

Village of Walden  
Planning Board Meeting  
November 6, 2017

Chairman:	Stan Plato	Present
Members:	Jay Wilkins	Present
	Lisa Dore	Absent
	Jason Trafton	Absent
	Zac Pearson	Present
Alternate:	Larry Kraus	Absent
Building Inspector:	Dean Stickles	Present
Village Attorney:	Robert Dickover	Present
Village Engineer:	John Queenan	Present
Secretary:	Tara Bliss	Present

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Chairman Plato - Called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** None

2. **BOARD BUSINESS**

A. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None

B. **FORMAL APPLICATIONS:**

**B.1 12 Edmunds Lane, Site Plan Amendment**

John Cappello with Jacobowitz & Gubitz with Ani Kunga representing the Temple of All-Encompassing Great Compassion. Explained they have revised the map and slightly rearranged it to allow for a large enough area for a fire truck and other emergency vehicles that might be needed in the future.

Member Wilkins asked if the roadway would be paved.

Mr. Cappello replied it calls for 2" crushed gravel 4" rocks.

Engineer Queenan feels this is a much better configuration. He got the revisions on Wednesday afternoon and this is better than the previous layout. He does feel one area should be blacktop as he sees it being difficult to maintain and keep it ice free if it's gravel. He would at least like it to be blacktopped.

Member Wilkins asked if it would be used year round.

Mr. Cappello replied they are built to be able to be occupied year round.

Ani commented that it is a huge amount of pavement to put in.

Chairman Plato asked if the parking lot now is just gravel

Engineer Queenan commented that the code is grey in that regard it says a hard firm surface so it's up to the Board.

Member Pearson commented that it's on them to do the maintenance so they should decide.

Mr. Cappello suggested if the Board was willing to add a condition to have the driveway reviewed after the 1<sup>st</sup> year or maybe even the 2<sup>nd</sup> year and see how it is operating and then if at that point you feel it should be paved we could certainly consider paving it. It is not just the cost it is the additional run off into the Village's system as well.

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Engineer Queenan said he didn't disagree it is just that the fire code wants everything bigger and better, it's just that balance.

Member Wilkins asked if they would be willing to pave in a year or 2.

Mr. Cappello replied they would consider it if the wear and tear is substantial.

Chairman Plato stated that the access would be for emergency purposes only, not driving back there.

Ani explained they would certainly be maintaining it when we have people back there for food truck deliveries, laundry trucks as well so we will be keeping it paved. John had a great suggestion we can see how it goes. It was a soccer field back in the day. If we could see how it goes in a year or 2 that would be optimal.

Member Wilkins asked if they would be used more in the warmer weather.

Ani replied definitely more in the warmer weather. There are 9 buildings in total proposed to be built in stages as we get the funds. We will be starting with 2 or 3 and hopefully they will build momentum but they don't expect to get all 9 in there for a little while.

The Board reviewed the short form EAF aloud and made corrections accordingly to question 17A which should be "no" and 17B should be "yes".

**Member Wilkins made a motion based on the answers to the EAF that this project, 12 Edmunds Lane, Site Plan Amendment, would not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts and issued a negative declaration. Seconded by Member Pearson. All ayes. Motion carried.**

**Member Wilkins made a motion to waive a public hearing for 12 Edmunds Lane, Site Plan Amendment. Seconded by Member Pearson. All ayes. Motion carried.**

Attorney Dickover explained that the Engineer still needs to review the plans but based on the applicants statement to the Board last time we were here, he wanted to review a few items again to see if they should be conditions with respect to the approval. Length of stay is 4-6weeks?

Ani replied yes, that is standard.

Attorney Dickover stated that the Board is concerned that the cabins could possibly become residential or full time rental facilities which is not permitted in that zoning district. He feels that a condition might be imposed to limit the length of stay for the retreatants. What length of stay is reasonable and would accommodate your needs?

Ani replied that the temporary permit was from April to November, which is 6 months and seems very reasonable. Only it wouldn't be limited to April through November, correct.

The Board agreed.

Attorney Dickover continued about the idea of avoiding rentals. Would a condition be agreeable to prohibiting the imposition of rental charges for staying there?

Ani replied yes. We would take donations according to people's budgets, but no rent.

Attorney Dickover asked if there would be a rental agreement or occupancy agreement if someone becomes objectionable for example how would you get them to leave.

Mr. Cappello stated that they would likely draft up some rules of conduct for them to sign saying that they are there at will and could be asked to leave.

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Ani discussed with His Holiness and His Holiness' wife was that they would have certain requirements such as no alcohol for example or they are not allowed to have other people in the cabin, that it is just for a single person as it's for a retreat only or training period.

Attorney Dickover asked if occupancy is limited to 1 occupant.

Ani replied yes to people who are doing a retreat or training for a retreat. It would not be used for residences for monks or nuns for example either as we have plenty of spaces for them in existing facilities.

Attorney Dickover asked if there would be any cooking going on and the need for refrigeration and cleaning facilities. Will there be an appliance to cook with? Is your plan to have all 3 of those appliances in each unit?

Ani explained the plan is to have a microwave to heat coffee or tea, maybe a small refrigerator in the summer when it's hot, and there is only 1 sink in there. Similar to a hotel. So there would be no cooking.

Attorney Dickover asked if there was a condition for the prohibition for the installation of a kitchen which is defined as a unit that has a sink, refrigerator and a stove, oven, range or combination. Is that ok?

Ani replied yes that's fine.

Attorney Dickover stated that the approval would be for accessory use to the temple and meditation center. If those uses were to cease the approval for use of the cabins would cease as well. His last question would be about occupancy. Is it conceivable that you might have occupancy all year round?

Ani replied yes it is. Duration would be no more than 6 months.

Attorney Dickover replied that when you get into year round you get back to the paving issue again.

Member Pearson stated that the paving thing is more of a maintenance thing on their end.

Engineer Queenan feels that doing a review in a year to make sure it's working is fair and agreeable.

Attorney Dickover explained that the Engineer has to finish his review but he can do a draft decision and then this will be back on the November 15<sup>th</sup>'s agenda.

Ani thanked the Board for their consideration and review.

**C. DISCUSSION ITEMS:** None

**D. INFORMATION ITEMS:** None

**E. CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**3. COMMUNICATIONS:** None

**4. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None

**5. MEETING ADJOURNED at 7:57 pm.**

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED  
Tara Bliss, Village Clerk  
Planning Board Secretary