

**Danby Planning Board  
Minutes of Meeting  
October 25, 2012**

**Present:**

Joel Gagnon  
Anne Klingensmith  
Frank Kruppa  
Steve Selin (arrived late)  
Naomi Strichartz

**Absent:**

Robert Roe  
Ted Melchen

**Others Present:**

Secretary	Pamela Goddard
Code Officer	Sue Beeners
Town Board	Leslie Connors
Public	Michael Casper, Siobhan Silver, Tony Cain, George Brauhaus

**The Planning Board Meeting was open at 7:03pm**

**Sketch Plan Review - Casper B&B**

Sketch Plan Review, Consider Setting Public Hearing Date for a request for Modifications to the Special Permit issued to Michael Casper on May 21, 2009 for a bed and breakfast dwelling, guest cabin, and a Buddhist Temple, where the proposed modification is the conversion of the residence at 1038 Comfort Road (15.-1-11.41) into a three-bedroom hotel. The bed and breakfast dwelling and temple are at 1040 Comfort Road (15.-1-11.42). Michael Casper, Casper Real Estate Trust, owner/applicant.

Casper presented information about his request. The Vegetarian Bed & Breakfast was granted by special permit in 2009. There are currently three guest rooms in a log house, occupied by the owner. Up to five guest rooms are allowed in that residence. Casper would like to have an additional three guest rooms in an improved barn that is not occupied by the owner. There are additional safety requirements (sprinkler system) required in an unoccupied "boarding house" or "hotel." With the sprinkler system, there could be up to six rooms in the barn house.

Casper assured the Board that both structures are up to code regarding fire alarms and other safety systems. Each building has its own well and septic system. Prior to the sprinkler system being installed, Casper asked to be allowed to have two guest rooms in the log house, and two in the barn house with each residence occupied by a family member.

The PB asked questions of Casper, regarding the expected amount of business and traffic on the road. Casper reported that there have been no complaints from neighbors. The B&B opened in April, 2012. There have been fewer than 30 rentals since that time. Most guests are parents of Cornell and Ithaca College students. Comfort Road is routinely maintained, and should not see a significant impact from additional rooms.

## **RESOLUTION NO. 29 OF 2012 - SET PUBLIC HEARING**

**Resolved**, that the Town of Danby Planning Board, sets a Public Hearing regarding a request for Modifications to the Special Permit issued to Michael Casper on May 21, 2009 for a bed and breakfast dwelling, guest cabin, and a Buddhist Temple, where the proposed modification is the conversion of the residence at 1038 Comfort Road (15.-1-11.41) into a three-bedroom hotel, to be held at the Danby Town Hall on Thursday, November 29 at 7:00 pm.

**Moved by Gagnon, Second by Klingensmith.**

**In favor: Gagnon, Klingensmith, Kruppa, Strichartz.**

### **Site Plan Review - Stork H&E TurboBlading, Inc.**

Sketch Plan Review, Application for Site Plan Approval for a proposed addition of between 21,000 and 26,000 sq. ft. to the rear of the existing buildings at Stork H & E TurboBlading, Inc., 334 Comfort Road, Tax Parcel 1.-1-25.1, Planned Development Zone 5. Stork H & E TurboBlading, Inc., Owner.

Information about the plan was presented by Stork H&E architect, George Brauhaus. Stork plans to close its Owego facility and move staff and equipment to the Comfort Road facility so that everything is at one site. This is being done for quality control and efficiency measures. The plan has the structure broken into separate fire zones, so that the entire facility does not have to a sprinkler system installed. Floor levels will be matched, and so the new structure would be built into the hillside. A service road would be built around the back of the building. The rear area is currently landscaped to drain into a fire pond, and would remain so.

Stork H&E currently expects to employ a maximum of 175 people over three shifts. There are currently 91 employees in Danby and 53 in Owego. It is hope that the majority of Owego employees will make the shift to the Danby facility.

There was a conversation about raw materials, waste stream, and “green” operational measures. Tony Cain, a purchasing manager, described the operations and the work flow for making turbine blades for gas and steam turbines. He also described the disposal system for waste water and scrap metal chips. A water based coolant, contained inside the fabricating machine, is used for cutting. That coolant water is recycled.

Beeners noted that this addition would reach close to the maximum buildable area in the Planned Development Zone. Most of the addition will be production space, with a small increase in employees. Many of these employees live in Danby and nearby towns. The most recent traffic study of Comfort Road (a county road) in 2010 found a count of 813 trips per day. Only a portion of these are related to Stork activities. It appears that this count is actually decreasing. Beeners does not view the additional employees as a regional increase in traffic.

There was an extensive discussion about the impact that this might have on neighbors, particularly from security lighting and shift traffic. Security lights at the rear of the building will be “dark sky” compliant. The business is considering replacing all exterior lights with “dark sky” compliant lights. Beeners inquired about other additional energy usage, in regards the SEQRA review. There should not be a major change, although an additional power pole will need to be installed.

Cain and Brauhaus emphasized that the staffing level is expected to rise to approximately 170 employees split over three shifts. This is less than the number of employees engaged by H&E at an earlier time, when 200 people were employed at the plant. Stork H&E has instructed its employees about safety and consideration for neighbors when leaving the parking lot. There was a discussion about the process for lowering the speed limit on Comfort from 55 to 45 mph.

Gagnon raised a question about providing screening along the boundary of the south side of the property. This would be along the edge of the Locker property. This was agreeable to the Stork representatives. Brauhaus informed the Board that Locker has expressed interest in taking the dirt that will be removed when the facility is built into the hillside. Additional dirt may be used to re-landscape a low spot in one of the Locker fields to facilitate haying.

Strichartz commended the business for employing local people, but expressed concern about “how big is too big for a low density residential neighborhood.” She made a request that neighbor

notification be extended beyond the normal 500 foot requirement. There was a discussion about the most appropriate boundaries for equitable neighbor notification.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 30 OF 2012 - SET PUBLIC HEARING**

**Resolved**, that the Town of Danby Planning Board, sets a Public Hearing regarding an Application for Site Plan Approval for a proposed addition of between 21,000 and 26,000 sq. ft. to the rear of the existing buildings at Stork H & E TurboBlading, Inc., 334 Comfort Road, Tax Parcel 1.-1-25.1, Planned Development Zone 5. Stork H & E TurboBlading, Inc., Owner, to be held at the Danby Town Hall on Thursday, November 29 to follow the Casper hearing, and be it

**Further Resolved**, that neighbor notification shall be extended to all property owners within Comfort Road from West Miller to Yaple Roads and West Jersey Hill Road to the intersection of West King Road.

**Moved by Gagnon, Second by Kruppa.**

**In favor: Gagnon, Klingensmith, Kruppa, Strichartz.**

There was further discussion about the legal options available to the Town regarding enlarging operations within a Planned Development Zone. This is not only in relation to the Planned Development Zone in question, but for all PDs in Danby. A legal opinion will be sought through the Association of Towns.

### **Town Board Report**

Connors informed the PB that the town budget hearing will be held at 6:45 on November 12.

There was a brief discussion of the inclusion of funds for a water testing program. Anne Klingensmith and Anne Stork have been trained to collect samples and monitor streams.

### **Steve Selin arrived at 8:15**

### **Report of October 25 Training**

Kruppa gave a short report on training held at TC3 regarding farmland protection and agricultural viability. Kruppa described this as basic information with not much new to learn. Kruppa thought that there was some useful information in the appendix of the hand-out.

### **County Planning Grant**

There was a discussion regarding whether Danby has any potential projects for a Tompkins County Planning Grant cycle. The deadline for applications is November 15, 2012. There was consideration of possible projects that might benefit from intern or consultant assistance.

There was some interest in having an intern or consultant assist during the summer of 2013 with compiling data for revision of the Comprehensive Plan. Beeners suggested using a consultant to conduct a market survey for the viability of a community grocery store, or suggest the direction the town needs to go to enable a market. There was consideration of using an intern or consultant to review zoning revisions which would enable higher density development in the Central Danby Hamlet area, or to review existing local ordinances.

After extensive discussion it was decided that there were no strong, ready-to-go proposals that would likely be funded. Preparing a proposal at this time would take more effort than is warranted given the short deadline. There are other, ongoing priorities at this time. No action will be taken by the Planning Board at this time.

### **Comprehensive Plan Review**

Several PB members made short reports on their sections of Comprehensive Plan review. Strichartz informed the Board that response to queries regarding agricultural activities has been slow. It is anticipated that response will increase following the harvest season. Several members expect to have an outline of revisions by the November meeting.

Klingensmith reported on work being done on CEA designation details. Plain language information will be compiled for public presentation.

### **Approve Minutes**

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 31 OF 2012 - APPROVE MINUTES**

**Resolved**, that the Planning Board of the Town of Danby approves the minutes of September 27, 2012.

**Moved by Kruppa, Second by Klingensmith.**

**In Favor: Gagnon, Klingensmith, Kruppa, Strichartz**

**Abstain: Selin**

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 pm.

---

Pamela Goddard, Planning Board Secretary