireland Road, Livingston Manor

As a property owner close to the project site, Chairman Ellison recused himself from the board as Wes Illing presented information on the Firelight Camp glamping project.

Wes stated that they need precise topography maps to design the roads within the project. They are waiting for the snow to melt and are hopeful it will be soon. Once these are done a formal site plan can be presented. In the mean time he presented the environmental review form to begin this process. This project is fully compliant with the DOH specs for a campground and the potable water application will be reviewed by the Albany office. Wes' brother is the senior engineer at the local DOH office so all paperwork will go through Albany.

A storm water plan and sewage treatment plan will be submitted to the DEC for their review and approval. Approximately 7 acres will be considered disturbed for the project, the roads will most likely be asphalt and not gravel, there will be 80 to 100 sites when the full project is completed with operation being 6 months of the year (April - October). There will be a centrally located food service building with gas grills for individual cooking and table areas for eating. There will not be fires at the individual sites. Some sites will have private bathrooms and some will share a common bathroom facility. Dark sky lighting will line the foot paths.

The existing Seekamp house will be renovated and used for manager housing. The debris on the property will be cleaned up and the smaller building removed. They are under contract to purchase this property. They expect to have five full time employees year round and approximately 60 part time summer help.

Nancy made a motion that the Planning Board be lead agency, Joy seconded and carried 5/0. A letter of intent will be sent to the DEC, DOH and county planning. A letter of intent will be sent.

Vice Chairman Barnhart asked if there were any comments from the public present. Mr. Joe & John Templin stated that they were neighboring property owners to the site and stated they reviewed the Ithaca site on-line and noticed it mentioned that dogs were acceptable, a bar was on site and this was a wedding venue. Would this project offer the same? This property was also a 'bowl' and sound traveled significantly. They had environmental and economic questions about this project.

Vice Chairman Barnhart stated that this project was also in it's preliminary planning stages and many items will be addressed in the coming months. All surrounding property owners will be notified when a public hearing would be scheduled and would have an opportunity to voice their questions and concerns.

Chairman Ellison rejoined the board.

Mr. Michael Misner from Keiser Equipment was not present to continue the review of his property issues. Mr. Gabbard will contact him.

Nancy mentioned that she attended the county training on solar farms.

There being no further business before the board, Jim made a motion to adjourn, Richard seconded and carried.