

Minutes of the Westhampton Zoning Board of Appeals

Public Hearing for a Variance by the Town of Westhampton for a proposed public safety complex

January 19, 2021 at 6 pm via Zoom

Present: Bill Tracy, John Kelsey, Peter Ignatovich, David Loven, Laurie Sanders

Applicant: Town of Westhampton (Steve Holt, Phil Dowling, John Zimmerman, Chris Brooks; Mark Sullivan, project manager; Dave Kelly, civil engineer)

Others present: Dave Antosz, fire chief; Steve Gagne, neighbor; Shirl Morrigan, resident.

6:06 pm Bill Tracy called the hearing to order for Application 220 for a variance at 48 Stage Road, by the Town of Westhampton, for the construction of a new public safety complex. The variance is needed because the building will not meet the front setback requirement.

Steve Holt, chairman of the public safety complex committee, spoke on behalf of the project. He explained that the existing building on site is inadequate due to state codes (OSHA, ADA). Multiple concept drawings were done and this is the best location for sight lights, turning radius, etc. It is 45' from the town ROW (vs 50'). All the other setbacks are satisfied.

Dave Kelly, civil engineer for the project, discussed the access drive and topographic issues from Southampton Road to Stage Road, especially as relates to the turning radius of the fire trucks.

The salt shed will remain.

He stated that the sight lines along Stage Road will not be impacted by the closer proximity. He stated that although it is 45' to the property line, the building is actually more than 50' to the actual roadway. The side setback to Southampton Road is currently out of compliance (22') and will come into compliance with the new layout.

Steve Holt noted that this layout provides parking for firefighters and the public. He showed a rendering of the proposed building.

Loven stated that he believes this new layout will be safer for traffic.

Holt states that stormwater will be improved and notes that the lot is centrally located, which is key for the fire/safety complex. It is town owned. The new building will tie into the public water supply.

Kelsey states that the project meets all three criteria required by a variance. All ZBA members concur.

Bill Tracy noted that an abutter, Florek, called and stated they had no issue.

Tracy invites public comment in objection. None.

Tracy invites public comment in favor. Steve Gagne stated that he was "110% supportive."

MOTION by John Kelsey to approve the application 220V from the Town of Westhampton for a variance because:

1a) the project is limited due to topography, wetlands and its size is mandated by state regulations (re: size of trucks).

1b) in the absence of a variance, there would be a substantial hardship

1c) the project is for the public good and not detrimental.

It meets all three criteria in 6.11 (a-c).

Peter Ignatovich seconds the motion.

Loven discloses his potential conflict of interest of future work on the site. John Kelsey states this does not disqualify Loven because no contract has been issued.

Dave Antosz, fire chief, thanks Public Safety Committee for is hard work, time & research.

The motion is repeated. All in favor (via roll call); Unanimous, with no abstentions.

Motion to close the public hearing is made. Bill Tracy states that the variance will be recorded following a 20 day appeal period.

Peter Ignatovich makes a motion to close the hearing. Dave Loven seconds.

All in favor. Close of hearing at 6:45 pm.