

APPROVED

TOWN OF THOMPSON
PLANNING BOARD
October 11, 2023

IN ATTENDANCE: Kathleen Lara, Chairman
Kristin Boyd
Arthur Knapp
Michael Hoyt
Michael Croissant
Matthew Sickler, Consulting Engineer
Helen Budrock, Sr. Planner, Delaware Engineering
Christina Cellini, Alternate
Logan Morey, Code enforcer
Laura Eppers, Secretary
Paula Elaine Kay, Attorney

Chairman Lara brought the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with a pledge to the flag.

A motion to approve the August 23, 2023 minutes was made Michael Hoyt and second by Arthur Knapp.
All in favor, 0 opposed

A motion to approve the September 13, 2023 minutes was made Michael Hoyt and second by Michael Croissant.
All in favor, 0 opposed

DISCUSSION/POTENTIAL ACTION ITEMS
(as determined by the board):

MILTON LANE SUBDIVISION

Dora Drive, Monticello, NY
Gavin Vuillaume, Project design professional
Bill Chapman, Project representative

A motion to schedule a public hearing on November 8, 2023 was made by Kristin Boyd and second by Arthur Knapp.
All in favor, 0 opposed

Gavin Vuillaume – This is a small 3 lot subdivision. It is a .42-acre parcel on the end of Dora Drive. I'm not sure how familiar everyone is with Dora Drive, but it was part of a previous subdivision and this road kind of just stops right after this parcel. The only thing currently on this property is what looks like an old, over grown road base that was probably developed when all of the other homes around were built. I had a survey look into if the Town has anything or some kind of easement on this property, but there doesn't seem to be any record of such. If anyone here knows otherwise, we would love to know. At this time, we are assuming the land owner has the ability to develop the whole piece, but the biggest issue here is the soils. We did both a perk test and a soil test and we are finding shale at 2 feet and ground water at 12-18 inches. Even through the soils are rough, we do believe there is enough there for a septic system. I can get into more design detail if you would like, but I believe at this time we are just talking about the reconfiguration of the property. We would simply just want to put in 3 structures, one on each subdivided piece; 2 duplexes and 1 single-family. The duplexes will have 6 bedrooms each, so we are looking at fairly

large septic systems for those, and the single-family will only have 4 bedrooms, so typical size septic for that. There is no municipal water to the property, so we are looking into drilling 3 different wells. Other than that I think the only other discussion you might want to have would be in regards to the small strip of road that goes into the property, referred to as Milton Lane, and if you would like that to remain private or become a public road. We were guessing you would want it to stay a private road. We don't anticipate any further development there, but we can leave an easement, if the Town would like, just in case that road needs to be extended in the future.

Michael Hoyt – Who will maintain Milton Lane if it stays as a private road? Gavin Vuillaume – It would be divided between the 3 property owners. They will have a small little HOA, which will maintain the road. Paula Kay – You could probably just do a road maintenance agreement because there is no other common area. Gavin Vuillaume – That's true and would work.

Matt Sickler – You will probably need to add some sort of spot at the end of the road for truck to turn around at. Gavin Vuillaume – Okay. There is plenty of land back this way so we can probably do some kind of "T" turn around there. Matt Sickler – That might work I would just take a look at the code because it supplies a list of expectable options. Gavin Vuillaume – Okay and we will make sure we provide that on the final plan.

Chairman Lara – Do the 2 houses off to the side there have access from another road? Gavin Vuillaume – Yes, they are access from the cul-de-sac that is over there.

Chairman Lara – Matt do you have any comments about the septic systems? Matt Sickler – Yes. I just glanced at the proposed septic systems briefly today and they are proposing raised septic beds. Those would be alternative systems, which we can't approve and they would require DOH approval. Gavin Vuillaume – Right and that is fairly common for those type of systems. Matt Sickler – So, before this Board can take any action, we would need something from the DOH stating what they are proposing is expectable. Chairman Lara - Okay.

Christina Cellini – What is that little road way there on lot #3. Gavin Vuillaume – That is just a little driveway turnaround spot for that lot.

Matt Sickler – Are you proposing that small strip of road to be on its own parcel? Gavin Vuillaume – I think to get adequate road frontage for these properties, we would want to have that deeded to the town with an easement for the property owners to use it. Matt Sickler – I don't know that the town is going to want the road. Gavin Vuillaume – They don't want any part of it? Even the land itself? Paula Kay – No. Gavin Vuillaume – Okay, then we will have to see how we are going to divide it up the frontage. We can make them flag lots. Paula Kay – Well it should just be a private road, on its own parcel, that the landowners would have a deeded right to. Gavin Vuillaume – We can do that. Chairman Lara – The issue the County has with the private road being on its own parcel is that people don't pay the taxes on it and it then becomes an access issue. I think Real Property would prefer that each parcel own to the middle of the road, or some sort of portion of it, or dedicate it to the Town. Matt Sickler – You can extend lots 1 & 2 to the middle of the road and make lot 3 like a flag lot with deeded access. Paula Kay – Or make it all part of one lot with deeded access for the others. Gavin Vuillaume – Okay. Paula Kay – And we will want to see the easement language, for which ever way you decide to go, as it will have to be in each deed.

Chairman Lara – So, I think the next step here is to get your septic to DOH for review and come back to us once you have approval. Matt Sickler – I don't think DOH will give them a final approval until they have obtained at least a preliminary approval from this Board, but I think before we go too far in our process, they should have some sort of initial review done by the DOH to see what they have to say about it. Gavin Vuillaume – Pretty much some kind of agreement from them that they are on board with our design? Matt Sickler – Right or there could be a possibility that they kick it back after we have gone through our whole

process. Chairman Lara – Okay.

Michael Hoyt – Will the duplexes be sold as one building? Gavin Vuillaume - There will be one owner for each lot. Bill Chapman – It is currently one owner who is subdividing for his family. Logan Morey – This will probably need site plan approval for both the subdivision and the 2-family buildings. Gavin Vuillaume – Okay. We weren't sure how this town handles duplexes, but we can do that. Do you require any kind of public hearing for a minor subdivision? Paula Kay – It is not required, but the Board always has the discretion. Michael Hoyt – And I think in that area, we should probably think about having one. Arthur Knapp – I agree. Chairman Lara – Okay, so we can schedule a public hearing if you guys are ready. Gavin Vuillaume – That would be great. Chairman Lara – Laura, when can we do a public hearing? Laura Eppers – Will this need a 239 review? Chairman Lara – No. Laura Eppers – We can do the first meeting in November. Paula Kay – That would be November 8th. Gavin Vuillaume – Okay. Paula Kay – Have all fees been paid for this project? Laura Eppers – As this is their first time in front of the Board, fees have not been calculated yet. Jim usually does that the following day. Paula Kay – Okay. Just make sure they are paid prior to the public hearing. Gavin Vuillaume – Okay.

A motion to schedule a public hearing on November 8, 2023 was made by Kristin Boyd and second by Arthur Knapp.

All in favor, 0 opposed.

CATSKILL HATZOLAH

Fraser Road, Kiamesha Lake, NY

Joel Kohn, Project representative

Ivan Kolter, Project attorney

Yahuda Feig, Hatzalah coordinator

Joel Kohn – Essentially Hatzalah is looking to add another 2-bay ambulance garage on the corner of Fraser Road and Anawana Lake Road. This property is located in the SR zone, but this type of use does not exist there or in any other zones in the Town. So, we petitioned the Town Board to add the use to the SR zone. This use will be for an Emergency Dispatch Service and will have a very specific definition, that Paula and I have been working on so that it cannot be used for anything else the town does not want to see. We submitted our suggestions for the minimum lot coverage and setbacks and originally asked for it to be a use subject to site plan review. However, when the Town Board referred us to this Board and we had our initial discussion, this Board asked that it also be a special use permit. This Board and its consultants also wanted to wait to hear from the County before you gave any kind of recommendations back to the Town Board, but when we went to the County, they said they were not going to say anything until we are officially referred something to review. So, we went back to the Town Board and asked them to refer this project to the County for a 239 review. It took a while and we just got their determination back, but I am not sure if you had a chance to take a look at that yet. If you haven't, they suggested that the entrance should not be on Anawana Lake Road and it should rather be on Fraser Road. That is pretty much where we stand at this point and we are here tonight in hopes that the Board will recommend the allowance of this use in this zone to the Town Board.

Chairman Lara – I'll start by saying we know how valuable Hatzalah is and how skilled every member is.

Ivan Kalter – At the last meeting the Board voiced some concern of having this facility in a residential area. I think, as Helen also pointed out at the last meeting, that there are other facilities permitted in the zone that are far more extreme, such as hotels, motels, club houses, social organizations, museums, public libraries, schools and colleges. So, you have a lot of other facilities that have the potential of being loud already in this zone. Plus, I believe there are a couple bungalow colonies and some developments already existing on this road. If there is any concern about traffic, I surmise that this garage won't be needed more than one or two times a day. With this being a 2-acre parcel, so it could be subdivided and two single-

family homes built, and that would generate the same amount of traffic, if not more. Michael Hoyt – I think there is going to be more traffic than one or two trips a day. Ivan Kalter – I don't know for sure, so I will let Yahuda speak to that. Yahuda Feig – We have about 20 ambulances, including the three we just got over this past summer, spread throughout Sullivan County, and two in Ulster County. Our busy season are the three summer months, as we all know, so there is difference in the call volumes then compared to the rest of the year. Outside of the summer months, the average calls per day, throughout the County, is three. So, that is about an average of one or two calls per week, or at the max one call per day, for this location. In the summer time it is a lot busier, but the demand is shared with 18 other ambulances, spread throughout the County. We currently have a void in the area we are proposing this ambulance garage and we are trying to fill that need. We are relying on volunteers who may be in the area at the time or ambulances from our Village of Monticello or Fallsburg locations; and in some cases, that volunteer may still need to travel, with their sirens on, to the nearest location to get an ambulance. That creating more traffic and a longer response time, than if there were an ambulance in that area. The proposed location is near two bigger developments and is central for where we have a need. There was recently a huge explosion there in Kiamesha Lake, less than a mile away from where this ambulance would have been parked, and EMTs from one of those developments, Parkside, were the first onsite. Hatzalah transported all three of the critical patients and where also the first to have paramedics onsite. There is a need for this kind of service and the County struggled to get help onsite and were trying to even get assistance from Orange County. Because we had so many volunteers here and nearby, we were able to save lives that day. However, there was a delay of a few minutes, because we had to wait for an ambulance to come from Fallsburg and Monticello. Having a location here will definitely cut down on the response time for this area. This past summer we did see a 20% increase in calls, which is about 500 more calls, and that is considerably due to the amount of 911 calls we are getting because the local commercial ambulance company is struggling tremendously to fill the need. They are having a hard time staffing, so our volunteers have stepped in to fill that void. Having a location here will be beneficial of all of the residence in the area, year-round and seasonal. As for the traffic, I don't see this causing an increase. If anything, I would think you would see a decrease as there won't be volunteers traveling back and forth to get an ambulance.

Arthur Knapp – My only additional comment would be in regards to future expansion. I fear that as the area develops, there will be a future need for additional ambulances. Yahuda Feig – We have already allowed room for future growth as there will be two bays and we only have one ambulance at this time. We don't see any need to expand any further than that, as there are other locations to serve the other areas throughout the County, so this one would be for the Kiamesha Lake area.

Michael Hoyt – This will not be a displace center, right? Yahuda Feig – No. It will only be a garage to house one or two ambulances and possibly a small room for a volunteer or two to stay the night if need be. At this point in time, we have volunteer paramedics coming up from the city everyday just to cover the need. Two of our year-round people did just finish their paramedic training, so once they have the required field training, that will help greatly. In the meantime, we are having to pay for a place for these volunteers to stay, since they are doing this for no pay, so maybe having a small room for that would be helpful.

Chairman Lara – Can you explain how it works with EMT and who can drive an ambulance? Yahuda Feig – NYS requires at least one EMT in the back of the ambulance and the driver, or the rest of the crew, does not need to be an EMT. A lot of the time the issue with getting a crew together for a call is the challenge of getting an EMT. Hatzalah does not take in any members who are not at least EMT certified. So, all of our members are, at a bare minimum, EMT certified and are equipped with EMS equipment. This is pretty much everything you would find in the back of an ambulance. So, anyone who gets directed to the scene is certified by the NYS Department of Health and will have an orange sticker on their windshield showing they are certified. The vehicle won't be lettered because it is their own personal vehicles, but it will be equipped with the basic equipment and supplies, such as an automatic defibrillator, oxygen, epi pens, albuterol, Narcan etc. Pretty much anything that is needed from delivering a baby to cardiac arrest.

Paramedics have a high level of training and carry all of the same equipment. This County is fortunate to have Hatzalah paramedics here year-round and about 50 paramedics in the summer time. We had six paramedics on-scene at that house explosion and out of those six, three of them were 911 paramedic in New York City for many years, one was a critical care pediatric nurse at NYU for 10 years, and one has been a paramedic for over 30 years. So, we don't just bring lifesaving equipment, we also bring experience. Every one of our members are equipped with these supplies so that they can go straight to the scene to decrease the response time, as that is our goal. Not all calls can be handled without an ambulance, but not all calls require on either.

Joel Kohn – After the last meeting we were here, Paula and Ivan exchanged some emails were Ivan suggested the use be referred to as a “volunteer ambulance service” to help limit the use and to be defined as “an ambulance entity, which is certified/licensed by the state and engaged in active calls”. To which Paula agreed was much better and said she would discuss with the Chair. As that was back in May, I am just bringing it up again in case the Board wants to comment on that tonight. Paula Kay – That goes to the issue of the concern the Board had about this opening up the possibility for other similar facilities to be populated all over the SR zones. Even though it is probably unlikely, the Board wanted to limit that possibility. That was one of the issues the Board raised and I believe another issued raised was the location. Not because of the zoning, but the location itself and if it would be appropriate for this use. Joel Kohn – I think that is why we wanted to hear from the County first before coming back to the Planning Board. Paula Kay – Did you guys get a chance to see the 239? Chairman Lara – Yes and Dermit said that Anawana Lake Road and Sackett Lake Road are two of the scariest roads during the summer. Michael Hoyt – I don't think the issue is with allowing the new use, but the location proposed. Christina Cellini – I agree. I drive this road everyday and the amount of animal damage alone is terrifying. Never mind adding an ambulance to the mix. Joel Kohn – Like Yahuda mentioned, this will hopefully decrease the amount of traffic traveling on the road, as a volunteer won't have to travel to Fallsburg, get an ambulance, and travel back. Michael Croissant – Regardless of if the volunteer is going to the proposed location or Fallsburg, they still have to travel down this road. Joel Kohn – Right and the County asked that the entrance should be on Fraser Road, instead of Anawana Lake Road. Michael Croissant – I agree with that. Chairman Lara – I think we also mentioned making this a special use. Ivan Kalter – I don't think that would work because then this would have to be a permitted use. Joel Kohn – It will be. I will just be subject to site plan approval. Paula Kay – And the Board would then have the opportunity to have the applicant come back after the first year of operation and hold another public hearing, if they chose, to see what kind of impact there has been. I think making this use a special use is a great idea. Yahuda Feig – What exactly does that mean? Paula Kay – If a project is a special use, it is a requirement by our code and the state law that project, basically, has a second review after it's first year of operation. This way they can see how things are going. Maybe there are some adjustments need to be done to help things work better or maybe it is just not working out at all, but if that was the case, I think you would know as well as us. Yahuda Feig – So, what happens if we build this building for a ½ million dollars and we come back in a year and the Board says it's not working? Paula Kay – That is the risk you take with a special use permit. Sometimes the use is too intense for the area or maybe it really doesn't fit the character of the area. All of the store in this mall here are special use permits, believe it or not. So, they put a lot of money into opening businesses that had to come back to this Board in a year for a second review. Yahuda Feig – Are there any metric or how does that work? Paula Kay – There is not necessarily any metrics. In a case like this we would look at things like real traffic issues and if there were any accidents or noise complaints from neighbors. Once the Board know if there have been any impacts to the area, they can take a look at those and see if they can be addressed. Ivan Kalter – it would have to be something egregious to revoke the special use permit. Yahuda Feig – Okay. I just wanted to make sure that just because one or two neighbors say they don't want to live next to an ambulance garage, we would have to shut down after spending all of that money, but that does not seem to be the case. Paula Kay – Right and if you go back to the Town Board with this Boards recommendation and they approve the use, you will have to come back to this Board for site plan and special use approval. During that process you will have to have a public hearing so you can kind of get a sense of how the neighbors feel about this. Joel Kohn – I have seen plenty of special use projects come back and I have

never seen one be taken away, so I don't think you have to worry.

Chairman Lara – Has there been any engineering done on the property to make sure the whole thing isn't a swamp? Joel Kohn – No engineering has been done yet, but I don't believe there are any wetlands on the site. Chairman Lara – Okay. I'm not very familiar with this site, so I just wanted to make sure you are not going through this whole process for nothing. Ivan Kalter – I drove by there today and the site looks pretty level. Paula Kay – Just remember at this point in time, all this Board is doing is making a recommendation back to the Town Board on whether or not you agree with adding this use to the zone, with the limiting language and it being a special use. Michael Hoyt – I like the idea of this being a special use permit. My only concern is there are more and more private agencies coming up in the area, because as you have already pointed out, there is a great demand in the winter, and if we allow the use in this zone, it opens up the door for these commercial agencies in a residential area. Chairma Lara – Right, commercial things belong in a commercial area. Ivan Kalter That is why we wanted to limit this to a volunteer service. Michael Hoyt – There are other volunteer ambulance services out there, right? Ivan Kalter – I can't imagine any other volunteer agencies coming in as Hatzalah monopolizes the County. Michael Hoyt – There is another agency out there. Yahuda Feig – There are no other EMS other than the Town EMS agencies already here that are licensed in the County. Michael Hoyt – There's another one, they have been on calls with us. Joel Kohn – I think you are talking about WSP. Chairman Lara – Yes, that is it. Yahuda Feig – Those are coming up from other counties when we have surges, but none of those are not ambulance agencies. Paula Kay – Right and I think it may be helpful if I read the definition Ivan and I came up with. I will be called a Volunteer Ambulance Service and the definition will be “an ambulance entity certified/licensed by the State engaged in active calls”. We also talked about limiting the size of the property to no less than 2 acres.

Ivan Kalter – The unique aspect of this whole situation is that the proposed property is being donated. Otherwise, some other agency that might want to provide the same type of service can develop in the other 50% of the Town, that is commercial. Michael Hoyt – That is a pretty active quarter and that is prime real estate on that corner there. Ivan Kalter – Than that makes it even more important that a garage be there. Paula Kay – I'm just playing devil's advocate here, but if it is prime real estate and it is being donated, why not sell it and build in a commercial area. Joel Kohn – We have actually looked into that, but I think going to a commercial area is not solving the void. They did look at other properties that may have been a better fit for this, but they are not in the area where there is a need. Ivan Kalter – I don't see any other volunteer ambulance services coming in that would be looking to set up shop, but if they did, they have plenty of other places they can go. Michael Hoyt – Years ago no one foreseen Hatzalah going in on that corner. Times change and all I am saying this that we need to find something that works for everyone. Yahuda Feig – Just remember that even if another volunteer ambulance service does come along, they cannot just come along and set up shop. They will need a Certificate of Need and a lot of support from everyone; the Town, the County, the community, and more. They will have to show there is a need and I don't think they will be able to show that if Hatzalah has a garage here because we will fill that void. Michael Hoyt – And you guys are doing a great job at that.

No more questions or comments from the Board.

The whole Board was in favor of recommending that the Town Board allow the addition of the “Volunteer Ambulance Service” use to the SR zone as a special use and with the limiting language of an ambulance entity certified/licensed by the State engaged in active calls”.

A motion to close the meeting was made by Michael Croissant and second by Michael Hoyt.
All in favor, 0 opposed.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Eppers, Secretary

Town of Thompson Planning Board

