

Town of Acton, Maine

Planning Board Meeting

July 9, 2020 (approved July 16, 2020) (Zoom Meeting)

PUBLIC HEARING

Grammy Rose, LLC, Route 109, Map 233, Lot 004, Site Plan Review Application for a Dog Rescue and Sanctuary, Mini Golf Course and Ice Cream Shop: The Chair opened the Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m. Jim Domoracki outlined the proposed Dog Rescue and Sanctuary stating that the facility is a non-profit organization which will raise funds to support operation through the proposed mini golf course and ice cream shop.

Dana Libby of Cornerpost Land Surveyors reviewed the site plan for the proposed Dog Rescue and Sanctuary. After discussion regarding landscaping at the last meeting, Mr. Libby explained that trees have been added for a buffer. He also talked about the storage building to be built at the backside of the facility and a turning radius at the dumpsters. Mr. Libby also said that Grammy Rose, LLC has obtained permits from the DEP for the Stormwater Plan, and Army Corps of Engineering for the Wetland fills.

Scott McLeod of Ashcove Construction explained that he is a resident of Acton and also the Builder Contracted for Grammy Rose; he said he believes it is a great project for the town and looks forward to getting started.

The Chair then opened the public hearing to questions or comments.

Anne McEchern, an abutter on Sam Page Road, stated that she is concerned about the noise and lights for the mini golf course. She also expressed concern regarding the disruption of wildlife that inhabit the area.

Dave Martineau, an abutter on Route 109, asked how many dogs will be placed at the rescue and where will they be would be coming from.

Nancy Ruma, an abutter on Sam Page Road, explained she is concerned about the noise from dogs barking, the safety of the entrance on Route 109 and the disposal of dog waste.

Dan Krampetz, a committee member for the Mary Grant Nature Preserve, stated that the committee's concern is if the dog rescue links trails with Mary Grant, will people be walking dogs on the trails and will they be cleaning up dog waste.

Dana Libby addressed the lighting concern explaining that there are six 12-foot-tall LED pole lights, all down facing so there will not be much spread. He said that the closest pole to Route 109 is about 110' from the edge of the pavement. The mini-golf course has mostly 4 foot tall, down facing lights.

Mr. Libby explained, regarding the barking noise concerns, that the dogs will be kept in their cabins. They will be with an employee when outside, but will return to their cabins when they are done.

The entrance to the facility located on Route 109 has been measured, and Mr. Libby stated that they meet the requirements for DOT site distance; he believes the engineers designed a safe entrance.

Dana Libby said the dog waste will be cleaned up immediately by an employee. He said that the dogs will always have an attendant with them when they are outside and the waste will be bagged and disposed of in the dumpster which will be emptied twice per week. When the dogs walk on the trails, the person walking with them will be required to bag the dog waste and carry it out with them. Jim Domoraki added that he would like to have bags readily available on the trail so they are accessible.

Jim Domoraki said that most of the dogs will be rescued from southern states from high kill shelters. The facility can accommodate up to 48 dogs but they plan to start slow with just a few dogs to begin with. He said that Maine has a lot of standards for the dogs entering the state that they will need to follow. The dogs will need to be quarantined for 14 days in one place before they can enter the state of Maine. Once the dogs arrive at the facility, Grammy Rose, LLC will designate one of the cabins to quarantine the dogs and they will remain in quarantine onsite for 14 days. Mr. Domoraki explained that the dogs will not interact with other dogs until all of the requirements have been met.

Dave Martineau asked what will happen if the dogs that arrive at the facility have health issues. Jim Domoraki stated that the facility will be working with the local veterinarian who will evaluate each dog. He added that the facility will be a sanctuary for dogs living out the rest of their lives.

Mr. Martineau asked if Grammy Rose, LLC will be responsible for the wellbeing of the dogs after they are placed with a family. Mr. Domoraki stated background checks of potential families will be included in their contracts; it will also be asked that if, at any point, they are unable to care for the dog, they will return the dog to the Grammy Rose facility.

Nancy Ruma asked if the Ice Cream and Mini Golf would be seasonal. She also wanted to know what the connection to the Mary Grant Nature Preserve was. Mr. Domoraki stated that the Ice Cream and Mini Golf would be seasonal. He said that the facility would create some nature trails that people walking the dogs could use connecting with the trails maintained by the Nature Preserve so that people walking on the trails could use both.

Dan Krampetz asked what would happen to the remains of a dog that lived out its life at the facility and passed away. Mr. Domoraki said that Grammy Rose would work with the local vets to have the remains disposed of properly.

Anthony Kondolian, resident on Stewart Drive in Acton, asked if Grammy Rose, LLC is a nonprofit, does that mean they do not pay property taxes, and would there be no sales tax on the mini golf and ice cream. Mr. Domoraki said that the mini golf and ice cream would be separate entities and would be responsible for collecting and paying sales tax. Mr. Domoraki said he was unsure whether the facility would pay property taxes. Jennifer Roux, Town Administrator, stated that they would be responsible for property taxes.

The Chair asked Planning Board Members if they had any remaining questions.

Jim Crowley stated that he is concerned with the traffic on Route 109 and asked if Grammy Rose would be willing to install a flashing light system or signage to alert drivers to traffic entering and leaving the facility. Dana Libby said that they would need to contact DOT to find out if that is possible.

Nancy Ruma stated that she is still concerned with the noise from the dogs; she asked if the cabins will have any kind of sound proofing. Scott McLeod explained how the cabins will be constructed and that he is confident that the dogs barking will not be heard.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 7:17 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Joyce Bakshi, Chair, Leslie Berlan, Dennis Long, Jim Crowley (Alternate), Tom Cashin (Alternate)

Members Absent: Gavin Maloney (excused)

Also present: Ken Paul, Director of Planning; Kristiina Robinson, Land Use Secretary; Jennifer Roux, Town Administrator; Charles Crespi; Sarah Delgizzio; Scott McLeod; Jim Domoraki; Ann McEachern; Dana Libby; Dan Krampetz; Nancy Ruma; Linda Grigerek; Dave Martineau; Anthony Kondolian; Zoom Meeting, Open to the Public with no questions or comments

Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:18 p.m. The Chair assigned Tom Cashin and Jim Crowley as alternates for the Meeting.

Approval of Minutes, July 2, 2020: Dennis Long moved to accept the minutes of July 2, 2020 as written. Leslie Berlan seconded; motion passed 5-0.

Old Business:

- **Grammy Rose, LLC, Route 109, Map 233, Lot 004, Site Plan Review Application for a Dog Rescue and Sanctuary, Mini Golf Course and Ice Cream Shop:** Sarah Delgizio, Planner for North Star Planning, explained that she received a letter from Dana Libby in response to her letter dated June 23, 2020. Ms. Delgizio reviewed the items on the letter with the applicant.

Board members discussed the cabins, signs and parking area with the applicants. The applicants will submit updated plans at the next meeting.

New Business: There was no new business to be discussed.

Adjournment: The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.