

Village of Fort Edward
Zoning Board of Appeals – Public Hearing
Date: May 21, 2025
Time: 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Bernie Taylor, Tabitha Fish, Doreen Rabine
Absent: Nasrene Haj, Tadgh Nealon Peter Amorosi, Dan Boucher

Present: Amanda Durkee, Cheryl Fisher, Eileen Irwin, MaryJoy Mosher, Stacie Brown, Laurie Hampshire, John Boucher, Jr. Dave Armando

Approval Minutes of April 16, 2025

Motion by: **Tabitha Fish**

Seconded by: **Bernie Taylor**

All ayes. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING – 215 Broadway, Spring Motor Inn – Rasheed Bhatti

- The meeting commenced with the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting held on April 16th.
- A public hearing was opened regarding proposed cabins on the current establishment's property.

A motion to open the public hearing was made by **Tabitha Fish**, seconded by **Bernie Taylor**.
All ayes. Motion carried.

- Attendees were instructed to keep comments within a five-minute timeframe and to state their name and address before speaking.

Key Updates

- The board discussed the need for a site plan review to ensure all applicable information is obtained before approval.
- Concerns were raised about the proposed cabins being referred to as temporary housing and the implications for residents.
- A written proposal detailing the operational season, sanitation measures, and weatherization plans is required before approval can be considered.

Interactive Q&A

- Questions were raised about the operational plans for the proposed cabins, including sanitation and seasonal usage.
- The board clarified that the applicant had not submitted the required narrative by the requested deadline of May 1, 2025. This deadline allows the board time to review the information before this next meeting on the 21st of May 2025.
- The county planning board's referral is still pending, preventing any action from being taken during this meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Written -

The clerk received written comment from residents *opposing* the project. All written comments are files with the application and available upon request.

In-Person –

MaryJoy Mosher – 1 William Street – MaryJoy asked where the proposed cabins were going to be located on the property. The map was given to the public to review. MaryJoy mentions that the current establishment is an eyesore.

Amanda Durkee – Seminary Street – Amanda asked the process of how the applications work with the Zoning Board. Board member Doreen Rabine explained the process. Amanda asked if from the Planning Board, does it go to the Village Board for approval. Doreen explained that after it is approved by the planning board, it is considered a complete review, and no further action is to be taken after approval or denial. Amanda asked for a possibility to extend the public hearing so there is time for the public to attend. Amanda also looked up the definition of Motel vs. Motor Inn. They both mean the same thing, which states:

Motels: Motels were originally called “motor hotels,” or Motor Inn’s targeted toward family and business travelers who were traveling by car. Motels usually offer a basic level of accommodation and simple amenities, as they are designed to meet the needs of people who might only be staying one or two nights.

Dave Armando was asked by board member Doreen Rabine if he had anything to review with the board at this time. Dave mentioned that there are people stopping into the office and calling reporting that there are people living there and staying past the 30 days which was approved by the Planning Board on another application back in 2021.

John Boucher, Jr. – Harrison Street as well as a teacher at the FEHS – Mr. Boucher also stated that he knows there are students living there who have lived there for more than a year now.

Mr. Bhatti touched on these comments and concerns and stated that the most someone will stay is 2 weeks. He also stated that they stay there until they find somewhere else to live.

Board member Doreen Rabine read a piece of a written comment from a resident stating they called the Spring Motor Inn and were told *“we do not rent to the general public and only accept DSS assistance.”* Doreen stated that when people are calling, they are not getting the same information as Mr. Bhatti is telling us here tonight.

Mr. Bhatti’s response was *“That’s not true.”*

Attorney Fuller gave a recap of this application stating that last month the board requested more information to be submitted by May 1st, which did not happen. Also, we are waiting on the county planning board to review the application which has not happened yet, so you cannot take any action tonight and will need to table the application, 1. The information requested was not submitted as requested and 2. The county planning board hasn’t acted yet. Attorney Fuller asked the board if there is anything else they wanted to ask pertaining to the application, the site plan based off your site plan law. Lights, parking, signs, anything else that pertains to site plan, ask now.

Board member Tabitha Fish asked about sanitation and if there were any sanitation barriers. The board can ask what kind of barriers blocking Marion Street. Is this proposed driveway part of this application? Board member Doreen Rabine and attorney stated that this application does not include the driveway to Marion Street. Tabitha also asked what the plan is to winterize the cabins and shut it down and what is “seasonal”. Tabitha asked for the narrative to include the plan for the seasonal cabins to be winterized and what your operational season is and length of stay.

The public hearing is remaining open until the next meeting on **June 18th**.

Future Projections

- The board agreed to extend the deadline for the applicant to submit the required narrative to June 2nd, with the next meeting scheduled for June 18th.

Decisions And Announcements

- The public hearing will remain open, and the board will table the decision until the next meeting, pending the submission of additional information by the applicant.

A motion to table the public hearing until **June 18th, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.** pending the information is received by the clerk by **June 2, 2025**, was made by **Tabitha Fish**, seconded by **Bernie Taylor**. All ayes. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by **Bernie Taylor**, seconded by **Tabitha Fish**.