

 **Town of Whitingham**

 **Zoning Board of Adjustment**

 **Planning Commission**

**MINUTES OF AUGUST 23, 2018 JOINT PUBLIC HEARING**

**Attendees**:

ZBA members: Chair David Dumaine, Marshall Dix, Craig Aekus, Scott Reed, Dana Dix and Troy Felisko.

PC members: Kristen Breeden

Zoning Administrator: Gig Zboray.

Applicants: Cody Scott, and Kevin Rehill, pilot.

Abutters: Larry Kingman, Claudia Greene, Don Greene, Martha Kingman, Suzette Kingman

Others: Lauren Jetter and Charles Bartlett, in support of applicant.

At 7:00pm David Dumaine opened the hearing by reading the legal warning. He noted his personal conflict of interest as an abutter.

**Application overview**: 896 Fowler Road is in the Rural Residential Zoning District. Eric Scott would like to change the use of a basketball court originally applied for on Zoning Permit # W-32-17 to a helicopter landing pad, new Permit # W-14-18. A helicopter landing pad is a Conditional Use in the Rural Residential District.

**Discussion:**

Claudia Greene indicated that she is concerned about safety of the aircraft flying so low overhead. Kevin Rehill, the pilot, responded that he demands a safe aircraft. The approach is incredibly safe. Cody Scott, Eric Scott’s son, is also a pilot, therefore the craft is usually dual piloted. They only fly when “it’s nice out”. Mrs. Greene mentioned the change in wind from the bottom of the hill to the top of the hill. The pilots indicated that there is a windsock on site to indicate the wind direction and strength.

Larry Kingman spoke saying that he has seen and heard them come and go and he has no problem with it at all. The noise is negligible and only slightly louder at takeoff and landing.

Cody Scott noted that their craft is a McDonnell Douglas 600 one of the quietest on the market because it has no tail rotor.

Mr. Greene has observed take-offs and landings and sees no reason why they should not be allowed to operate a helicopter there.

Use of Site / Site Plan Review:

The site was designed and built on FAA helicopter requirements although it was originally permitted as a basketball court. The pad is actually 20 feet larger than FAA requirements.

Dana Dix asked if they are storing aviation fuel on the property - answer -no, not in the hanger.

Troy Felisko asked about **lighting** for night landings – answer – they have no plans for night flying, it is safer to fly sunrise to sunset.

It was indicated that there is not a lot of **vibration** – craft was designed not to disturb people and animals on the ground.

**Dust** – the area surrounding the landing pad is sodded – they don’t want dust getting into the aircraft motor or interior.

Troy Felisko asked about the effect of the craft on **electronics** – answer – no effect, it is a totally different frequency.

Emergency Landings were discussed. The pilot indicated that the pad would be available for emergency landings if necessary (by Lifeflight) however, the location isn’t the greatest for that and it would be difficult for an ambulance to reach the landing pad.

Kristen Breeden asked if they planned to charter their helicopter – answer – no, it is for personal use only.

Kristen Breeden asked about maintenance and what they do – answer – the craft is maintained per or above manufacturers recommendations, no repairs or maintenance are conducted on site, they all must be done by a qualified mechanic.

Claudia Greene asked if ten-years down the line they get a new helicopter, will it be noisier? Answer – probably not, helicopters are now being designed to be quieter.

Kristen Breeden noted that if they change their plans in the future about lighting that they must update the site plan review.

**Adjourn hearing**: A motion to adjourn the hearing was made by Craig Aekus, seconded by Troy Felisko. Dave Dumaine adjourned the hearing at 7:26pm.

David Dumaine, the abutters and the applicants left the room and the members of the Zoning Board of Adjustment conducted their deliberations.

**Dana Dix made a motion to allow the use of a helicopter landing pad at 896 Fowler Road with the following conditions:**

* **Operate from dawn to dusk only**
* **No lighting – if lighting is needed in the future a new site plan review must be conducted.**
* **No on-site helicopter fuel storage.**
* **Noise level must remain as it has been or lower.**

**Motion was seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

The Zoning Board of Adjustment adjourned at 7:34pm.

Respectfully submitted,

~*Gig Zboray,*

Zoning Administrator