

Town of New Haven
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD MEETING
HYBRID Public Meeting
Monday, January 22, 2024
Meeting Minutes

DRB Members Present:

In person: Paul Audy, Don Johnston. *Remote:* Charlie Roy, Victor LaBerge, Roger Hamilton, Carol Charbonneau, Tom Fyles (joined meeting at 8:20 p.m.)
Absent: Kathy Barrett

Staff Present:

Peggy Connor, Zoning Administrator, Minutes

Visitors Present:

In person: Benj Deppman on behalf of Addison County Field Days, Cara Mosier, Megan Sutton, Brenda Deering, Bruce Putnam, Cindy Kayhart, Kathy Nisun, Paul Quesnel, Ken Button; applicants Steve and Lisa Dupoise; and Roger Waterman, Curtis Mraz, Charles Mraz. *Remote:* Mike Reed, Tiffany and Josh Shaw, Paul Metzger.

Call to Order:

Vice Chair Charlie Roy called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

I. Adjustments to Agenda:

Charles Mraz requested an informal discussion with DRB members regarding his proposal to relocate his honey business from Middlebury to the Choquette farm located at 3432 Route 17 in New Haven.

II. Visitors Business

None.

III. Permit #2024-DRB-01-CU: Submitted by Addison County Fair & Field Days, Inc., 1790 Field Days Road for a conditional use permit for commercial indoor recreation in the RA-2/RA-10 zoning district, per New Haven Bylaws Section 341

Benj Deppman, Vice President for the Addison County Field Days' Board of Directors, advised that the calendar of events held in addition to the five days of Field Days in August, has not changed throughout the time he has served on the Board since 2008. He added that he was only recently made aware of neighbors expressing concerns regarding noise and/or lighting, particularly when the site is used as a wedding venue. Benj explained that events throughout the year are critical to Field Day's financial success, especially since the organization is now subject to stormwater regulations, estimated to cost \$500,000. Drafting a 5-year capital improvement plan for Field Days has been delayed while the Board of Directors seek ways to raise the necessary funds to address stormwater management. One goal, however, is to replace the show tent with a permanent show building since the cost to rent the show tent each year during Field Days is \$15,000.

Cara Mosier who serves as Business Manager for Field Days, advised that new contracts have been drafted for wedding events which now state that all music must end by 10:00 p.m.

Field Days Board member Megan Sutton noted that Addison County Field Days was first established in 1948, and therefore predates the New Haven Zoning Regulations. She also asked what conditional and by-right uses are allowed in the zoning district where Field Days is located. Don Johnston advised that the parcels lie in the RA-2 and RA-10 zoning districts, adding that conditional and permitted uses for all zoning districts within the Town are listed in

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the New Haven Zoning Bylaws available on the Town’s website at:
<https://www.newhavenvt.com/>

Abutting property owners Tiffany and Josh Shaw attended the meeting remotely. Tiffany expressed their full support of the spirit of Field Days as an agricultural center; however, non-agricultural events held throughout the year, such as weddings, should comply with reasonable expectations related to noise, lighting, and parking. Also:

- Campers appear to be parked at the east border of the main parking field at various times throughout the year, with infrastructure of the camp sites visible from the Shaws’ property. The line of campers impacts their property value and quality of life, and it is requested that the site be reviewed by the DRB as a “campground,” and to consider a form of screening.
- The lights sporadically left on at night in the Paquette Exhibit Building, and occasionally in other buildings could be resolved by considering the installation of timers.
- Traffic in and out of the expanded gate on Route 17 is a significant traffic hazard; therefore, it is requested that the gate only be used as intended for passenger vehicles or fair attendees during the five days of the Fair.

Cara Mosier noted that most campers on site are there for specific events and/or Field Days. Although there are power hookups, there is no septic. In terms of screening, Bruce Putnam advised the area is far too wet and would require a special kind of tree or fencing. Brenda Deering agreed that screening would be aesthetically pleasing, but providing sufficient housing for animals on a limited budget rises to a higher priority. Brenda added that the non-profit organization is managed by volunteer board members, who may not have been made aware of additional permits, beyond those regularly obtained by Bill Roleau for new display buildings.

Don Johnston suggested that any proposed expansion plans come before the New Haven Development Review Board for a site plan review, at which time the public may also comment. Victor LaBerge moved to table a decision to allow the DRB to further research the campground issue and how the Town’s zoning regulations apply; Don Johnston seconded.

MOTION PASSED:
5 - Yes (V. LaBerge, D. Johnston, P. Audy, C. Roy)
1 – No (C. Charbonneau)
1 – Abstaining (R. Hamilton)
HEARING CONTINUED.

**IV. Close Hearing on Permit #2024-DRB-01-CU
Deferred. Hearing Continued.**

V. Permit #2024-DRB-02-CU: Submitted by Steve and Lisa Dupoise for a conditional use permit to operate an automotive repair and auto body repair shop at 7407 Ethan Allen Highway in the Highway Commercial zoning district, per New haven Zoning Bylaws Section 341

As he explained at the DRB’s meeting on September 18, Steve Dupoise reviewed the preliminary plat showing the following proposed change of use at 7407 Ethan Allen Highway:

- Repurpose the 4 bays of the existing garage for an auto repair and alignment facility (ADAS: Advanced Driver Assistance Systems)
- Rent existing house
- Tear down large building and replace with south-facing 54’ x 120’ structure, plus parking

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- Install pump station to connect to existing septic located in right of way along neighboring Hamilton property, and install septic pressure tank inside existing house to pump water to shop
 - Create parking area by squaring off existing driveway by utility pole to the north edge of the garage to accommodate an average of 80 cars/day for servicing
 - Anticipate 9 employees on site
 - No car sales or parts cars on site
 - Shop will be equipped with a paint booth, as required by the state
 - The 1.1-acre parcel does not require Act 250 approval
 - Hours of operation: Monday-Friday 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

123 Steve added that Lincoln Applied Geology is preparing the wastewater design, D&F
124 Construction has been hired for site development, and the new buildings will be Morton steel
125 buildings, similar to the new storage buildings recently constructed by Ethan Allen Highway
126 Storage.

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128 Paul Audy moved to approve permit #2024-DRB-02-CU as presented, upon condition all
129 required state and federal regulations are met; Carol Charbonneau seconded.

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131 **MOTION PASSED:**

132 **6 - Yes (R. Hamilton, D. Johnston, P. Audy, V. LaBerge, C. Roy)**

133 **0 – No (C. Charbonneau)**

134 **0 – Abstaining**

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136 **VI. Close Hearing on Permit #2024-DRB-02-CU**

137 Don Johnston moved to close the hearing on Permit #2024-DRB-02-CU: Victor La Berge
138 seconded.

139 **MOTION PASSED:**

140 **6 - Yes (R. Hamilton, D. Johnston, P. Audy, C. Charbonneau, V. LaBerge, C. Roy)**

141 **0 – No**

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143 **Added Agenda Item:**

144 **Informal discussion re: Mraz Proposal to move honey business to 3432 Route 17**

145 Charles Mraz, his nephew Curtis Mraz, and Roger Waterman reviewed preliminary plans to
146 move their honey business, Champlain Valley Apiaries, from Middlebury to the Choquette farm
147 they plan to purchase located at 3432 Route 17. He noted that Albert and Jeannine Choquette
148 have a lifetime lease for the existing home. Early plans include using the existing barn perhaps
149 for storage, and to build a new structure for the honey business. It is anticipated to have 5
150 employees, both full- and part-time, and some temporary employees, but no more than 10 at
151 any one time. A new septic design is part of the sale since Ron LaRose has advised another
152 septic would be appropriate for a new building. There are 1,000 hives at 30 different locations,
153 and honey will be sold at the retail shop on site. All future plans will be shared with the Town as
154 they develop with the hope of being in operation by 2026.

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156 Noting the focus of the New Haven Town Plan continues to be the town's strong agricultural and
157 rural heritage, DRB members expressed their support for the proposal.

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159 **VII. Approval of July 3, 2020 DRB meeting minutes**

160 DEFERRED for lack of quorum of those present at the July 3, 2023 meeting.

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Approval of December 4, 2023 DRB meeting minutes

Carol Charbonneau noted a typo on the December 4, 2023 DRB meeting minutes (Line 51: “two”), and moved to approve the minutes as amended; Victor LaBerge seconded.

MOTION PASSED:

5 – Yes (P. Audy, V. LaBerge, C. Charbonneau, R. Hamilton, T. Fyles)

0 – No

2 – Abstentions (D. Johnston, C. Roy)

VIII. Adjourn

Tom Fyles moved to adjourn; C. Charbonneau seconded.

MOTION PASSED:

7 - Yes (R. Hamilton, T. Fyles, C. Charbonneau, V. LaBerge, P. Audy, D. Johnston, C. Roy)

0 – No

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Connor

Charlie Roy, Vice Chair

Paul Audy

Carol Charbonneau

Roger Hamilton

Tom Fyles

Victor LaBerge

Don Johnston