

Town of Sodus Zoning Board of Appeals
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 23, 2026
Courtroom, 14–16 Mill Street, Sodus, NY

Chair David Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and stated that the meeting was being recorded.

Roll Call: David Johnson, Pat Russell, Kim Buell, Jim Russell, Ray Stacy, Sal Vittozzi. **Approval of Minutes:** Motion made by Kim Buell, seconded by Pat Russell, to approve last month's meeting minutes. Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

Legal Notice: The Town of Sodus Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing on Monday, March 23, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Town Court located at 14–16 Mill Street, Sodus, NY 14551, to consider the following application: #13400 – Site Plan Review for installation of agricultural wind machines for frost control within orchards located off Sodus Center Road, Town of Sodus. Application submitted by Scott VanDeWalle.

SEQR: Completed by the Town of Sodus Planning Board on March 2, 2026.

#13400 Applicant Presentation: Application representatives Dave Maddison and Harrison VanDeWalle appeared before the Board on behalf of the applicant. The proposal consists of the installation of approximately ten agricultural wind machines, with four units on the south side of the property and six on the north side, for the purpose of frost protection within the orchard. The representatives explained that the machines are designed to circulate warmer air during frost events, particularly in low-lying areas where cold air tends to settle due to limited drainage. The machines are operated only when necessary and are not used continuously. Operation is temperature-controlled, generally activating at approximately 34°F and shutting off around 39°F. The machines are typically operated during overnight hours when frost conditions are present and only a few days a year.

Board Discussion: The Board discussed the frequency and duration of operation. The applicant indicated that in some years the machines are not used beyond testing, while in other years they may operate for several hours over a few nights during critical frost events. The Board reviewed prior use and effectiveness, noting that similar machines have been successful in preventing crop loss in other orchard locations. Discussion was held regarding placement and proximity to neighboring properties. The applicant stated that the machines are located approximately 550 to 650 feet from property lines and have been positioned to minimize impacts to nearby residences. Exhaust is directed away from homes. The Board also discussed noise levels. The applicant described the sound as comparable to a helicopter due to the rotating blades, but noted that operation is infrequent and limited to necessary conditions. Additional discussion included operational controls and safety. The applicant stated that the machines are not operated during windy conditions and are monitored while in use. Personnel are present to ensure proper operation and to shut down equipment if conditions change.

Public Comment: Sharon Hoover addressed the Board and inquired about the power source and whether the machines would be operated during pesticide spraying. The applicant responded that the machines are powered by propane and are not operated during spraying. It was further noted that operation typically occurs at night during frost conditions. Other guests in attendance: Thorne and Deb VanDerBroke. No other objections were expressed by neighboring property owners.

Board Determination: A motion was made by Ray Stacy and seconded by Kim Buell to approve Application #13400 for installation of agricultural wind machines for frost control. Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

Adjournment: Motion made by Kim Buell, seconded by Jim Russell, to adjourn the meeting. Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

Submitted by: Chandra Jensen ZBA Secretary