

TOWN OF POMFRET
ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Minutes of Hearing
December 11, 2018

MEMBERS PRESIDING: Alan Blackmer (Chair), Michael Reese, Loie Havill, and Shaun Pickett

OTHERS PRESENT: Steven Horton, George Turner, Eleanor Pizzani, Frank Perron (Selectboard), James Havill, John Peters (Selectboard), Emily Grube (Selectboard), Carol Lamson, Sharlene Kelly, John Svagzdys, Kathleen Dolan, Mark van Gulden, Christine Cole, Karen Hewitt (Zoning Administrator)

A hearing was convened for the following application:

Application #ZP18-23 by Kathleen Dolan for Continuation of Use for The South Pomfret General Store formally known as Teago General Store on parcel #0121 at 2035 Pomfret Road.

HEARING:

The hearing was opened at 6:07 PM by chair Alan Blackmer. The hearing was recorded. No conflicts of interest were disclosed. Eleanor Pizzani, Sharlene Kelly, Emily Grube (on behalf of the Selectboard), Jim Kelly by email request and Pam Pickett by email request were granted status as interested persons. Applicants Steven Horton, George Turner and Kathleen Dolan, as well as Mark van Gulden and interested persons Eleanor Pizzani, Sharlene Kelly and Emily Grube were sworn in.

Steven Horton presented the application, assisted by architect George Turner.

Site plans were presented to the board by architect George Turner.

A summary of the discussion follows:

Kathleen Dolan spoke about revitalizing but not changing the store as it is a central community business. She assured the previous owner, Chuck Gunderson that the store would be kept in the spirit of the community and not some tacky tourist place. She is trying to strike a balance between serving the community while also serving tourists. The store needs a lot of maintenance especially the interior and the basement as it was flooded during Hurricane Irene.

Kathleen Dolan also spoke about providing goods and services, clearing space for tables, having an ice cream window in the summer months and a deli.

Christine Cole spoke about keeping the store the same as it is now but addressing the needs to the community of this day and age. The Post Office will still be housed in the building.

George Turner spoke about survey maps. Wanting to add a porch similar to the Theatre. The porch would be closer to the road than the existing porch and ramp, and it would extend along the entire front of the building. Will be revising the exit stairs to apartments in the back. Also, to get everything out of the basement.

George Turner spoke about creating affordable housing in the village. Building a canopy for back door deliveries. He also spoke about installing a cantilevered deck extending over the brook on the west side of the house which faces the Abbott Library. Adding tables and chairs in the interior and exterior of the building for people to get sandwiches and stay to eat.

The construction would be phased and there may possibly be a fan condenser on the outside of the building. The buildings mechanical operations would be moved completely out of the basement.

Christine Cole stated that porch lighting would continue as it is now.

George Turner spoke regarding adding a dormer and adding a handicap facility in the interior of the building.

Steven Horton spoke about there being a definite 2 apartments, one on the second floor and one on the third floor, with the other space being a possible office or very small apartment.

John Svagzdys spoke about the waste water permit and stream alteration permit still pending. George Turner spoke about the state building code requirements and related permit still pending.

John Peters spoke about the culvert for drainage being non-existent and needing replacement.

Steven Horton stated that the septic system may not be viable and sized large enough for three apartments and potentially greater store use.

John Svagzdys stated that existing road runoff would divert to a catch basin which would act like a septic tank. Would be passive with no pump system, no fan, no noise and be conveyed to the stream through a pipe.

Michael Reese asked about snowfall onto the Pomfret Road from the roof. George Turner stated that the roof would be resingled with asphalt shingles replacing the current metal roof and would install snow guards if necessary.

Sharlene Kelly asked about parking in the lot across from the store and limiting parking in front of the building. ~ A possible remedy is to make a single handicap parking area in front of the store. George Turner said there is room for about 30 parking spaces across the road. Additional space would be available if the new septic system is installed that could be driven over by vehicles. Christine Cole said customers with trailers need space to park and maneuver their vehicles.

Emily Grube spoke about the concern for safety issues.

- Cut back trees and shrubs to improve visibility at west edge of the parking lot.
- Install a cross walk to the parking lot.
- Install a handicap parking space in front of the building
- Poor intersection as it comes to a “Y”
- Stop sign is on the wrong side of the road
- 3 parking spaces behind the building being of limited area which causes people to back into the Pomfret Road.
- Teago’s does not own the parking area on the west side of the building. It is owned by the library. Their approval may be needed for continued use. Additional parking may be needed.

Steven Horton spoke about installing signs, handicap parking in front and adding landscaping to detour the additional parking in front of the store to improve visibility. Installing markers for spaces in the lot across from the store to organize and maximize parking spaces. In the back of the building to organize to parallel park only. Also, to add a pedestrian crossing sign. He said he would need to work with the town to coordinate traffic measures.

Sharlene Kelly asked about the number of tables, George Turner responded that there would be 20-25 seats inside and a dozen seats outside.

Frank Perron said the nature of customer use of the store will change with the additional tables, because more people will come and stay for longer. Kathleen Dolan said some of the additional customers will walk over directly from Artistree.

There is no proposed lighting for the parking lot. Christine Cole said lights in parking lot would make it safer.

The applicants did not provide measurements of the distance of proposed changes to the centerline of the right of way or neighboring lot lines.

Frank Perron suggested everyone step back and look at the bigger picture by considering such changes as moving the store to address the difficult traffic and other issues with the existing location.

Shaun Pickett asked about the portable toilet (porta-potty) in the parking lot and the plan to install a better pumpable facility as there would be an installed bathroom inside.

Michael Reese stated that the ZBA needed to leave the evidence open for the application ZP18-23 The South Pomfret General Store as more information is needed to make an informed decision.

By unanimous vote, the ZBA went into deliberation session at 8:28 PM.

These minutes approved at Pomfret, Vermont, this 19 day of December, 2018.

Alan Blackmer

Alan Blackmer, Chair, Zoning Board of Adjustment