

Town of Ghent Planning Board Meeting, Wednesday, February 9, 2011

Board Members Present: French, Groom, Machiz, Nelson, and Rosenstreich

Public Hearing

The Nature Institute
Craig Holdrege
Tax ID# 104-1-30

(Board member Machiz recused himself from this portion of the meeting.)

The Nature Institute would like to put a 2,200 square foot extension on their existing building. They would like to make an additional green parking lot on their land as well. They are a RA-2 and have five acres of land. They host 10-20 events per year. Hours of operation vary somewhat, but are generally 9am-5pm, Monday thru Friday. They do host special events on evenings and weekends. They have an arrangement with the May Hill Road Association for any current overflow parking: extra cars can be parked on the southwest side of May Hill Road.

Motion to open public hearing made by French, seconded by Nelson. All agreed.

Albert Wassenhove asked how big the addition will be. Applicant answered that it will be between 2,000 and 2,200 square feet. It will be two stories.

Mr. Wassenhove asked how many events will be held and how many people attend. Applicant answered that they have between 500 and 1,000 guests throughout the year. It is estimated that they have between 10 and 20 evening events, with 20 to 40 people at each; 2-4 day events with 10-30 people each; 3 six week events with 10-30 people each; and 5 internships per year.

Mr. Wassenhove asked about potential traffic problems on May Hill Road and if emergency vehicles will be able to get through if needed. Applicant explained the overflow parking arrangement made with the May Hill Road Association and said emergency vehicles will have no problem with access.

Larry Van Brunt asked if the Nature Institute is a tax exempt property. Applicant answered yes, and stated that it has been since they built on the property in 2002. There is no new tax exemption. Applicant stressed that visitors to the Institute do not stay on the property overnight, so visitors generate money for the county/town by way of hotels, meals, etc. Board Member Groom stated the

Planning Board has no reviewing power regarding the tax status of the property, just the site plan review.

Mr. Wassenhove asked what fire district the Nature Institute property is in. Applicant believes property is in the Philmont Fire District.

No more questions from the public. Motion made by Nelson, seconded by Rosenstreich to close public hearing. All in favor.

Board member Rosenstreich read applicable code section to make sure the Nature Institute meets all requirements.

Lighting: New lighting to be installed will be no higher than 4-5' off the ground, and is only turned on for events when needed.

Parking: 40 cars is maximum average number of vehicles on property at any one time. Pre-existing agreement with May Hill Road Association allows overflow parking on southwest side of Road when needed. New parking lot will be green. Board member French asked what the maximum number of cars parked on May Hill Road would be. Applicant answered that there would be no more than 10 cars parked on the road. Applicant must provide the Planning Board with a copy of the overflow parking arrangement made with the May Hill Road Association.

There will be no new signage.

Trees and vegetation: nothing of significance will be taken down. Existing screening will remain in place.

Went through code section by section.

Short form SEQR was completed. Negative Declaration from all Board Members.

Motion was made by French, seconded by Nelson to approve application for site plan.

Nelson: approve, nice addition, good programs to have for both children and adults.

Rosenstreich: approve, good to see Institute expanding, meets all requirements.

French: approve, all requirements met.

Groom: approve upon receipt of agreement of overflow parking arrangement with May Hill Road Association.

The Nature institute hopes to break ground for the new addition in May.

Old Business

Twin County Group, LLC / Dialysis Center
Dr. Vinny Anand
Tax ID# 101-1-8.12

Co-chair Groom told property owner that there are extra lights on the building which were not in the original site plan. Board Member Machiz said the lights face out, and the Town of Ghent does not want this type of lighting in Town and that was made clear to the applicant. More lights, and the brightness of the lights are problems that must be addressed. All lighting must match the original site plan that was approved. Property owner is not aware of any discrepancies and though the building followed the site plan exactly. Employees and patients complain about the current lighting. They must walk through the parking lot at odd hours and say is it not properly lit. Property owner will look into this issue further.

Point of order by Board Member French: this issue should not be handled by the Planning Board. Enforcement Office Gil Raab should handle discrepancies that come up. The Property Owner did not know why they had been asked to attend this meeting – they were not given any paperwork or explanations for being called in. If we are to meet with Property Owner we should have file and original approval plans available for review.

New Applicant

Application for Site Plan Review

Kinderhook Sportsmen's Club

Terrence Toomey, President, and Sylvester Braswell, PE, Consulting Engineer

Tax ID# 64-1-28 and 36.2

Applicant would like to build a 640 square foot addition to existing building, to be used as a multi-purpose space (meeting, storage, etc.). There will be no new occupancy. The existing roof was hit by lightening a few years ago and is in very poor condition. The building requires a new roof, which is also a good time to build an addition. Applicant owns two parcels of land, one is 24 acres and the other is 12 acres. They have not yet notified any neighbors that they would like to build an addition.

Co-chair Groom asked about light, traffic and screening. Applicant Sy Braswell explained that there will be no change in elevation to the building.

Board member Machiz asked if the applicant anticipated any problems from their neighbors. Applicants answered that one neighbor might complain, he has been complaining since he moved in six years ago.

Board Member French asked if they anticipated any increase in traffic and membership. Applicant answered no.

Board Member Rosenstreich asked if they rent out their facilities. Applicant answered no. Club members can use the property but that is it. There are 1-2 parties held on the property per year. There is no liquor on the premises.

Hours of operation are 7am until 10pm. There is no outside lighting on any of the shooting ranges, so most people leave before dark. There is a small light fixture on the outside of the building and a utility pole that comes off of Fowler Lake Road with a light on top. The light on the pole is motion activated and can not be seen from Fowler Lake Road.

General discussion of property – hills, trees, berms, creek and small pond on property. Co-chair Groom asked if the state set guidelines for the buffer zones around each shooting range. NYSDEC sets all requirements for berms and buffer zones.

Board member Nelson asked if the club was seasonal. Applicant answered that they operate year round.

Signage: existing sign is about 10 inches square. No new signage will be added.

Board member Nelson asked about existing parking. Applicant will provide an estimate for parking when they return next month.

Co-chair Groom asked applicant to submit a letter including: hours of operation, and approximate number of vehicles that can be parked on the property. He also requested applicant include information on buffers and berms as required by existing NYS gun laws.

Applicant stated that no new outdoor lighting will be added.

This applicant will proceed to Public Hearing on Wednesday, March 2, 2011.