

COÖS COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Gorham Town Hall

Gorham, NH

October 19, 2022

The regular meeting was opened at 6:03 pm by Vice Chair Rineer.

**Roll Call:**

John Scarinza – Chair: Present-via Zoom	Scott Rineer- Vice Chair: Present
Jennifer Fish – Clerk: Present	Tom McCue: Arrived at 7:05 pm
Ed Mellet: Present	Rick Tillotson: Absent
Mike Waddell: Present	Rep. Troy Merner: Present
Commissioner Tom Brady: Absent	Mike Ouellet - Alternate: Present
Leon Rideout - Alternate: Absent	

**Also in Attendance:** Tara Bamford, Planning Consultant (via Zoom); Ed Brisson, Hannah Campbell, Rich McGarry, Dixville Capital LLC; and Ericka Canalas. Members of the press and public.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS NOT RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES**

Mike Ouellet was appointed for Rick Tillotson

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mike Waddell made a motion to approve the minutes of September 21, 2021. Ed Mellet seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 7-0.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- a. *Dixville: review the site plan application by Dixville Capital, LLC. for expansion of the Balsams Ski Area on NH Route 26 in Dixville (Tax Map 1626, Lots 1,2,3.3,3.4,6.3,6.4, and 6.4a).*

Vice-Chair Rineer recused himself from the meeting and appointed Mike Waddell to be the chair. Tara Bamford submitted to the Board prior to the meeting comments on the application. Tara recommended that the Board review the written narrative application item by item and give the applicant feedback on additional information the Board will want to see prior to scheduling a public hearing and beginning consideration. Ed Brisson explained that the proposed site plan is a large and complex project with lots of elements to it. It has ski lifts, ski trails, snowmaking support buildings, future mountain top lodge, ski back bridge, service roads, pedestrian and vehicle circulation, traffic, and parking. The applicant is requesting that some of the item's approval be done in phases. The applicant is requesting the approval of the location of lifts subject to the NH DES Alteration of Terrain permit. The ski back bridge needs to be designed for a specific location. The applicant doesn't want to spend time going through a design process if it isn't going to be approved. Ed Brisson explained if the locations are approved, then the lifts

will be designed and then they will come back to the Board. Mike Waddell asked if the plans are surveyed. Rich McGarry explained that they are not surveyed but are mapped with GPS. Mike Waddell asked Tara Bamford if the County's regulations allow for GPS locations. Tara stated that the regulations require surveyed property lines and that they are included in the application. There is no site plan for the ski back bridge and there should be more details for the gondola. There is no such thing as a preliminary approval in New Hampshire law anymore where you give an approval for a location for something that doesn't have any detailed information.

John Scarinza asked about the zero-setback waiver request. Tara reminded the Board that the PUD agreement allows the Board to reduce setbacks with the abutting landowner(s)' approval.

Ed Brisson distributed to the Board a design plan for a ski lift that will be very similar to the ones at the Balsams. Ed Mellet asked if there will be any base lodges. Ed Brisson stated that base station buildings will be included in a future application. John Scarinza asked about the proposed trails in the areas of the wind towers owned by NextEra. Tara recommended that a safety operational plan be provided to the Board as a condition of approval.

Ed Mellet asked about the ski trails on lands owned by other companies and Ed Brisson stated written permission letters will be submitted.

It is Tara's recommendation to the Board that the gondola, ski back bridge and mountain top lodge aspects of the plan are incomplete. Ed Brisson stated that they can provide a concept drawing of the gondola as it crosses over Route 26.

Mike Waddell stated that the Board would be looking for an application that includes details on size, shape, height and location of the gondola, ski back bridge, ski trails, ski lifts, and snowmaking buildings. John Scarinza said that the ski back bridge must be a realistic plan as to what the final product will be. The application also needs to include the updated landowner permission letters, the wind park safety operational plan, Map L, and an updated letter from State of NH about the zero setbacks.

Tara recommended to the Board that they discuss whether this phase of the ski area project is a development with potential region impact per RSA 36:56. After a brief discussion, Ed Mellet made the motion that the Balsams ski area project is a development with potential regional impact that requires notification to North Country Council, the Town of Colebrook, the Unincorporated Place of Millsfield, and the Town of Errol. Troy Merner seconded the motion. The motion passed, 7-0.

John Scarinza made a motion to continue the review for completeness of the site application by Dixville Capital, LLC for expansion of the Balsams Ski Area at the November 16, 2022, meeting. Tom McCue seconded the motion. The motion passed, 7-0.

Mike Waddell informed the applicant that updated materials will need to be received by November 9<sup>th</sup> to provide the Board ample to time to review.

At this time Scott Rineer rejoined the Board and resumed chairing the meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

**RATIFICATION OF ZONING PERMITS**

None

**TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is November 16, 2022, at 6pm in Lancaster.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Ed Mellet seconded by Mike Waddell to adjourn at 7:42 pm. All approved, 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Fish, Clerk

Pending Approval