

**Westmoreland Zoning Board  
Minutes of July 15, 2020**

**The Westmoreland Zoning Board met on July 15, @ 2020 at the  
Westmoreland Town Hall**

**Present: Peter Remy, Chairman, Brian Merry, Nancy Ranson, Ernie Perham, Mark Terry, John Harris.**

**Due to the Corona-19 pandemic all participants wore protective masks.**

**Riley Hearing**

Frank Riley applied for a Special Exception to hold outdoor weddings at the Rural Residential property where he lives at 1024 River Road (Map R-1, Lot 27) according to Article V Table 505.11 which states that Private Outdoor Recreation might be allowed by Special Exception of the Ordinances of The Town of Westmoreland.

At 7p.m. Chairman Remy invited Frank Riley to describe his proposal necessitating a Special Exception for the property located at 1024 River Road, MapR1, Lot 27.

Mr. Riley introduced his wife, Kristen. Kristen explained that her father was the owner of the property and she and Frank had been married on the property and had lived on the property for several years. The property had a prime location along the Connecticut River, very desirable as a wedding venue.

He passed out large map marked with the location of their house, the position of the vendors and their parking spaces, where the wedding ceremony would be held, and where a dance floor would be installed and where 100 parking places had been marked out with spray paint on the grass. Mr. Riley said that signs directing cars to the off-road parking spaces would be posted on the road well before guests and the wedding party were due to arrive. The vendors would have eight spaces near the food preparation area. They had gotten a driveway permit alerting drivers on the road to slow down for the hidden driveway. The arriving cars will be directed in a one way pattern, leaving the field in the same direction. There will be a bar area and all lighting will be downward facing. Mr. Riley had letters from two neighbors signifying they do not have an objection to this proposal.

The events will not start before 10 am and all music will stop by 10pm. Due to the expense and difficulty of setting up the tent, they are hoping to run two events per weekend, back to back and work with 6 clients and no more than 8 events per month. Mrs. Riley will act as wedding planner/liaison with the clients.

Mr. Terry asked if they intended to have other kinds of events. Yes, they expect to have family reunions, too.

Chairman Remy commended Mr. Riley for his presentation and anticipating all the questions that would be asked by the Board.

Mr. Remy went through the criteria list for granting a Special Exception:

- A. Is this specific site an appropriate location for such a use? All Board members agreed that it is.
- B. Such approval would not reduce the value of any property within the district, or otherwise be injurious, obnoxious, or offensive to the neighborhood. All Board members agreed.
- C. There will be no nuisance or hazard to vehicles or pedestrians. All Board members agreed.
- D. Adequate and appropriate facilities will be provided for the proper operation of the proposed use. All Board members agreed.

Mr. Merry suggested that "No Parking on Street" signs be posted and Chairman Remy agreed.

Mr. Perham mentioned that there would be two times when there would be more traffic going and coming from Maplewood, at the beginning/ending of shifts at 7am and 3pm.

Chairman Remy asked for a motion.

Mr. Merry moved to accept the Riley's proposal to hold events at their property from May through October, on Thursdays through Sunday during the hours of 10 am to 10pm, with an occasional Monday. All parking will be off the road and signs will be posted to that effect.

Mr. Harris seconded the motion. Mr. Harris questioned whether the Riley's could handle consecutive events over two days. Mr. Riley assured him that

other people would be doing the actual work; setting up the tent, tables and chairs; providing the food, music, flowers, etc. The Riley's would oversee the events.

There was a brief discussion about the number of events to be held. Mr. Merry suggested a maximum of eight per month in order to make it worthwhile as a business for the Riley's.

Chairman Remy asked for a vote on the motion.

All members voted in favor of granting the Special Exception. Mr. Terry abstained from voting as there were six members present and only five votes were required.

#### CKB Properties Hearing

Chairman Remy announced the second hearing. CKB Properties was represented by Katie Beam. Her company owns the property located at 1659 Route 12 Westmoreland, in the Commercial/Industrial Zone.

The applicant was seeking a Special Exception for a Change of Use. There are three structures on the property; two of which are residential and one is Commercial.

Ms. Beam explained that since she had bought the property she had rented the commercial structure to tenants who had opened a second hand shop. The tenants had not had success with it, nor had any tenants who had tried various commercial enterprises under previous owners. For that reason Ms. Beam wanted to change the use of that structure to residential as she would have no trouble finding tenants for it. It would be advantageous to the town, having a going concern instead of an empty building; it would fill a need for rental housing in the town, and would make the property more valuable in terms of assessment value and taxes to have it occupied.

Chairman Remy said that it was not possible for the Board to grant a Special Exception. She needed a Variance because of the Westmoreland Ordinance 407.1 stating that, "There shall be only one residential building on a lot."

Ms. Beam was visibly upset as this was the second time she had come before the Board and no one had mentioned this Ordinance before and she had paid a considerable amount in fees with nothing to show for it. Remy said she might want to hire a lawyer to look into helping her get a Variance but the Board could not consider granting a Special Exception.

At 8:12 pm Ms. Ranson moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Perham seconded and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Jacqueline Cleary, Zoning Board Clerk