Town of Jefferson

Zoning Board Meeting Minutes

Jefferson Community Center

November 9, 2023

Members of the board present: Chairperson, Kim Perry, Tom Walker, Biff Wyman, Rodney Houghton, Jason Call, Wayne Bilquin, alternate.

Members of the public: Maura Chappelle, Richard Garabedian, Bailey Couture, Rebecca Lebeau, Mike Lebeau, Joe Vigneault, James Ackerman SR., Andrea Gendron, Megan Wells, Stacey Hicks.

Minutes recorded by: Megan Wells

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm by Chairperson, Kim Perry.

**Hearing-Bailey, Colby, and Pierre Couture, 123 Turnpike Road**

The Couture’s requested a Special Exception to operate a short-term rental. The rental will be available for at least 4 vehicles. Bailey Couture spoke and said that they had bought the property from their mother and have been renovating it. Fire Chief, Chris Milligan has already inspected the property and gave approval. Kim Perry asked how many people are allowed at any given night. Bailey replied, 8 people. Kim Perry asked if Bailey will be handling it himself. Bailey said that Colby is handling it and that Bailey is the Property Manager and that they use a local cleaning service.

Kim Perry asked the members of the public if anyone wanted to speak. Rebecca Lebeau spoke, as she is a neighbor to this property and stated that she is fine with it.

Richard Garabedian spoke and said that he thinks it’s a good idea as someone local is managing it and it will get people to stay in Jefferson bringing in more business. Richard encouraged the board to approve the request.

Kim Perry asked what would happen if there was a problem at night. Bailey said that the renters would have his and his brother’s phone number.

Jason Call asked about house rules and not being a disturbance for neighbors. Bailey said that if the renters did not follow the rules, he would ask them to leave or quiet down.

The board closed the hearing for members of the public so they could deliberate.

The board discussed the application in accordance with the Land Use Ordinance and reviewed the criteria for a Special Exception.

Wayne Bilquin made a motion to approve. Jason Call Seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Hearing-Stacey Hicks and Forest Hicks, 685 Presidential Highway**

Kim Perry stated that this was a Special Exception for a short-term rental. Kim asked the members of the public if anyone wanted to speak to it. Members of the public said nothing. Kim asked if there was any correspondence on this. Jason Call said he had not heard from the Town Office, so he was not sure, but didn’t think so. The board discussed, and it was mentioned that Fire Chief, Chris Milligan had already done a walk through for safety codes, and there are no structural changes.

Kim Perry read through the application. The renters would be required to check in at 11 am and check out by 4 pm. There cannot be any events, gatherings or parties without prior consent. No smoking, and if you do smoke, there is a $250 fine. There are not pets. Renters will be charged a $350 fine for unauthorized pets, and the pets and renters will need to be removed. They will offer travelers insurance which will be available on their website. The parking limit is 4 vehicles. There are 4 bedrooms upstairs and 3 bedrooms downstairs. The building has air conditioning and wifi. Renters will be able to book a stay as part of a wedding package. The barn is not included in the rental.

Kim Perry asked the members of the public if anyone had any questions.

Richard Garabedian encouraged the board to approve the request, as it meets the full criteria, and would be a good thing for Jefferson. He also mentioned that they have strict rules and local management.

Kim Perry asked how they are booking, and Jason Call said it was mentioned in a previous meeting by Stacey Hicks that they can book with Bretton Woods Vacations.

Kim Perry mentioned that the application did not say how many people are allowed. The board used the rule of 2 people per room, since the application did not say.

Kim Perry asked if there were any final questions from the members of the public. There were none. The Board reviewed the criteria for a Special Exception.

Biff Wyman made a motion to approve. Rodney Houghton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Previous Meeting Minutes**

The board looked over the meeting minutes from the last meeting. Jason Call made a motion to approve the minutes. Biff Wyman seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Other Business**

Jason Call talked about a few things that were brought up in the last meeting. He said that people are concerned about the number of short-term rental units and the lack of enforcement. Things like fireworks and loud parties are a concern. It was mentioned that some people want to overregulate and then others think that people should be able to do what they want with their own land. It was mentioned that the Planning Board is looking at a few other town’s ordinances, like the Town of Jackson. Jackson has an application fee and then the application goes to the Selectmen’s Office, then the Building Inspector reviews it, and then it goes to the Planning Board, and then back to the Selectboard. Jackson also has a complaint rule set up.

A member of the public, Stacey Hicks, entered the meeting at 8:08pm.

The board continued their conversation and said that people were saying that short term rentals are driving up property values and young people can’t afford to buy anything. Rodney mentioned that there is always a public safety concern. Maura Chappelle suggested to have the complaints go the state level, this way the state deals with it and the Town does not have to hire additional staff like people in administration or police officers. Biff Wyman asked Stacey Hicks what the limit on the number of people was for their rental. Stacey said it was 14. The board told Stacey that her application was approved, and she would get a letter in the mail.

Kim Perry mentioned that there is an application for a short-term rental coming up in December.

**Jefferson North**

James Ackerman Sr., asked about Jefferson North and what’s going on in the lot next to it, as there was a large excavator there the other day. Jefferson North owns the lot next door. Ackerman was told by the property owner that there was going to be a campground going there. Kim Perry said that the property owner may have to submit an application to the Board depending on what is being planned there. Wayne Bilquin said he heard there was going to be a house built there. Ackerman asked, if the property owners are going to build a campground, would they have to present a plan to the Selectboard. Jason Call said yes. Ackerman said the property owner said he didn’t need anything for the driveway. Wayne Bilquin said the property owner would have to go through the state of NH DOT for the driveway.

Jason Call said he remembers approving the property for as rental units, but that is not what the property owner wanted. Jason also recalled that the Zoning Board did not allow for the barn on the property to be used for functions of any kind. Ackerman said that he’s heard 3 different things from the property owner of what’s going to go on the lot. Ackerman said he was just bringing it to the board’s attention, as it’s their job. Kim Perry stated, that ultimately, it’s the Select Board’s job, the Zoning Board of Adjustment only acts when there is an application in front of them.

**2024 Budget**

Jason Call mentioned that Charlene had brought up the budget for next year at a previous meeting. Kim Perry said he looked at the budget, and that it looked good. Jason Call suggested to make a motion that the Select Board use the same budget amount as this year for 2024. Kim Perry said that the total budget was $5,175, and as of October they were at $4,164, so Kim agreed with keeping the budget the same.

Kim Perry made a motion to keep the budget the same. Tom Walker seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Jason Call made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Kim Perry seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:37pm.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Megan Wells