

OFFICE OF THE ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

TOWN OF HALIFAX

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT PUBLIC HEARING MEETING MINUTES

September 16, 2024

Chairman Tommy Fox opened the public meeting to consider the Essex & Halifax LLC, Conditional Use permit #24-15 request at 8:00 PM. Other Planning Commissioners present were William Pusey, & Eli Summers. Kaitlin Stone and Matt Gancz were not in attendance. Linda Swanson, Tina Blais, Kyle Farnsworth, William Oglesby, Jason Hale, Kelsey Kissell, Stephan Chait, Nancy McCrea, Diana Conway, Edee Edwards, Carl Barmen, Elizabeth Martin, Bonnie Brown, Linda Lyon, Mary Brewster, Diane Comalli, Stephen Barrows, Rhonda Ashcraft, Regina Hardgrove, Elizabeth Moore, Marion Canedy, Paul & Leeanne Placentino, Robert More, Erik Gura, Andrea Fletcher, Mark Holcome, Jeremy, Joseph & Kate Brown, David Christie, Bettye Roberts, Randy Corbial, Richard Morel, David Jones, Ken Derby, Sue Kelly, Kurt Schellenburg, Blaize, Annette & Gary Deschaine, Kattie Foster, David Ross, John Waters, Suzanne Waters, Kimberly & David Isaacsen, Valerie Wheeler, William Wheeler, Teresa & Dennis Tefft, Francisco Rodriquer, Marilyn Chattin, James Schneider, mana Supenti, Anatole Hocek, Ann Bogart, Gina DePoalis, Andrea Fletcher, Mark Holcomb, Malcolm & Monica Sumner, William Stone, and David Gabriel were also present.

Fox read the Notice of Hearing for Conditional Use Zoning Permit into record.

Eric Gura & Megan Essex of 10 Middle Street, Woods Hole Ma has submitted an application for conditional use of property located at 1600 Brook Road & 491

We propose a campground on our property: Camping at Ballou Mountain, West Halifax, Vermont

Site 1. 1600 Brook Rd This is the formal address of our 420 acre property a 50 yard road improved with crushed stone and a landing approximately 80'x20'. From that landing heading up a 50 yd. woods road a second landing approximately 60'x60' & access to the VAST trail from there

Site 2. The Middle Log landing off of 491 Whitneyville Rd. a three hundred yard long road improved with crushed stone ending in a cleared log landing, approximately 100' square & a second spot a branch of the above mentioned road off 491 Whitneyville Rd. the property formerly of Chris Shields, recently purchased by us a 15 acre parcel cleared with a gravel pad approximately 60'x100'

Site 3. The site of the camping pavilion. There is an open building permit for this structure, & after a year delay we hope this will be finished by December 2024. A 3/4 mile long road improved where needed with culverts and crushed stone, starting at 1355 Whitneyville Rd. & ending at the Upper Log landing abutting the VAST trail. Details of this site are incorporated in the approved permit for the camping pavilion.

Please let us know if this is enough information & please address any questions or concerns to my personal cell phone, 413 364 7505 & the best email addresses are, etgura@aol.com and meg.esx@gmail.com Thank you for your consideration of our application.

Sincerely,

Erik Gura & Megan Essex
Essex & Halifax, LLC



The Town of Halifax Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on this application on September 16, 2024. There will be a hearing at 8:00 PM at the Halifax Town Office conference room located at 246 Branch Road. A copy of the application and additional information can be obtained at the Halifax Town Office, Halifax, Vermont.

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. 4464(a)(1)(c), participation in this local proceeding is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal.

Dated at Halifax, Vermont this day of August 29, 2024.

Fox then asked Gura if he knew what district his property was in Gura replied that he thought it was in the Conservation District, Fox confirmed that it was. Fox then pointed out that a camp ground was not permitted in a conservation district according to the Town Regulations. Discussion followed with Gura and Fox. Fox

continued to explain to Gura about the towns regulations pertaining to a campground in a Conservation District. Fox asked Gura to explain his plans for the proposed campground. Gura explained that he was thinking of 6 camping spots for all season camping. Fox then presented Gura with a copy of the towns district map and a copy of the Town Plan. Fox also asked if the property was in Current Use which Gura replied yes, Fox asked if he could present a forestry plan at a later date, Gura said yes.

Fox opened the discussion to all in attendance.

Pusey then asked all in attendance if they knew what they were attending for and stated that it was very nice to see such a large attendance for Town business.

Someone from the audience had questions and concerns about how many camp sites were planned and what he thought the traffic flow would be like. Gura talked about having space for six or seven cars in one area to park for camping. He also states that there will be room for horse trailers and RV campers. Gura said he cannot predict how well the campground will do and how much traffic there will actually be.

Fox asked the Board if they had any questions. Summers raised concerns about parking per site and brought up a couple concerns that Gancz had brought up in an email as he could not attend. Gancz questioned waste water and what would happen with it. Gura stated that he planned to have a Pack in, Pack out policy. Summers read the section 5-10 of the Town Plan that explains waste water and what should happen with it. (Minute 12 on recording)

Fox then read in Eric Wightmans, (abutter) into record. (Minute 12:16 on recording)

Fox then opens the floor up to any land abutters for questions and concerns.

Deplaolis raises concerns about tourism in her back yard. Oglesby has concerns about the lack of information in the application. Gura has no answers to his concerns. (Minutes 17:00 on recording) Barrows expressing a concern about the ruin of the land. Christie raises his concerns about a permit already in existence on CU land.

Fox asks if there is anyone in attendance for the Conditional Use permit submitted by Gura. There was no response.

Eric Gura verbally withdrew his Conditional Use Permit 24-15 without prejudice.

Summers made a motion to adjourn. Pusey seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Also submitted was a letter written by David Christie who is not an abutter. The letter is filed in the Conditional Use Permit 24-15 at the Halifax Town Office.

The hearing adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Tina Blais

Zoning Board of Adjustment, Secretary