



TOWN OF DURHAM
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Town Planner's Review
Wednesday, May 25, 2022

- X. **15 Newmarket Road – Tideline Public House.** Site plan application to create a tap room (serving beer and wine), store and food truck court with 8 food trucks, covered pavilions, a landscaped community gathering space, and other site changes behind the old Durham Town Offices. Scott and Karen Letourneau, applicants. William and Carrie Salas, current property owners. Mike Sievert, Horizons Engineering. Map 5, Lot 4-10.
- I recommend that the board accept the application as complete, schedule a site walk, and schedule the public hearing for June 8.

Please note the following in no particular order.

- 1) Acceptance. The application can be accepted as complete.
- 2) Site Walk. It would be useful to schedule a site walk.
- 3) Use. The proposed use is allowed by right in the Courthouse District, including the restaurant, tavern, and retail store. Tavern is not listed in the table but is considered part of a restaurant. I am not aware of any conditional use, special exceptions, or variances that would be needed for the project.
- 4) Ownership. The applicant is acquiring the property, the former Durham Town Offices, from Bill and Carrie Salas (THMB, LLC), proprietors of Applied GeoSolutions consulting firm.
- 5) Compacted stone. Audrey Cline asked about the crushed stone for people in wheelchairs. It will be compacted stone dust which should be fine.
- 6) Parking. A waiver is requested for the number of parking spaces. We will review this.
- 7) TRG. The project was reviewed by the Technical Review Group on Tuesday. I will send notes of the meeting on Monday or Tuesday.
- 8) Town Parking. The applicant is working out an arrangement with the Town Administrator to allow the applicant to use the 10 parking spaces at the front left of the property, where the Town has an easement for use, in exchange for designating 10 spaces for Town use at the rear of the site. The Town Council approved the essentials of the agreement on April 4.
- 9) Sprinklers. The building will be sprinkled, as required for public assembly.
- 10) Kitchen. The applicant will coordinate with the Building and Fire Departments about requirements for the kitchen.

- 11) Landscaping. No new landscaping is proposed other than planting grass as shown. Some shrubbery should be placed to buffer the view of the food trucks from Newmarket Road.
- 12) Liquor License. The applicant is applying for a liquor license to serve wine and beer. The NH Liquor Commission will have several requirements for layout of the site. Some items shown are based on an earlier review by the commission and will likely be removed, including the ticket booth.
- 13) HDC. The applicant will need approval from the Durham Historic District Commission for changes to the rear of the main building, changes to one or both of the outbuildings on the left side, installation of the brick and crushed stone surfaces, and any other new structures. The applicant plans to present the project to the HDC on June 2. The food trucks are not subject to HDC review because they are not structures, i.e. they are not attached to the ground. The applicant presented a preliminary plan to the HDC on February 3.
- 14) Pedestrian Way. The brick walk should connect to Main Street and Schoolhouse Lane. The plan is shown this way based on an earlier specification from the Liquor Commission.
- 15) Encroachment. There is an encroachment of the parking lot into Schoolhouse Lane. Since the encroachment was in place when the Town owned the lot and while the lot has been owned by Bill and Carrie Salas, the Town will probably simply execute an agreement of some kind to allow for the encroachment to continue unless the Town needed the land for expansion of Schoolhouse Lane in the future.
- 16) Charging Station. The applicant shows an electric vehicle charging station on site.
- 17) Traffic. The traffic on Newmarket Road in front of the property is about 15,000 vehicles per day (weekday total in both directions). The most recent count by NHDOT is 13,000 vehicles in 2015. A 2% annual growth equals around 15,000 vehicles today. I would not anticipate any needed improvement at the Schoolhouse Lane/Newmarket Road intersection. The current traffic pattern on Schoolhouse Lane seems to be effective – with two-way traffic in the lower part of the road and one way traffic coming from Dover Road at the upper end.
- 18) Composting. We have put the applicant in contact with the Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee about potential composting.
- 19) Recycling. A recycling plan will be needed.
- 20) Dumpster. The dumpster should be moved further from the abutting residence at the rear if feasible. Is the dumpster sufficient size?
- 21) Lighting. The applicant requested a waiver regarding lighting. We should get details about the proposed café style lighting.
- 22) Hours and activities. The board will need to establish hours of operation and limits on activity (such as playing music).
- 23) Letters of support. While the Town was negotiating with the applicant about how to handle the 10 parking spaces used by the Town we received numerous letters of support from citizens about the project. We will post those on the website shortly.

- 24) Fire pits. The applicant has talked about having fire pits on site. If they plan to have them, they will coordinate with the Fire Department.
- 25) Building exterior. The applicant is not proposing changes to the exterior facades of the building.
- 26) Materials. We will need details on the color and materials for the retaining wall and brick pavers.
- 27) Bike racks. Several bike racks are shown in the front and rear of the building.
- 28) Utilities. The project will use Town water and sewer. Propane gas will be provided to the food trucks from a central underground tank. The applicant is reducing impervious surface so they do not intend to incorporate any drainage improvements. There is natural gas on Newmarket Road, but the applicant does not plan to connect. The applicant requested a waiver from preparing a stormwater report. Some more research may be needed to clarify exactly where existing drainage structures are located.
- 29) Overhead lines. The applicant proposes to retain the existing overhead wires so a waiver will be needed for that.
- 30) Energy checklist. The energy checklist will be needed soon.
- 31) Floor plans. It would be helpful to see proposed floor plans.
- 32) Construction plan. A basic construction management plan is probably needed.
- 33) Snow storage. How will snow be managed?
- 34) Signage. If the applicant proposes any signage a design should be submitted at that time.
- 35) Preliminary review. The Planning Board held a preliminary conceptual review of the application on February 9. Here are minutes of that review. Some plans for the project may have changed since that time. The applicant gave a powerpoint presentation that you can see on the website (See closed conceptual review for 15 Newmarket Road in 2022).

Minutes of preliminary review. Scott Letourneau said the concept for the Tideline Public House is for a brick-and-mortar taproom, with bakery or retail shops, and 6-8 food trucks onsite as a family-friendly, community outdoor gathering space with indoor and outdoor dining. The Old Town Hall has 7,000 sq ft of indoor space and they would like to put in a taproom with bar and seating, lounging area, and entertainments. A grassy, landscaped area would be created behind the building up to the current treed median with outdoor picnic tables, fire pits, and child play areas. The building would be surrounded with a patio/garden area with food trucks to one side. Business hours would be from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm, hoping to target locals and non-locals commuting through Durham. He said he and his wife just moved back from Bend, OR where there are about 10 taproom/food truck courts featuring more than 50 trucks and none of the businesses have failed.

Mr. Letourneau said they plan to eventually rehabilitate the old Salt Shed and add a glass-front rollup door with additional indoor covered seating and possible antique woodstove. Tideline would provide beverages with a minimal bar menu and provide all amenities. Truck operators would provide food and

staff trucks and be tenants on a month-to-month lease of an RV-style pad with a base rate including power and city water. Food Truck Vendors would come here to stay, and vehicle maintenance will be provided. These amenities will require Planning Board and Historical District Commission approval.

Mr. Letourneau said old site plans from 1971 show a 3-sided garage next to the Salt Shed with historical precedent for a structure along that property line and showed concept pavilion shed roofs and woodshed concepts for dry wood storage for fire pits and woodstove. He said clear boundaries will be needed around certain parts of property and a dumpster enclosure will be added somewhere on the site.

Mr. Letourneau said there are a lot of potential benefits to Durham and the Historical District with a highly visible and greatly underutilized public office becoming a public community gathering place; will also enhance street appeal with full landscaping on street side; creates a more walkable and bikeable gathering place with 20-25 jobs added; building will need a sprinkler suppression system for change of use and an assembly permit.

Mr. Letourneau emphasized their commitment to sustainability, changing pavement into permeable area, explore adding EV charging stations, bike racks, adding solar, and partner with area businesses to use composting as much as possible. The community commitment could be a hosting spot for all sorts of community events and charity events, and become a true destination as a first-in-the-region type of business which will benefit other Durham businesses

Questions: Mr. Bubar said if food trucks are permanently there, they may need vehicle registration in Durham. He said he liked the approach to sustainability but was concerned about fire pits and wood stoves as an environmental issue. Mr. Letourneau said he is already working on a rental agreement which will require vendor vehicles remain registered, road-worthy, and licensed, and is willing to engage in discussion regarding fire pits.

Mr. Kelley asked if he intended to abandon the curb cut on the left side of the building, and Mr. Letourneau said yes it would be used for service vehicles only. Mr. Kelley asked the approximate number of parking spaces that would remain for site use; Mr. Letourneau said 35-40 with on-street parking nearby. Mr. Behrendt said parking responsibilities are in Site Plan Regulations and the Board could waive or adjust them. Mr. Bubar said he would like to hear from Police and Fire.

Councilor Tobias said this is an excellent idea in the location and a good spot for trails and downtown connections; idea is forward-thinking, and this could be a successful business adding more vibrancy to our Historic District and making Durham a destination. Ms. Dill said this is the most refreshing business plan she has seen in a long time, and the name Tideline Public House also has historical connotations.

Mr. Bubar asked for clarification that the entire sanitary aspect of the area would be provided by the applicants. Mr. Letourneau said our plan is to provide areas for garbage disposal, recycling, and composting for the public, with most food truck vendors taking care of waste they generate.

Chair Rasmussen said he is encouraged to see such a creative repurposing of the Old Town Hall transitioning one public venue into another.