

**Approved
MINUTES
Zoning Board of Adjustment
March 8, 2023**

Present: Steve Lagasse, Chair (03-07-25), Chris Lowe, Vice Chair (03-21-25) Tom Franklin (04-04-25), Stephanie Gile (11-15-24), and Jo-Ann Ells, Zoning Administrator

Absent: Alice Maleski (03-07-25), and Lannie Collins, Selectboard Liaison

Public Hearing

Steve Lagasse opened the Hearing, read the hybrid meeting script, asked people to sign in, explained the Hearing process, administered the oath, and took a roll call.

1. Application #01-23 by Catamount Self Storage, LLC (owner/applicant) for Conditional Use Approval under section 260-16 of the Hartford Zoning Regulations for a self-storage facility, lot 08-0090-000, Route 14, White River Junction, in an IC zoning district.

Nick Tsouknakis, David Grayck, Jeff Goodrich, and Skip Nalette were present.

Jo-Ann Ells distributed a letter from John Hughes dated March 6, 2023.

Skip Nalette described the application as:

- A self-storage facility
- Located on the north side of Route 14
- On a 11.79-acre lot
- In an IC zoning district
- An option as a Conditional Use in the zoning district.

Chris Lowe asked about the meaning of “daylight” in Finding #16.

Jeff Goodrich explained that it means the water would flow on the surface, in a surface swale. Chris Lowe suggested the proposed grading be added to the plans.

Tom Franklin noted that the Fire Marshal would need to approve the turning movement plans. Jo-Ann Ells noted she received a verbal approval.

Tom Franklin asked about the ability of a tractor trailer to negotiate the site noting the applicant’s response to staff question regarding this issue was unclear.

Skip Nalette explained that since the turning movement plans show that a ladder truck can maneuver through the site, a tractor trailer will not have any trouble.

Stephanie Gile stated that the applicant's references to an existing self-storage facility on an adjacent lot were not very useful especially since she was not on the Board when that application was reviewed. She asked that the consultant provide clear and complete answers to staff comments in the future.

Stephanie Gile asked about the lack of a photometric plan. Jeff Goodrich noted it was a condition in the draft Findings and that the lighting would be similar to AG self-storage next door. Stephanie Gile stated that she would like to see spec. sheets included with the photometric plan.

Stephanie Gile commented that the applicant's answer to the question regarding landscaping in Jo-Ann Ells' memo was non-responsive. Jeff Goodrich noted that plantings were proposed along the front of the lot. Stephanie Gile stated that she's like to see a convincing answer.

Steve Lagasse echoed Stephanie Gile's concerns and stated that references to an existing facility on an adjacent lot were not acceptable answers to staffs' comments.

The Board and applicant discussed Finding #15 and the corresponding condition.

Chris Lowe stated that he would like to see landscaping, decorative fencing, or a combination of the two, extended along the sides of the project.

Stephanie Gile asked if there were any plans for solar. Nick Tsouknakis stated that he was considering building the structures to be able to accommodate roof top solar panels in the future.

Stephanie Gile asked if any of the units would be climate controlled. Nick Tsouknakis stated that none of the units would be climate controlled.

Steve Lagasse asked for comments from interested parties.

Michael Lazar introduced himself as the owner of the adjacent lot that is developed with the AG self-storage facility. He submitted a letter with attachments. The Board paused to read the materials.

Steve Lagasse explained that the Board had the authority to respond to some, but not all, of the items in the letter.

Steve Lagasse noted that the Board did not have the authority to comment the use of AG's plans.

Steve Lagasse noted that the Board did have the authority to comment on the size of the proposed facility.

Steve Lagasse noted that the Board did not have the authority to condition the issuance of a Zoning Permit on Act 250 approval as suggested.

Steve Lagasse noted that the Board has the authority to comment on plan details, and clarified that this did not include the color of the building.

03-08-23

Steve Lagasse noted that the Planning Commission reviews parking, and the turning movement plans was addressed.

There was a discussion about a potential drainpipe on the property. It was agreed that if the pipe was discovered, the applicant would contact Town Staff to discuss how to handle it.

It was noted that the project would require an access permit from VTrans.

Nick Tsouknakis stated that the maximum number of storage units is 300.

The Board concurred that they were not concerned with traffic generation.

Michael Lazar asked that the Board restrict unit access from the side of the buildings facing the road.

Michael Lazar questioned the Board's authority to comment on the use of his plans. Steve Lagasse stated that this was a civil matter.

Skip Nalette commented that the buildings are one story, and Act 250 will look at the color.

Noting that the property is in an IC zoning district, Chris Lowe commented that there would need to be something extraordinary about the project for it to be out of character with the area.

Michael Lazar asked if the letter from John Hughes would be part of the record. Steve Lagasse confirmed it would be part of the record.

Steve Lagasse asked if there were comments from the general public.

Dillon Bianchi, 272 Campbell Street, commented that there were a lot of missing pieces, and many required items would not be reviewed by the entire Board if made conditions of approval.

Margo Howland, 228 Wilder Street, stated that she was a tenant of AG self-storage and concurred with Dillon Bianchi's comments. She expressed concern with the lack of building elevations.

Steve Lagasse moved to close the Public Hearing. Stephanie Gile seconded, and the Public Hearing was closed.

Jo-Ann Ells reviewed changes to the Findings of Fact as discussed.

Tom Franklin commented that he would be more comfortable voting on the application if some of the missing information was submitted.

The Board discussed possible dates for a continuance.

03-08-23

Chris Lowe moved to reopen the Public Hearing. Tom Franklin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Chris Lowe moved to continue the application to 6:00PM, Tuesday, April 18th with the understanding that the following information would be submitted from the applicant to the Zoning Administrator by April 3rd:

- Photometric Plan with spec. sheets
- Building elevation including height
- Revised landscaping/fencing plan

Stephanie Gile seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Administrative Matters

1. Minutes

Chris Lowe moved to approve the minute of December 14, 2022. Stephanie Gile seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Administrative Permits

Jo-Ann Ells reviewed the following projects that were permitted administratively:

Residential Unit, 35 Railroad Row

Retail, Landscaper, Storage, Manufacturing, 50 Woodstock Road

3. Availability for the next Public Hearing

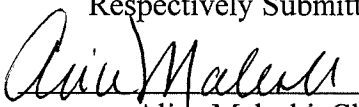
It was noted that the April 12, 2023 would be moved to April 18th as previously discussed.

4. Public comment

None

Adjournment

At 8:35 p.m., Stephanie Gile moved to adjourn. Tom Franklin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectively Submitted,

Alice Maleski, Clerk