

JANUARY 16, 2013

A regular meeting of the Planning Board of the Village of Lakewood, NY, was held Wednesday, January 16, 2013, 7:30 PM, in the Board Room of the Anthony C. Caprino Municipal, 20 W. Summit Street, with Chairman Jon T. Pearson presiding. Board Members present were Herbert Hern, Sally Bootey, Marion Gibbon and Thomas Moore. Also present were Village Clerk/Secretary Joseph M. Johnson and Building Inspector Charles L. Smith.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Herbert Hern, seconded by Sally Bootey, to approve the minutes of the last regular meeting of the Planning Board held October 17, 2012.

Adopted: 5 ayes, no nays (Pearson, Hern, Bootey, Gibbon, Moore)

SPECIAL USE PERMIT VEHICLE SALES LOT 266 EAST FAIRMOUNT AVE.

Mr. Daniel R. Johnson, 57 Woodworth Ave., Jamestown, New York, has submitted an application for a Special Use Permit regarding his proposal to establish a used car sales lot and office at 266 East Fairmount Ave.(corner of Elmcrest Ave.). In accordance with Section #25-14, (C-10), [Highway Business (B-2) District] of the Village of Lakewood Zoning Law, the establishment of a vehicle sales lot in a B-2, Highway Business District requires a Special Use Permit.

Chairman Pearson asked Mr. Johnson, if he would like to give a brief explanation of his proposal.

Mr. Johnson indicated that what he is hoping to do is have a car dealership at the former Custom Car Audio 266 East Fairmount Ave., corner of Elmcrest Ave. Mr. Johnson said he is not going to be the typical car dealership but rather a place where individuals can approach him and place an order for a particular car. He in turn will do his best to find that car and complete the transaction. Mr. Johnson said he isn't planning on storing more than a few cars on the property. He indicated the property is just the right size for what he is planning. With the required set-backs to display vehicles there isn't enough room to do anything other than what he is proposing. Mr. Johnson said his proposed car dealership will be unlike any other. He won't be making use of any balloons, streamers, neon lights, inflatable animals or anything like that. The business will be very low key. Mr. Johnson said he plans on erecting an advertising sign in front of the property along Rt. 394. He indicated the only lighting he might add would be for security only, but there might be enough spillover light from nearby businesses where he wouldn't have to.

Mr. Johnson said the property is in pretty poor condition, but the first thing he would like to do is make some long overdue improvements to the building and property. He also intends to do some landscaping so as to enhance the property's appearance. Mr. Johnson said he would also be willing to establish any buffers that might be necessary.

Chairman Pearson asked Mr. Johnson if he is planning on maintaining up to five parking spaces as designated on the proposed site plan marked inventory parking.

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Mr. Johnson said he should probably amend that number, however when filling out the application he didn't want to paint himself into a corner. The likely scenario will go something like this. A customer will want a particular car. I find the car at an auction or elsewhere and store on site until the prospective buyer comes in and purchases the car. Mr. Johnson said he is not looking to do this full time, for the fact that this business adventure is not his primary source of income. As a rule he will not be going to a car auction just to buy inventory.

Board member Marion Gibbon asked Mr. Johnson if he intends to improve the driveways and parking areas on the property.

Mr. Johnson said he would like to remake the whole place immediately but he will not be able to afford to do that. Instead he will initially concentrate on improving the house and garage and be satisfied with a gravel lot for now, reminding members of the Planning Board this will be only a part time job. Mr. Johnson said he is interested in the character of the local community and will do his best to be a good neighbor.

Deputy Chairman Herbert Hern asked Mr. Johnson if he owns the property.

Mr. Johnson said he and his brother purchased the property less than a year ago as an investment.

Mr. Hern said he believes Mr. Johnson's proposed business will have great exposure in that it is close to other dealerships, however he asked him why would someone want to buy a used car from you instead of from the nearby competition that have cars on the lot.

Mr. Johnson said he has been in the car business for eleven years now and is currently the general manager at Lite House Auto, 120 Mall Blvd. One of the biggest expenses or overhead for any dealership is its inventory. Unless one has a lot of cash the line of credit to carry an inventory is incredibly expensive. Because I will not have an inventory of cars my overhead will be reduced tremendously compared to the other used car dealerships in the area and therefore he will be able to sell cars cheaper. Mr. Johnson said he is hopeful to be able to turn over vehicles quickly.

Deputy Chairman Hern asked Mr. Johnson what will pull in the used car buyer to your location and what will be the hours of operation.

Mr. Johnson said after renovations the property will be a tasteful location but for the most part he will have to rely on advertising. Hours of operation will be limited to start, however he will be available by cell phone. Mr. Johnson said his boss at Lite House Auto is fully aware of his desire to start his own part time used auto business. Mr. Johnson said we will not be in competition with one another, rather he'll be trying to establish his own little niche.

Deputy Chairman Hern asked Mr. Johnson what kind of improvements will he be making to the property.

Mr. Johnson said initially he will be razing part of the garage and eventually he would also like to raze the house which is towards the front of the property.

Village Trustee Susan F. Drago asked Mr. Johnson if he plans on doing any vehicle detailing or mechanical work on the site.

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Mr. Johnson indicated to Trustee Drago that he will not be doing any detailing or mechanical work on vehicles at this location.

Motion by Marion Gibbon, seconded by Herbert Hern, that is the recommendation of the Planning Board for the Board of Trustees to grant/approve the Special Use Permit application as submitted by Mr. Daniel R. Johnson, 57 Woodworth Ave., Jamestown, New York, whereby he will be allowed to establish a used car business and sales office at 266 East Fairmount Ave. (corner of Elmcrest Ave.) and be operated in accordance with Section #25-44 [Vehicle Sales] of the Village of Lakewood Zoning Law.
Adopted: 5 ayes, no nays (Pearson, Hern, Bootey, Gibbon, Moore)

Meeting adjourned: 7:48 PM

Joseph M. Johnson
Village Clerk/Secretary