



Town of Amherst, New Hampshire
Office of Community Development

Building · Code Enforcement · Planning · Zoning · Economic Development
2 Main Street, Amherst, NH 03031

Site Walk Minutes

Tuesday, May 9, 2023

3:30 p.m.

17 Christian Hill Road, Amherst, NH 03031

- 1. CASE #: PZ17123-032323 - Robert H. Jacobson Revocable Trust, Laurie Stevens, Trustee (Owner) & TransFarmations, Inc. (Applicant), 17 Christian Hill Road, PIN #s: Tax Map 005-148-000 & 005-100-000 - Conditional Use Permit. To depict a 60-unit Planned Residential Development per the Integrated Innovative Housing Ordinance (IIHO). Zoned Residential Rural.**
- 2. CASE #: PZ17124-032323 - Robert H. Jacobson Revocable Trust, Laurie Stevens, Trustee (Owner) & TransFarmations, Inc. (Applicant), 17 Christian Hill Road, PIN #s: Tax Map 005-148-000 & 005-100-000 - Conditional Use Permit. To depict a 33 Single-Family Lot, and Four-Unit Barn and Planned Residential Development per the Integrated Innovative Housing Ordinance (IIHO). Zoned Residential Rural.**

Planning Board Members: Bill Stoughton, Tom Silvia, Arnie Rosenblatt, and Tim Kachmar. (Chris Yates and Cynthia Dokmo arrived later but did not join up with the group during the walk.)

Applicant/Agent/Professionals: Sam Foisie, PE, Meridian Land Services, Inc., Carter Scott, TransFarmations, and one other Meridian employee.

Other Attendees: Frank and Lisa Montesanto, Tracie Adams, Jim Hendrix and four or five other members of the public.

Staff: Nic Strong, Community Development Director.

The site walk began at 3:30 p.m. just past the existing farmhouse at 17 Christian Hill Road. Those present walked around the field behind the farmhouse. The farmhouse will remain and is a four-bedroom dwelling. In the CUP II application, a four-unit barn will be built and will be workforce housing units. The access drive was where the site walk began. There will be three buildings behind the existing farmhouse - two dwelling structures and one garage. In the CUP III application, there will be three units on three separate lots behind the existing farmhouse. There will also be three solar lots at an angle in the field. Density credits are sought for the reuse of the existing farmhouse.

The potential location of the houses was discussed and it was noted that they would not go far beyond the existing treeline at the southeasterly end of the field.

A member of the public mentioned that the field was wet in the past and trucks had been stuck. They asked if the soil had perc'ed. Sam Foisie explained that the structures were sited based off test pits which had indicated the seasonal wet and water table. The building sites may be raised.

The roads and foundations would not be constructed in the water table. He also pointed out that the weather had been wet for the past two weeks and the field was not inundated with water.

A question was asked about the solar farms and the inverters and who would be maintaining those, who would sign the PPA agreements with Eversource and how this related to the CUP. Arnie Rosenblatt stated that those questions were best suited to being raised at a Planning Board meeting and this site walk was intended to view the property and get an idea of the proposed layout.

It was noted that a new septic system had been installed behind the existing farmhouse.

Those present walked to the approximate location of the front edge of the southerly set of solar panels. It was noted that greenhouses were proposed in the CUP III application as well on one of the solar lots. The proposed community barn was noted as being constructed within the treeline on the CUP III application and there was an old foundation there as a reference point.

Those present walked to the proposed location of the most northerly structure in the field which was about the same location for both CUP II and CUP III. There were proposed to be multifamily structures in this location for both applications and those would be out of the side building setbacks and away from the neighboring house. The house lots proposed would have 100' front setbacks due to Christian Hill Road being a scenic road. For the CUP III application on Map 5 Lot 100 there would be three single family homes across the street from the field. The stone wall marks the right-of-way and would be removed where necessary for driveway construction.

Those present walked along Christian Hill Road and observed the old foundation in the treeline mentioned earlier. Driveways to the proposed barn would be on either side of that foundation.

The existing farmhouse was noted as dating from approximately 1830 and the existing structure will be maintained.

The proposed road entry location on Map 5 Lot 100 is the same location for both applications. The assembled company made their way to this location and followed as closely as possible the proposed centerline up through the woods. The group walked to the center of the proposed cul-de-sac for CUP II which is also where the road bends to continue up the hill for the CUP III application. In the CUP II application, a shared driveway continues up from the cul-de-sac to 11 more units, whereas in the CUP III application the road itself continues up and the cul-de-sac is at the top of the hill from where a shared driveway extends to three more lots. The proposed road's location in relation to existing stone walls was noted.

Pink and white flags noted on site were explained to be the centerline for the original CUP application, but the road had been shifted downhill to lessen the grade and meet the Town's standards.

The group was shown the plans and where the open space started in relation to the proposed lots or units. It was noted that 6.8 acres had been purchased by an abutting property owner prior to the original CUP for the development and a lot line adjustment was done at that time.

The cul-de-sac location for CUP III was noted and Sam Foisie explained that the design was the same as the one recently proposed for the Curran subdivision. He noted that three larger lots were proposed from a shared driveway at the peak elevation on the property. Sam Foisie noted that he was trying to retain as much stone wall as possible and trying to incorporate it as the right-of-way line.

A question was raised about how much material would be removed during road construction and what the plan sequence would be for construction. It was noted that this would be dictated by the market and any phasing required by the Planning Board. Staking would be done to denote the clearing required for the road and then the applicant would decide whether or not to do the lots at the same time.

A concern was raised with the sight distance from the road entrance on Christian Hill Road. It was noted that the entrance was on the apex of the curve and the distance was good in each direction.

A question was asked about the possibility of more land being sold to an abutter. Sam Foisie stated that 50 acres could be sold and would be subject to restrictions such as the development rights being removed so the land would be preserved and no development would take place on it. A lot line adjustment with an abutter would be required for this to take place. Farming may remain as an approved use of that land but no residential or commercial use would be permitted.

The projected start and finish date for the project was questioned. The applicant noted that there were too many variables at this time to give an answer on that but thought there might be a five-year timeframe.

The next meeting was noted to be at the High School on June 7, 2023.

The site walk concluded at 4:30 p.m. +/-

Respectfully submitted,

Nic Strong
Community Development Director

Minutes approved: June 7, 2023