

Pomfret Planning Commission Meeting

Pomfret Town Office
Pomfret, VT
12/04/2017
approved 12/18/17

Attendance: - -Bill Emmons, Orson St. John, Ann Reynolds, Cy Benoit, Nelson Lamson, John Moore via speaker phone

Guests: Karen Hewitt, Zoning Administrator

Call To Order/Agenda Changes/Public Comment:

Bill Emmons convened the meeting at 6:15p.m. A quorum was declared.

Public Comment... There was none.

Minutes of Nov 6, 2017 as amended ... Motion made to approve the minutes by Nelson Lamson and seconded by Orson St. John. Motion approved

There was considerable discussion for the entire meeting on the comments relative to the ridgeline issues for an event tent and bike trails as submitted by S6 area /Woodstock Resorts. The Chair will write up on comments for submission to the ZBA before their meeting this week. Those comments when available will be attached to these minutes (see below). There was also discussion about the need for conditional use permits for activities, outside of skiing, for the base lodge.

John Moore sent out zoning by-laws from surrounding towns re the issue we are discussing: Home Based businesses. We will continue our discussion, input and updates on Section 3 and Section 4 of the Zoning at the next meeting.

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Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

William B. Emmons, III
Pomfret Planning Commission
870 Cloudland Road
Woodstock, VT 05091

Alan Blackmer
Chair, Pomfret Zoning Board of Adjustment
Pomfret Town Offices
North Pomfret, VT 05053

December 5, 2017

Dear Mr. Blackmer,

The Pomfret Planning Commission (PPC) recently met and now wishes to share with the Pomfret Zoning Board of Adjustment our concerns regarding the recently filed Act 250 permit application (3W0223-5) by the Woodstock Resort Corporation (WRC) for a project “generally described as constructing approximately 6.6 miles of new mountain biking trails for seasonal use at Suicide Six (S6)” and the use of “an event tent at the top of the ski lift to be used once a month, May to October.”

Several members of the PPC attended the Act 250 site visit and consequent hearing at the S6 lodge on October 31, 2017 and are very familiar with the project and the applicant’s requests to date.

The PPC is unanimous in their support for the continued success of Suicide Six and agree that the Town of Pomfret and surrounding towns will benefit from the resort’s continued success and growth. We are only concerned with the area that lies within the Pomfret Ridgeline Conservation Area and have been satisfied with the applicants plans for the change of use in this area.

The inclusion into the application of the “Suicide Six Ski Area Life Evacuation Protocols” and the assurance that all emergency medical evacuation needs will take place on the ski area’s handicap assessable chairlift and/or ski trails by motorized emergency vehicles has satisfied the PPC regarding public health requirements for emergency medical evacuation. The use of any other emergency evacuation needs should and must be met without reservation by the WRC’s staff, including the Dart helicopter service and/or the use of the neighboring Longfield driveway.

The newly revised map showing the siting of the event tent has corrected the error on the originally submitted map and is acceptable to the PPC.

The use of the neighboring Longfield driveway for “set-up” and event staff **only** is entirely acceptable and the agreement between both the Longfields and the WRC for this use is not an issue affecting the Ridgeline Conservation Area.

The notification of upcoming event dates should be a courtesy afforded to abutters but is entirely a choice that should be made by the WRC. This is their protocol regarding weddings and other events held at the Woodstock Inn and would be helpful to local abutting Pomfret residents. It should be a requirement, however, that event date notifications should be directed to Pomfret’s Zoning Administrator, Ms. Karen Hewitt.

The PPC, as has been pointed out, finds the proposed WRC project to be acceptable and potentially beneficial to our community. Our concern is “project creep”. This is the phenomenon of a successful entrepreneurial venture growing and creating a business model larger than what was originally asked for and permitted. Therefore, a Zoning Administrator must oversee a project’s growth to allow for future success that is compatible with a town’s plan and its vision for its future. The future use of the Suicide Six ski area needs to be discussed to insure the WRC’s future success is compatible to Pomfret’s town plan and the needs of its citizens.

Thank you for allowing the PPC to comment on this project.

Respectfully,

William B. Emmons, III
Chair, Pomfret Planning Commission