**Planning Board Meeting Minutes**

**September 19th, 2023**

**8:00 p.m.**

**PRESENT:**  Rob Luntz

John Ghegan

Geoffrey Haynes

Steve Krisky

Eva Thaddeus

**ALSO PRESENT:** Daniel O’Connor, P.E., Village Engineer   
 Len Simon, Village Board Trustee & Planning Board Liaison

**ABSENT:** Ann Gallelli, Village Board Trustee & Planning Board Liaison

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Luntz called the Planning Board meeting of September 19th, 2023 to order at 8:01 p.m.

1. **NEW BUSINESS**
2. *Korn, Eric Leap F.C., LLC – 122 Grand Street (Section 78.8 Block 7 Lot 4) – Application for Change of Use from Retail Use with Food Service and Arcade to Personal Services Establishment (Youth Enrichment Center)*

Steve Krisky wanted to go on record and say that he knows Eric Korn and is his neighbor, but did not believe that this would prevent him from making a determination on the application.

Katie Gillespie was present in support of the change of use application and reported that she is Eric Korn’s business partner. The applicant stated that she is a Croton resident with two children at CET Elementary School. The applicants would like to start a childhood enrichment center for kids with the primary focus being afterschool support for families. The applicants plan to use this space as their headquarters or “hub” and plan to use outdoor space for “outdoor adventures.” The applicant reported that local elementary school CET has 594 students, but only 125 “afterschool” spots, so there is a need for additional options for families who need aftercare services.

The applicant again stated that they are planning to use this space on Grand Street as a hub for their business but will also provide leadership development meetings for kids in middle school and high school, as well as birthday parties on the weekends.

The primary operation hours will be weekdays from 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. In the afternoons, the children who attend the program will be between 5 years old and 10 years old. There will be a maximum of 30 kids at a time, 15 kids to start with and a maximum of five staff members.

The applicant stated that they have spoken to Mark Duncan of the Croton Recreation Department about using Vasallo Park. Ideally, Leap F.C. plan to have the children outside as much as possible and use the proposed space for team building activities and enrichment. They may also try to use Dobbs Park for basketball and other activities, but have not spoken to the Village about that yet. They do not plan to use the ball fields at CET Elementary School, but they have met with both the Principal and Assistant Principal of CET, who are, by report, supportive of this venture.

Leap F.C. have also spoken to Mark Duncan about “game days” that the Village Recreation Department used to hold at CET, and this is something that Leap F.C. may take on. Game days would be held at CET Elementary School.

On a typical day, school busses would bring the kids to Leap F.C., they would have a snack and team meeting, then walk to any activities scheduled for the day. If they were to do something at CET, they would stay there after school and the Leap F.C. staff would come to them. Leap F.C. will use an app called Parental Pick-Up to coordinate pick up with parents.

Leap F.C. is not a formal day-care center so they do not have state mandated staffing requirements, however they plan to have staffing numbers similar to the state mandated 10:1 child to adult ratio.

As part of their application, the applicants submitted a parking survey, that looked like it was done around the 5:15 p.m. time. The applicant stated that based on her observations, there are parking spots available around 3:00 p.m. which would be the bus drop-off time. The applicants have not solidified the exact spot where the bus will drop the students off, but they have spoken to the owner of Happy Hearts Daycare Center, Desiree Drapala, and Ms. Drapala has offered to let the Leap F.C. children be dropped off in front of her facility, which is a short walk from Leap F.C. that would not require the children to cross a major street. Wherever the bus stop is, Leap F.C. staff will meet the children at the bus stop.

The applicants plan to leave the interior space as it is. In the fully open space, the children can play games. There will be no large furniture. The hours of operation will be approximately 2:45 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. during the week and birthday parties on the weekend, by reservation. The director of transportation from Carrie E Thompkins Elementary School will have a look at the area and be involved in the decision as to where the school bus stop will be to drop off the children. Eva Thaddeus asked if the building had a second egress and the applicant stated that they do not have one, nor is it required.

The name Leap F.C. stands for leadership, energy, adventure, and perseverance fun camp. The applicants have no plans to open satellite offices currently and are looking to open the program on October 2, 2023. The applicants do not plan to put up a sign at this time.

Chairman Luntz went over the Resolution with the applicant and read the three conditions, including condition number one which states that “Any use of Village parks for business related outdoor activities (running, ball games, agility drills, etc.) needs to be approved by the Village Recreation Department.”

Steve Krisky made a motion to approve the Change of Use Application for Leap F.C., LLC, seconded by John Ghegan, and the motion carried, 5-0.

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

***Draft Minutes August 15th, 2023***

Eva Thaddeus made a motion to approve the Planning Board minutes of August 15th, 2023, as amended, seconded by Geoff Haynes, and the motion carried by a vote of 4 – 0, with Steve Krisky abstaining as he was absent for the August 15th meeting.

1. **ENGINEER’S REPORT**

Regarding the Design Center AT 1360 Albany Post Road, Steve Krisky mentioned that there are vertical flags that the owner puts out every day. Dan O’Connor reported that the owner moved everything out of the state right of way. There was a surveying issue and a wall may be in the NYS right of way, so it is possible that the owner may have to come in to for amended site plan approval. Dan O’Connor will reach out to the state and get copies of the latest paperwork.

Dan O’Connor was asked if there were plans to put in a sidewalk on South Riverside Avenue from the Mobil Gas Station to the corner of Municipal Place.

It was noted that the landlord from ShopRite needs to complete some upgrades in the parking area. There is a big overgrown bush near Pronto Pizzeria that could be dangerous in that it can hinder visibility. There are also sections of the parking lot that should have the parking lines restriped.

Eva Thaddeus raised the topic as to whether the Village should establish some guidelines about the planting of invasive plants and the planting of native plants. New York City has established guidelines for its own department of works (Eva Thaddeus sent links to the document) and Eva Thaddeus did some research as to what neighboring municipalities have on the books at this time and feels that Croton’s guidelines could be improved. No other river town has anything comparable to NYC, but this is something that the Village may want to consider. Len Simon said that the Village Board would be amenable to receiving info on the invasive plants.

Regarding the former hardware store spot on South Riverside Avenue, Dan O’Connor stated that they were waiting for bonds which he expects to receive soon. Monitoring devices were set up on the two houses closest to the site to monitor vibrations and make sure that the vibrations are below a certain threshold.

The Planning Board discussed the ADU meeting and noted that Jessica Bacher from Pace Law was present. It was noted that proposals for a floating district for affordable or multi-family housing will go through further discussion. Len Simon reported that the Village Board went through a lot of documents and the Village Manager will put all of the data together for a later session.

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was duly adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Stapleton

Secretary to the Planning Board