

THESE MINUTES MAY BE APPROVED AND/OR AMENDED AT THE FOLLOWING MEETING

Town of Richmond
Planning Board Public Hearing
April 28, 2015 6:00 PM Camp Takodah Site Walk

Planning Board Public Meeting

Members Present:

Wes Vaughan (Chairman)
Lloyd Condon, (Vice Chairman)
Norma Thibodeau
Harry Brake
Chris Daugherty, Selectman Rep.
Butch Morin, Alternate

Members Absent:

Seth Reece (Secretary)

Public: Chris Bause, Pam Bause, Jerald Merrifield, Susan Merrifield, Richard Drew, Robert Hitchcock, Steve Morris, Richard Drew, Ryan Reed-Camp Takodah, Arthur Lang - Director, Camp Takodah, Doug Brown - Board of Directors, Camp Takodah and William Parkman - President of the Board of Directors, Camp Takodah. .

Meeting and Site Walk call to order @ 6:00 PM.

Butch Morin seated for Seth Reece.

Site walk began on the west side of the entrance driveway for Camp Takodah where roughly 2 ½ acres were clear cut and a gravel parking area was constructed. Limited stumping has been done which did not require State approval. Rob Hitchcock from SVE Associates provided an updated plan for the Board to review. The plan located the tree line from the clear cut and the area graveled in for parking

Distances were measured from the abutters to the tree line of the clearing. Swanson (Map 201-025) - 260', Morris (Map 201-027) - 500', Pamela and Christopher Bause (Map 201-018) 650' to Village B, Jerald and Susan Merrifield (Map 201-017 and Map 201-013).

Issue's with the abutters included loud noise all day and into the late night, lighting and fireworks. Susan Merrifield asked why the 2 ½ acres were clear cut and did the Camp have intentions of doing something further with the clearing? Rob Hitchcock explained that at the time Scott Perkins was Camp Director and he had the work done and didn't realize the procedure.

Rob Hitchcock further explained that a charette was developed and shared with the Selectmen in 2008 showing a future expansion. Copies of the charette were handed out to board members and the public to share. In 2011 a second version was developed for the Camp which contained a lot of the same features. The conceptionol plan called for that area to have housing units for staff, rifle and archery ranges, maintenance and storage area, basketball courts and so on. He continued to explain that the charette produced in 2008 is like a pie in the sky but it is a great tool to have for future planning. Once the Camp began to calculate the cost of this kind of expansion the plans moved sway from the charette to the live site planning stage. None of the abutters or the Planning Board had seen the charette and knew nothing of the camps future plan. Camp Takodah has new staff and with that will come a better appreciation of the procedure of the Planning Board and the Town of Richmond, the clearing was not part of the original site plan approval.

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The board walked across the road and headed west to the Art Center. This is a 30' X 80' building (2400 sq. ft.) and it received a building permit but did not go through site plan review. The building permit asked for a 45' X 30' (1350 sq. ft.) Art Center and was approved on 2/11/2013 for a fee of \$337.50.

The site walk continued to a Yurt measuring 24' in diameter (430 sq. ft.), this building did not receive a building permit or site plan review.

The next stop, the proposed bath house which will measure 26' X 50' (1300 sq. ft.) and was staked out for the board to view. This would be the first building to be erected and use would start in the summer of 2015.

The board viewed the proposed building sites for the six cabins measuring 20 X 40 (80 sq. ft. ea.). Two of the proposed cabins received approved building permits on 2/3/14 with a paid fee of \$400.00 applicant was Ketola Contracting LLC from Rindge NH but did not go through site plan review. At this time of the proposed 6 cabins two are erected and there are 4 more to build if the plan is approved.

Each cabin will house 40 additional campers and about 15 staff. From this area the board could see through the woods the home of Roy and Melissa Hill Jr. & Lyle Hill (Map 201-019). The home of Pamela and Christopher Bause measured roughly 500' from the edge of the basketball court.

Several smaller buildings for equipment and archery storage had been erected in Village A all smaller than 10' X 10'.

1. Public Hearing: Camp Takodah Site Plan 6:00 PM:
Meeting will be continued to Vet's Hall

At roughly 6:45 PM the board and public walked back to move the meeting to the Veterans Hall located on Rt. 32 N. to continue.

Meeting was reconvened @ 7:00 PM at the Veterans Hall and the Public Hearing.

Chairman Vaughan started with the waivers requested by SVE in reference to Town of Richmond Site Plan Review Regulations. Under V. Required Exhibits and Data;

G. The type and location of solid waste deposal facilities. No new solid waste disposal facility is proposed. Motion made by Butch Morin to accept the request for waiver. Seconded by Norma Thibodeau. All in favor. None oppose. Motion carries.

H. The location, elevation and layout of catch basins and other surface drainage features. None are proposed. Motion made by Butch Morin to accept the waiver request. Seconded by Lloyd Condon. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

K. The location, size and design of all proposed signs. There will be no new proposed signage. Motion made by Butch Morin to accept the waiver request. Seconded by Norma Thibodeau. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

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O. Surveyed property lines showing their deflection angles, distances, radius, lengths of arcs, central angles, along all property lines and monument locations. A tape and compass survey was performed by Richard P. Drew, LLS. Property is substantially large and proposed development is no closer than 75' from nearest property line. Motion made by Butch Morin to accept the waiver as request. Seconded by Norma Thibodeau. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

Q. If a Subdivision. NO subdivision is proposed this is not applicable. Motion made by Butch Morin to accept the waiver request. Seconded by Norma Thibodeau. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

T. Erosion and Sedimentation Plan per V.5 of the regulations. The plans contain a silt fence and the Camp is requesting a waiver for a separate Erosion and Sedimentation Plan. Motion made by Butch Morin to accept the waiver request. Seconded by Lloyd Condon. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

U. Flood Hazard Areas per V.5 of this regulation. Not applicable. Motion made by Butch Morin to accept the waiver request. Seconded by Harry Brake. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

V. Any other exhibits or data the Planning Board may require. The Planning Board did not require any additional information. Motion made by Butch Morin to accept the waiver request. Seconded by Norma Thibodeau. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

A letter from Camp Takodah authorized Robert Hitchcock as a representative for the project and invited the public to attend the site walk was presented to the Planning Board.

Motion by Butch Morin to accept the proposed site plan as a completed application. Lloyd Condon seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

Chairman Vaughan opened the Public Hearing @ 7:15 PM.

Sue Merrifield asked about the usage of the area and if time limits could be set for quiet times or maybe a curfew or is the Camp open to no restraints. There is a lot of noise late at night and it disrupts the abutters.

Ryan Reed spoke for Camp Takodah and explained that wake up time is @ 7:00 AM, main activities start about 9:00 AM and everyone is usually back in their cabins by 9:00 PM.

Sue Merrifield spoke to the sounds and activities going on until 11:00 PM and how difficult sometimes it can be to fall a sleep and many neighbors have to get up and work the next day. There was no comment in return to Mrs. Merrifield's concerns.

Jerald Merrifield's concern was the setting off of fireworks at the Camp and if the Camp had a permit for using the fireworks. There seems to be no exact time it's very random and seems whenever they like. Chair Vaughan referred to the Zoning Ordinances and at this time Richmond does not have an Ordinance against fireworks.

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Jerald Merrifield's concern was the noise and fire hazard in July and August when the Camp is most active.

William Parkman, President of the Board of Directors for Camp Takodah said that as far as Camp Takodah is concerned the last time Camp Takodah had fireworks was in 2002-2003. Jerald Merrifield disagreed with Mr. Parkman and said he's heard them. Mr. Parkman said the last time the camp had fireworks put together it was done by Atlas Fireworks and other then that the camp has had no fireworks. This would involve a large display which is different from what Mr. Merrifield was trying to explain. Chairman Vaughan asked if it was possible that some of the staff might bring some in. Ryan Reed injected that this would be against camp policy. Mr. Parkman said it might have been Camp Shir-Roy but not Takodah.

Chris Daugherty, asked Camp Takodah representative's who the abutters might contact from the camp if they hear fireworks or sounds get out of control after hours? Ryan Reed said absolutely he could be contacted and if abutters can call the camp 24 hr's a day during the camping season. When the office is closed it goes directly to the camp health center someone will answer that phone and if there is a challenge then that person can help find the correct contact. Mr. Reed said that in the past year he's been called once due to a smoke detector going off. He did respond to that call.

Chris Daugherty asked if there was anything the Planning Board could do as a condition to set hours or curfew as part of the site plan approval. It was determined that this could be offered by the applicant and be negotiated out with the abutters to create mutual satisfaction. But, none has been proposed at this time by the Camp Takodah.

1. At this time the board has heard about the noise from fireworks though the actual source of the noise but the abutters believe it came form the camp.
2. Hours are a concern, and any additional restraints curfews should be addressed.
3. Lighting was a concern as lights can be seen through the trees.

Mr. Merrifield reflected that in the past Camp Takodah received their approval and permits from the Selectmen to do additional construction without site plan approval. Does the Planning Board have any plans to prevent this from happening again?

Chris Daugherty Selectman's reprehensive to the Planning Board offered to address Mr. Merrifield's question he felt this was a Selectman's concern not the Planning Board.

The Selectmen looked at what happened and the first item put in place was the usage of the Town's Zoning Compliance Officer to review paperwork and check the site before any building permit is approved. This was not done and that is how this happened to three of the four buildings. The fourth building (Yurt) went up without anybodies knowledge so as part of the process we are going to recommend that the building permits be applied for and approved referencing the present site plan and a building permit be submitted for the structure not approved previously. If additional fees are required Camp Takodah will be responsible to pay them.

Steve Morris asked if there are plans to remove anymore trees between his home and the Camp. The clear cut of the 2 ½ acres increased the sound and lights coming from the camp.

Robert Hitchcock addressed the question stating that there are no plans at the moment. Other then maybe smaller trees that may be removed to update the Lagoon.

Chris Daugherty asked if the PB could make it a condition of the site plan that trees not be cut between the camp

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and abutters unless the abutter's are notified. Or, can we accept this as a buffer zone as it's apparent there are some issue's right now this would at least protect the abutters from increased noise in the future. It would be important to be more specific about which properties the tree line buffer would address. Mr. Daugherty heard from the abutters tonight that they would like to know what is going on in advance and if we can specify areas as buffer zones.

Butch Morin offered to contact Southwest Region Planning Commission to ask them their opinion.

Doug Brown member of the Camp's Board of Directors took the floor. He talked about having a certain limit on rule making and hard stuff when you have neighbors. He explained that in the summer the Camp will have hundreds of kids visiting during the summer and during the year for various programs. The Camp has neighbors that want to live in peace and he would like to offer the idea that the only way to manage this is to make sure that everyone talks to each other. To make sure if there is a problem it can be addressed at the time. This will only happen if everyone is talking. Going through a town, city or police dept. to try an make it work will create additional problems. You can't make enough rules or agreements to respect each other, the neighbors who want to live in peace aren't going away. The Camp isn't going away with hundred's of kids running around and that's been the case for 100 yrs. next year. It's tough and both sides may not like the outcome but it's the only way to keep the communication line open.

With no further questions for the public or Camp Takodah the Board proceeded to close the Public Hearing.

Motion to close the Public Hearing made by Butch Morin. Seconded by Lloyd Condon. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

1. Must apply for the 3 amended building permits and amended with reference to the current date according to the proposed site plan. The 4th building needs to be applied for and receive a building permit with reference to the proposed site plan.
2. The proposed site plan fee included only the footage of the newly proposed buildings and bath house. It didn't include the other buildings. Payment for site plan review for the extra buildings will be required.
3. Buffer to help with sound for the neighbors on Map 201-017, Map 201-018. Map 201-019, Map 201-024, Map 201-026 and Map 201-025. Question was asked by Rob Hitchcock, what if the Camp doesn't want to give up that Land? Maybe a reasonable buffer which is what the PB was thinking. It was decided that Butch Morin would ask Southwest Region Planning Commission what a reasonable buffer might be for noise reduction. Or, the town could hire someone to help which could be hired by the town and paid for by the applicant. At this time the PB can't move forward with conditions without any further information.
Burm is a possibility with pine trees planted along the side. Fencing may be another solution.
4. Lighting is a concern but not as important as sound reduction.

Motion made by Butch Morin to continue the discussion to the next Planning Board meeting May 12, 2015 @ 7:30 located at the Richmond Veterans Hall. Seconded by Lloyd Condon. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

Rob Hitchcock will drop a map off at Southwest Region Planning Commission on Tuesday April 29, 2015.

2. Public:

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No one from public.

3. Mail:

Southwest Region Planning Commission monthly newsletter.
Mail order catalog on promotional items.

4. Minutes April 14, 2015:

Page 1, under 3. Second paragraph down last sentence add Mr. Crane said that removing the trees and moving the pole was the suggestion of the land owner. This is located throughout the document and should be changed.

Page 2, under 5. First paragraph third line down: Public hearing could not be opened and was only used as presentation and questions.

Second paragraph, sixth line down: Add: to the Planning Boards knowledge a site plan review or permit was not applied for by Camp Takodah for construction of the parking lot.

Third paragraph down third line change 2013 to 2012.

Page 3, second paragraph down, third line at end 6 brevities change to 6 arborvitae.

Third paragraph, fourth sentence down change Rob Hitchcock to Richard Drew.

Motion made by Butch Morin to accept the minutes as amended. Seconded by Lloyd Condon. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

5. 2015 Zoning Ordinance Lay out:

2015 Richmond Zoning updates as voted on the March 2015 Ballot which included Zoning missed in 2010 ballot and FEMA. The Planning Board agreed to have hard copies printed to distribute for the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustments and the Selectmen the rest will be available to the public for purchase at the Town Clerk's office. An electronic version will be sent to the Selectmen's Secretary to post on the town website.

6. Master Plan:

No new update.

7. Other:

1. Informational discussion on repeater for Emergency Radios.

Andy Wood 16 yr. veteran of the Richmond Police Dept. and Arlene Crowe working with the Sheriff's Dept. discussed the placement of an Emergency repeater on the property of Dan and Bonnie Pratt on Fish Hatchery Rd.

Andrew Wood has been working for 4-5 years to find a suitable site for a repeater antenna which the town purchased. At present the antenna is placed on top of the Richmond Fire Dept. but its ability to reach the distance needed to supply contact with emergency personal radios is limited. Arlene Crowe has worked closely with the

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Cheshire County to provide sites through out the County to enhance the entire system and has discovered a suitable site on the Pratt's property. A suitable site is important so that the system will not interfere with other systems which have already been put in place. This site has been tested and meets the standards required. The agreement would be a land use situation providing the space for a pole, antenna and working boxes its electricity would be provided by Eversource, eventually there would be a back up generator added.

The telephone pole is very effective and low cost with the attached radio cabinet about 10' up. The pole itself is 40" with about 5' in the ground and an 8' antenna placed on the top.

This would involve no Richmond tax payer dollars, the cost would be provided through a grant from Vt. Yankee. This would start as an enhancement for the police channels but the development for more emergency and public service will come on board.

This enhanced communications would help Richmond, Winchester, Fitzwilliam and Swanzey.

The Board asked for the height when the system is fully installed. Officer Wood will provide the board with photos and the height for their next meeting. But, pertaining to safety he didn't see any problems with the antenna being placed on top of a telephone pole.

Motion to adjourn by Butch Morin. Seconded by Lloyd Condon. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned @ 8:17 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Kandace Mattson