

Readfield Planning Board

Minutes of Wednesday, June 26, 2019

Board Members Attending: Paula Clark, (Chair), Jack Comart, Don Witherill, William Buck, Jay Hyland, Ed Bergman

Others attending: Clif Buuck (Alternate CEO), Larry Perkins, Tom Molokie, Nancy Perkins, Grace Keene, Vincent Zarella, Robert Stuebner, Tammy Snow, Bonnie Harris, Casey Coyne, Eric Dyer.

Meeting opened at 6:35pm.

New Application: Robert Stuebner for Mastodon Farms, LLC. Application is for the current use of one 30'x72' greenhouse and the accessory structures currently under construction, all of which are intended for the commercial cultivation of cannabis as now approved by the State. The Project is located at 17 Pine Rest Cottage Road, map 128, lot 87.

In the written application, Mastodon Farms proposes long-range approval for the eventual construction and use of a total of three 30'x72' greenhouses, three 22'x48' hoop houses, a 50'x100' pole shed, a 24'x40' storage building, a 10'x12' electrical shed and a 40'x270' fenced, outdoor flowering area. Mr. Stuebner stated at the meeting however, they are looking for long-range approval of up to nine greenhouses along with the 6,000 sq. ft. of operational buildings.

Paula Clark first commented that the primary issue at hand is whether the proposed use is "Agriculture", and raises numerous other questions. And, how will Town's review interface with State regulations for this new industry?

Mr. Stuebner introduced himself, and described his background. He is being licensed as a "Caregiver" under State regulations and Paula summarized what constitutes a "Caregiver." Stuebner has applied for and will be receiving this license and will be the first Caregiver in the project. Others associated with Mastodon Farms will follow—probably up to 10 Caregivers. The license allows for each Caregiver to manage up to 30 flowering plants. Their stated goal is to provide medicine. They will be growing other agricultural products as well.

Mr. Stuebner stated that the property will have a 24/7 fully automated security system. There will also be constructed a 6-7 ft. privacy fence around the compound. Additionally, no one will be allowed access to the property who are not fully licensed as a Caregiver or Caregiver's assistance.

Jack asked about the impact of odor. Stuebner stated that odor can be mitigated with filters if it becomes an issue. Stuebner stated that it would likely be only the outdoor area which could create odor—although it is non-toxic. The outdoor growing area is limited to plants for personal consumption only.

Water usage is estimated to be less than 2500 gpd at full build-out.

The siding/roofing material is constructed of opaque material. Lighting will be activated only after dark.

As for marketing the product, Stuebner stated that 25% will be sold directly to patients, the remaining 75% will be delivered wholesale to retail & manufacturing facilities. No manufacturing or refining of the product will be conducted on this site. The business concept is one of “collective” farming. Mastodon Farms begins by obtaining two State licenses for the owners—himself and partner, Matt Kapinos.

In response to questions, Mr. Stuebner stated the proposed facility is 638 ft. from the edge of the elementary school property and about ¼-mile from Maranacook Lake. The State can inspect the facility for compliance at any time without notice.

Larry Perkins described the ownership of the Pine Rest Cottage Road and the maintenance agreement for the road. He also expressed concern that no indoor toilets are proposed for the greenhouse workers at this time, and that the road will be impacted by a substantial increase in vehicular traffic.

Tom Molokie spoke to the subject of “Caregivers”.

Chair Clark again raised the primary question at this time as to whether the use is purely agriculture, or not, and if it is subject to Planning Board Site Review. The applicant and his attorney, Tammy Snow, argued that it is strictly agriculture but the Chair’s concern is that the Planning Board is not well-versed in this type of business yet. They need to become more familiar with the issues and obtain further legal review before proceeding.

Jack Comart expressed concern that the LUO requires approved land uses in Readfield to comply with all State and Federal regulations and questions whether this use could meet Federal regulations.

The Town Manager (Eric Dyer) recommended the Board get input from the Town’s attorney prior to further review.

MOTION made by Jack Comart; Seconded by Jay Hyland to table the application for now. Vote: 6-0.

Other Business:

MOTION made by Jack Comart, SECONDED by Don Witherill to approve the minutes of 03/27/19.
VOTE: 4-0-2 (Bill & Ed).

Alternate CEO Clif Buuck brought up the issue that a long, narrow strip of land lying between the Chimney Road and the Kents Hill ski slope (map 106, lot 002) was included into the Academic District when the District was created, although this parcel is in private ownership. The lot is for sale and should perhaps revert back to its former Rural Residential classification unless KHS moves to purchase it. No action was taken.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55.

Submitted by Clif Buuck, Alt. CEO

APPROVED 8-28-2019