

The Balsams

**Application for
Ski Area Expansion – phase I**

**The Balsams Planned Unit Development
DD-Resort**

**Unincorporated Places of Coös County, New
Hampshire**

September 28, 2022

PART I: INTRODUCTION

This application requests Planning Board approval for certain critical elements for Phase I expansion of the existing Balsams Wilderness Ski Area. These include approval of the ski trails, ski lifts, gondola, ski back bridge, snowmaking pump station buildings, and service roads. The application also requests approval to clear lift lines to allow field surveys required by lift manufacturers to design the lifts and gondola. The requested approval will allow the applicant to proceed with land clearing this winter and construction of these critical elements once proposed conditions of approval are met and applicable state approvals are obtained. Planning Board approval of this application will also enable the applicant to proceed with final engineering and obtain required state approvals of lifts, buildings and related infrastructure based on approved locations.

Prior to reopening the ski area to the public, additional planning board submittals, reviews and approvals will be necessary to address items for which final design and engineering is currently not available. These additional submittals are expected to include:

- 1- Public access and parking
- 2- Pedestrian and vehicle circulation
- 3- NHDOT driveway permit(s) & traffic
- 4- Potable water & wastewater facilities
- 5- Exterior lighting & signage
- 6- Mountaintop day lodge

This application does not include any proposed re-use of the existing base lodge. An application to amend this site plan application or a new site plan application will be submitted to the Board if and when a re-use of the lodge is proposed.

This application covers the initial phase of expansion which is expected to take approximately two years to construct. Future expansion anticipated by The Balsams PUD will be covered by additional site plan approval applications as market conditions warrant.

Note: A “ski terrain boundary” line is shown on select plans. The proposed ski expansion is on multiple parcels. The line is only intended to indicate the general extent of the ski area expansion. It is not intended to propose any new parcel boundaries, lease, or easement areas.

PART II: SITE PLAN SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

The following items are required submittals that accompany this Site Plan Permit application:

A. General Requirements

- 1. Site plan with the following characteristics:***
 - a. Maximum plan size: 22" x 34"***
 - b. Suggested scale: 1" = 40'***
 - c. Submit three (3) copies of blue or black line prints***
 - d. Date, title, north point, scale***
 - e. Name and address of developer, owner, and applicant if not the owner***
 - f. Name, address and stamp of the Registered Professional Engineer and/or Registered Land Surveyor who prepared the plan.***

Due to the large area this site plan application covers, the trail and lift maps are rendered at a scale of 1" = 500' with 25' vertical contours. (See waiver request for contours).

Land Ownership:

Map-C identifies landowners of property within the boundaries of this application, abutting parcels and other nearby parcels. The map is based on the current county property report for Dixville. The county report has not been updated to reflect the merger of Dixville Woodlands, LLC into Balsams View, LLC. The Dixville Woodlands parcels are now owned by Balsams View, LLC.

Landowners authorization letters are provided in Appendix E.

Dixville Capital, LLC holds options to purchase the Tillotson parcel 1626-003.1 and the 3285-acre subdivision of Bayroot parcel 1626.001 approved for subdivision by the Board on 8-23-16. Dixville Capital will become part of Balsams Resort Holding, LLC, the ski area's owner.

Horizons Engineering, 34 School Street, Littleton, NH is the registered engineer that prepared the plans.

B. Site Plan Requirements

- 1. *Surveyed property lines showing bearings, distances, monuments, the lot area and names of all abutters.***

See Map – C and Exhibit 1 for abutters.

See Maps H 1-4 and Map M for survey information

- 2. *Existing and proposed grades, drainage systems and structures, with topographic contours at intervals not exceeding 2 feet with spot elevations where grade is less than 5% (percent), otherwise not exceeding 5-foot contour intervals.***

See waiver request regarding contours.

See Map J, Maps H1-3, and Map K for existing features and topography, proposed trails, lifts, service roads, building locations, and ski bridge location, etc.

- 3. *The location of all buildings within 50 feet of sight lines of existing abutting streets, and the location of all intersecting roads or driveways within 200 feet, together with an identification of the use of abutting properties.***

See Map C (Property Ownership Map) and Map J and Maps H-1-3 (Ski Area Plans)

- 4. *Natural features such as streams, marshes, lakes or ponds, types of vegetation, and ledge outcrops. Man-made features such as, but not limited to, existing roads, structures and landscaping. Such map shall indicate which of such features are to be retained and which are to be removed or altered.***

See Map G, Maps H 1-3, and Map J.

- 5. *A vicinity sketch (suggested scale 1" equals 400') showing the location of the site in relation to the surrounding public street system. The zoning districts and boundaries for the site and up to 1,000 feet from the site shall be shown. One hundred year flood elevation line shall be included where applicable.***

See Map A – Location Map

- 6. *The size and proposed location of water supply and sewage facilities and provision for future expansion of sewage and water facilities, and all distances from existing water and sewage facilities on the site and on abutting properties to a distance of 200 feet.***

Reopening of the existing base lodge is not proposed and no potable water or wastewater facilities are proposed with this application.

Water and sewage facilities will be submitted with a future application for the mountaintop day lodge and/or a future application to reopen the existing base lodge to the public.

Snowmaking water: Locations of snowmaking buildings are shown on Maps J and H 1-2. Snowmaking water will be drawn from the Androscoggin River in accordance with provisions of the state's 401 Water Quality Certification. An underground pipeline will be installed within the RT 26 NHDOT right of way to the main pump station. Pipeline installation within the right of way will be subject to NHDOT approvals and permits.

- 7. *The size and location of existing and proposed public and private utilities and utility connections, with all necessary engineering data. Include provisions for fire protection.***

New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, the existing provider for Dixville, has indicated they will be able to provide power for the ski area expansion and is currently evaluating supply options. A will-serve letter will be provided to the board when available. Electrical service plans are not yet available from NHEC and will be dependent on final lift and snowmaking equipment layout and engineering.

Fire protection: No fire protection is proposed. Snowmaking pump stations are typically not required to have fire protection other than hand-held fire extinguishers.

8. *The shape, size, height and location of the proposed structures, including expansion of existing buildings.*

Snowmaking Pump Stations: See Map J and H 1-2 for the location of three proposed pump station buildings. See Map M for the Main Snowmaking Pump Station Site plan and Plan N for the main pump station building. The booster pump stations will be the same size or smaller than the main station. The interior layout is conceptual and shown for information only. The pump stations are intermittently accessed by staff for operational and maintenance purposes but are not occupied on a full-time basis.

Ski lifts and gondola: The proposed locations and alignments of the lifts and gondola are shown on the plans.

The exact alignment, number, locations, and heights of towers will be determined during final engineering by the lift manufacturer(s). Before final engineering can begin, the lift alignments must be cleared and field surveys of elevations and condition must be completed. The final engineered configurations of lift and gondola lines are expected as follows:

- 1- The alignment of the lifts will be within 15' of that shown on the plans.
- 2- Lift tower heights are expected to generally range from 30-45ft high. The general goal is to keep the lift profile as close to the ground as possible due to wind and other factors. Occasionally towers as low as 20' or as high as 90' could be required to address a specific topographic condition.
- 3- Tower are typically spaced 175-350 feet apart depending on topography and minimization of wetland impacts. Closer or further tower spacing is sometimes needed to address specific conditions. It should be noted that the boxes shown on the application plans are not intended to indicate average tower spacing. They are only intended to identify the drawn line as a lift alignment.
- 4- The minimum height of the lift lines crossing Rt 26 and Spur Road will be as required by NHDOT and Tramway Board approvals.

Information on typical lift terminals, lift towers and gondola cabs from one manufacturer are included in Appendix B. Each terminal will have one operator enclosure. There may be minor variations of the terminals between manufacturers, but they are all very similar. The typical terminal information applies to both chair lifts and the gondola.

An enlarged plan of the RT 26 crossings of the gondola and the ski back bridge is shown on Map K. Both the gondola and bridge terminate at the Lake Gloriette House Plaza. The gondola terminal location is consistent with the location shown in the 2017 LGH site plan approval. The ski bridge also terminates at the same location in the 2017 LGH plans. The proposed alignment of the ski bridge has rotated slightly from the 2017 LGH plans as shown on Map K. Visual exhibits of the gondola and bridge crossings of RT 26 are included in Appendix C.

Ski-back bridge: The proposed ski back bridge will be used by skiers and snowboarders in the winter. During the non-ski seasons, the bridge will be used by pedestrians, hikers, and bikers to access the trail network. The bridge will be engineered to accommodate atv-type maintenance vehicles and a small trail groomer. Access to larger vehicles will be prevented. Engineered plans will require NHDOT review and approvals and will meet all applicable codes. Preliminary design of the ski-back bridge is included in Appendix D. The topography and use of the bridge are well suited for a bridge type not often used in roadway settings. The preliminary design has been reviewed with NHDOT.

9. ***The location, type and size of all proposed landscaping and screening.***

No landscaping or screening is proposed with this application.

10. ***Exterior lighting plan and proposed signs (advertising and instructional) to be located on the site.***

No general site lighting is proposed by this application.

The snowmaking pump station buildings will have wall mounted exterior lighting at entry doors which will be dark-sky compliant.

The lift terminals and operator enclosures include lighting as required for circulation and safety at the terminal. All lighting will be dark-sky compliant.

11. ***A storm drainage plan, including plans for retention and slow release/recharge of stormwater where necessary, including the location, elevation and site of all catch basins, dry wells, drainage ditches, swales, culverts, retention basins and storm sewers. Indicate direction of flow through the use of arrows. Show the engineering calculations used to determine drainage requirements. A plan for long-term maintenance of the stormwater facilities must be included. Indicate plan for snow removal and storage.***

Applicant requests this requirement be deferred until plans based on an approved trail and lift layout are available.

12. ***A circulation plan of the interior of the lot showing provisions for both auto and pedestrian circulation. An access plan showing means of accesses and egress, and proposed changes to existing streets, sidewalks or curbs, including any traffic control devices or signs necessary in conjunction with the site development plan.***

To be addressed in future application(s) for amendment.

13. ***Proposed streets with street names, driveways, parking spaces, sidewalks, with indication of direction of travel for one-way streets and drives, and inside radii of all curves. The width of streets, driveways, sidewalks and the total number of parking spaces shall be shown. In addition, loading spaces and facilities associated with the structures on the site shall be done.***

No new streets, driveways, or loading facilities are proposed. Applicant requests to defer submittal of parking and associated infrastructure.

14. ***Construction drawings including, but not limited to, pavements, walks, steps, curbing and drainage structures.***

Drainage structures to be submitted with storm drainage plan. (See item 11 above)

No walks, steps or curbing are proposed with this application. Drawings will be included with amendment application for the mountaintop lodge and with other amendment applications as required by the proposed amendment.

15. *The location of all building's setbacks required by the Zoning Ordinances.*

See request for setback for waivers at several locations.

Reduced setbacks for a trail and utilities are proposed along a section of the existing state park parcel and the proposed mitigation land addition to the state park. This area is shown on Map J and is located between lift terminals B6 and B10.

See Map M for the Main Snowmaking Pump Station setbacks.

16. *Location of zoning district boundaries.*

See Map K for Protection districts. See Map-C for PUD boundaries.

17. *The lot area and street frontage.*

Total acreage:	4,576 acres.
Rt 26 Road frontage:	16,417 ft

18. *The location of all existing and proposed deed restrictions, easements, covenants, etc.*

No deed restrictions or covenants are proposed other than as required for conservation mitigation.

See Map L for existing easement areas and restrictions.

NHEC has existing easements over portions of the proposed ski area. Additional utility easements will be provided as necessary when final utility plans are available.

- 19. A soils classification map, together with descriptive information for each type of soil (required for onsite sewage disposal only).**

Not applicable. No on-site sewage disposal proposed.

- 20. Copies of all applicable state approvals and permits and associated application material.**

Copies of the state Alteration of Terrain Permit application will be submitted with applicant's submittal for requirement #11. The Planning Board has copies of the NHDES Wetlands Permit and the 401 Water Quality Certificate. See Exhibit 2 for the Wetlands Permit renewal.

- 21. Visual and noise reduction barriers to adjacent properties, if applicable.**

None proposed.

C. Additional Requirements for Subdivision and Site Plans per Balsams PUD:

A. Land use designation

Recreation – ski facilities

B. Number of acres devoted to each permitted use

This expansion phases includes approximately 350 acres of new ski trails and approximately 480 acres of glade skiing.

C. Number of dwelling units proposed.

Not applicable. None proposed.

D. Number of lodging units proposed.

Not applicable. None proposed.

E. Number of square feet of each other permitted use.

Not applicable. No building space proposed.

F. Estimates of trip generation, trip distribution, and potential impacts on existing public highway system.

Applicant requests this requirement be deferred.

G. Use, height, location/ footprint of buildings and other structures.

See #8 above.

H. Proposed ownership arrangement.

The ski area will be owned by Balsams Resort Holdings, LLC

I. Proposed articles of incorporation and bylaws of any corporation and or/association to be formed.

None proposed.

J. Location and design of water supply, wastewater treatment and other utilities to serve the development whether or not located on the portion of the Planned Unit Development which is the subject to the subdivision or site plan application.

See item 6 above.

K. Location, function, ownership and maintenance responsibility of common areas, conserved lands, and other open space.

No common areas are proposed.

Existing and proposed conservation areas are shown on Map - F. The proposed conservation areas are intended to mitigate the impacts of ski area buildout and initial redevelopment of the Lake Gloriette hotel area anticipated in the wetlands permit issued in December 2015. Documents and final boundaries for the parcels noted as state park parcels and 258a conservation parcels are currently being finalized and are subject to change.

L. Language of covenants, easements or other restrictions to be imposed upon the use of land, buildings and other structures

including proposed easements for roads, pedestrian ways, and other public utilities. Including how they will be monitored and enforced if applicable.

None proposed.

M. Proposed language ensuring responsibility for maintenance and improvement as needed of roads, pedestrian ways, water, wastewater and storm water management facilities, including covenants, articles of association, bylaws.

The ski area owner, Balsam Resort Holdings, LLC will be responsible for maintenance and improvements.

N. Sign guidelines unless approved as part of the PUD Permit, including the number, size, design and typical placement of each type of sign, including materials, heights, colors, and proposed setbacks for each sign category such as directional, development, and businesses.

No signage is proposed by this application.

O. Landscaping plan.

None proposed.

P. Proposed time schedule for completion. If phased, details of each phase to enable evaluation of performance guarantees.

Construction is expected to begin with clearing in early 2023 and will take approximately two years to complete.

PART III: Additional Information

1- Proposed Ski Trails:

The layout of trails is generally shown on the plans with a 200' wide shaded line. Actual trails widths will vary and will typically be less than the 200'. The 200' width provides the actual trail location to be adjusted for field conditions while remaining within the shown width.

2- Clearing limits:

Due to the plans' scale, it is difficult to indicate the expected limits of tree clearing on the plans except for the enlarged plans. Clearing for trails will typically be 5' beyond trail edge. Clearing for lift lines will 50' or less centered on the lift alignment.

3- Wind Tower setbacks & operating plan for icing conditions:

See Appendix A for proposed setbacks, operating plan, and ice throw studies.

4- Deferred submittals and other ski area applications:

This application requests deferrals of several site plan submittal requirements. Additional site plan applications or amendments related to the ski area are also expected. Based on receiving approvals and funding to begin redevelopment this winter, the applicant projects the following key submittal timeframes. The actual submittal schedule may change due to a variety of factors.

- 1- Req 11: A copy of the NHDES AoT submittal will be submitted this winter and will include applicable BMP's for protection districts and other information required.
- 2- Mountaintop Day Lodge: We expect to submit day lodge plans next summer. The plans are expected to also address potable water and wastewater requirements for the ski area.
- 3- Trip generation/traffic: Applicant will begin NHDOT driveway application submittals, NHDOT scoping, and additional studies as required by NHDOT this winter. The timing of final traffic impact projections for this application will depend on any additional studies required by NHDOT.
- 4- Parking and associated circulation: We expect to submit this in Spring 2023.
- 5- Exterior lighting and signage: Signage is expected to be submitted next fall. All exterior lighting for phase I other than that addressed in this application, is expected to be submitted with the day lodge or circulation submittals. No night skiing lighting is proposed with this application. Applicant may propose night skiing in future applications for further expansion or to amend this

application. The layout proposed by this application, however, is not based on any assumptions of whether night skiing may be proposed in the future.