

OFFICE OF THE PLANNING BOARD
Town of Schaghticoke
August 7, 2024

PUBLIC HEARING

7: 00 P.M. **Genesis Burial Vault Special Use Permit and Site Plan Review (Tax Map #41-1-61)**. David Baker, property owner and applicant, appeared. Mr. Baker stated that his business operation, located in an HC district within an existing steel building at 943 NYS Route 40 in Melrose, consists of the custom painting of burial vaults. Following the painting process, the vaults are shipped to various destinations within the Northeast. He added that the well on the property was drilled; the septic system, designed by Steve Dean, P.E., is to be located 50'-60' from the nearby wetlands and creek. RCHD approval was granted.

In addition, Mr. Baker stated that approximately 2,300 vaults are painted by Genesis Burial Vault annually.

There were 2 public comments.

Jackie Stellone asked about the sequence of approvals from RCHD and the PB.

Kyle Knickerbocker, the adjacent neighbor to the north, asked if Genesis Burial Vault was located in an RA zone. Mr. Knickerbocker stated that he had not been notified of a change from an RA district to a HC zone.

Chairman Alessandrini replied that Genesis Vault, 943 NYS Route 40, is located in a HC zoning district. Mr. Alessandrini added that the Town Board has jurisdiction with regard to the consideration and decisions concerning changes to zoning districts.

Mr. Knickerbocker had additional questions concerning the location of the septic system and well. Mr. Baker left the PB meeting to collect the survey to share with Mr. Knickerbocker and the Board.

The hearing was closed at 7:12 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING

7: 00 P.M. Members present were: Frank Alessandrini, Kasey Casas, Dan Clow, Elizabeth Hale, and Chris Reynolds. Vince Ragone and Bob Weir were absent. David Brennan, Town Attorney, was present.

The Board reviewed the minutes from the July 10, 2024 meeting. Chris Reynolds made a motion to approve the minutes with the following correction: under the section titled Briggs Timber Harvest, the name Marcel Burdick needs to be edited to read Marcel Barrick. Kasey Casas seconded.

Ayes: Alessandrini, Casas, Clow, Hale, Reynolds

Nays: None

ASD Solar II (Former Landfill -Tax Map #21.-2-5) and ASD Solar III (Highway Garage -Tax Map #21.-2-4.2). Frank Alessandrini informed the Board that the ASD Solar II project, with amendments to the site plan, was both stamped and signed. The ASD Solar III project is currently undergoing consideration for changes with regard to the screening of the facility at the Highway Garage site. Chairman Alessandrini met with Jason Dell, P.E., Lansing Engineering LLC, to discuss the proposed removal of the existing mature trees. Mr. Alessandrini noted that there is a line of trees along the stretch of NYS 67, broken only by a few openings, such as the Highway Garage and National Grid. In addition, Mr. Alessandrini discussed the Comprehensive Plan and its emphasis on the Town's preference to retain the illusion of open space. As a result, a meeting to discuss modifications to the screening will be arranged for the following week with Jason Dell and Paul Kruger, Director of Development for Active Solar Development. The Board was encouraged to attend. Jackie Stellone, a resident of the Town, stated that she thought the solar project for that location had been "nixed" by National Grid.

Briggs Timber Harvest Permit (Tax Map #31.-2-47). Gary Webber, representing Mountain View Logging, the applicant, and David Izzo, forester, Stillwater, NY, appeared to propose a 175.78± timber harvest of vacant land at Neeson Lane off Sliter Road. Paul Briggs, property owner, is proposing to clear-cut 40± acres of timber to create an agricultural field and to carry out a selective cut of timber, with girth measuring 15" and more, on the residual acreage. At the July meeting Chairman Alessandrini stated that the Board would consider the concerns voiced by the residents at the public hearing and encouraged the Board members to visit the site. Mr. Izzo submitted an amended timber harvest plan, addressing and resolving the concerns that arose at the August public hearing. Mr. Izzo stated that the plan included "Voluntary Best Management Practices for Water Quality" to protect the property and adjacent land and waters from environmental damage. In addition, the select harvest, using a prism to determine the basal area -the proximity of trees per square foot (40-50 square feet within the prism area), is a recommended forestry practice and will result in control of the canopy to foster less growth of invasive species. Mr. Briggs' property has not been surveyed to establish the property lines, but all adjacent neighbors have their property surveyed and have posted their lands. Mr. Izzo stated that boundary lines were determined by the use of a GPS mapper and that a 15' buffer from adjacent properties will be observed and kept. Chairman Alessandrini conferred with the Highway Superintendent with regard to the maintenance of Neeson Lane. The maintenance of Neeson Lane and the nearby roads is the responsibility of the loggers. The roads must be kept in pristine condition by Mountain View Logging. Mr. Izzo emphasized that the plan includes best practices set forth by DEC. There will be no logging on steep slopes and hillsides. There are forested wetlands on the Briggs' land where a minimum of 60 square feet is required to harvest timber. Mr. Izzo added that it is clear on the DEC map that there are no swamps within the property; however

there are two unclassified streams, one on the northerly side of the property and one within the buffer zone; neither area is to be harvested and there are no crossings within these areas. The area to be clear cut lies outside the forested wetlands.

Hours of operation were discussed and set for Mondays through Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 or 4:00 p.m. with no operations allowed on weekends

Discussion took place concerning the displacement of wildlife. The Board concurred that logging responsibly will improve habitat for wildlife and that the harvest will allow for regeneration of new growth.

The short form EAF was submitted; the harvest plan and application fee were received. Dan Clow made a motion to issue negative declaration under SEQR. Chris Reynolds seconded.

Ayes: Alessandrini, Casas, Clow, Hale, Reynolds

Nays: None

Chris Reynolds made a motion to grant approval with the above conditions, as noted in the minutes and forthcoming written decision. Elizabeth Hale seconded.

Ayes: Alessandrini, Casas, Clow, Hale, Reynolds

Nays: None

Rohloff Subdivision (Tax Map 32.-3-29). Chairman Alessandrini informed the Board that the proposal for the 5 lot Rohloff Subdivision, to be located on an 8.15± acre parcel on NYS Route 40, is not ready to be entertained by the Board. The SWPP has been submitted to the MS4 Officer, Scott Frisino; however, the document is lacking the archeological studies required in Part 1B. A review will take place at the next Board meeting in September.

Genesis Burial Vault Special Use Permit and Site Plan Review (Tax Map #41-1-61).

David Baker, applicant and property owner of Genesis Burial Vault, returned to the meeting. Mr. Baker is applying for a Special Use Permit to operate his business, consisting of the painting of burial vaults and located at 943 NYS Route 40 in Melrose. An application for a Special Use Permit to operate the business and the short form EAF were submitted.

Chairman Alessandrini explained that a site plan was just submitted by Mr. Baker. A survey of the property was displayed. Mr. Baker stated that RCHD approval was granted, that the septic is located 20' from the building, that it was difficult to locate water, that the well is located 600' down, and that he intends to install one toilet and two sinks. Kyle Knickerbocker, an adjacent neighbor, had concerns and asked to examine the survey to locate the septic and well. Mr. Baker invited Mr. Knickerbocker to go to the business premises. Mr. Knickerbocker departed with Mr. Baker to view the site and discuss the plans.

OTHER

Chairman Alessandrini stated that he received correspondence (copies distributed to Board members) from the Town Board to request an opinion from the PB. The matter concerns the proposed installation of solar power battery storage facilities within the Town of Schaghticoke. Various companies have expressed interest in creating battery storage facilities within the Town. David Brennan, Town Attorney, stated that battery storage units are beginning to be seen in homes to power individual residences and that type of usage will be exempt from the legislation. In addition, Atty. Brennan noted that NYS is researching standards for commercial use.

The Board discussed the matter and the high possibility of fire and the difficulty in extinguishing fire at commercial battery storage sites. The Board concluded that elimination of battery storage facilities within the Town is currently appropriate. The Board made a motion to draft a letter in response to the Town Board's inquiry indicating that the Planning Board concurred that they are unanimously in favor of eliminating battery storage sites.

Abbreviations:

DEC _ Department of Conservation

EAF – Environmental Assessment Form

PB – Planning Board

NYS - New York State

RA - Residential Agricultural District

SEQRA –State Environmental Quality Review Act

Respectfully Submitted,

date:

Elizabeth Hale, Clerk

Planning Board, Town of Schaghticoke