

**MINUTES OF THE VILLAGE OF JOHNSBURG
MARCH 26, 2025 MEETING OF THE
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Larsen called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

Commission Members Present

James Barrett
Steve Dixon
Daniel Loud (absent)
Roger Block
Ken Calhoun
Tom Benck (absent)

Staff Present:

Village Administrator Claudett Sofiakis
Assistant Administrator Vinny Lamontagna
Village Attorney Michael Smoron
Village Engineer Tim Hartnett

HIDDEN HARBOR - Chairman Larsen read the request into the record and confirmed that all notice and fee requirements were met. The subject property is commonly known as 3309 Chapel Hill Road, Johnsburg, Illinois and consists of 4 parcels, measuring at total of approximately 16 acres. The parcels are currently zoned B-1 District; B-2 Business District; and A-1 Agricultural District. The Petitioner, Mike Oliver, Hidden, Harbor LLC is requesting that the Planning and Zoning Commission for the Village of Johnsburg recommend that all parcels be zoned B-2 Business District with a special use permit for planned development to accommodate the following with conditions: 1) a marina with 227 drive up boat storage units; 2) a hotel and restaurant with a conditional use permit to allow for the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages on the premises; 3) an ice cream shop housed in a light house building measuring 50 feet in height; 4) a multi-use retail building housing a boating supply store and vehicle sale showroom; 5) 28 vehicle condominiums; and 6) Public amenities to include a river walk providing public access to the Fox River, children play areas and a multi-use path along Chapel Hill Road.

Attorney Smoron swore in Mike Oliver. Mr. Oliver expressed his desire to improve the current state of the subject property. He reviewed a slideshow presentation and introduced his general contractor, Josh Stark and architect, Adam Levee. Mr. Oliver stated that he proposes to operate the development which will consist of seven different business ventures including a restaurant, hotel, ice cream shop, marina, automobile condos and drive up boat storage units. He added that he is proposing a river walk along the property's edge with public access amenities which will include a children play area, splash pad, and seating area. He explained that the ice cream shop will be situated at the base of a lighthouse feature on the property. Mr. Oliver reviewed the proposed site plan and explained that it was designed to keep the boat storage separate from the motor caves and other areas. He explained that motor caves are facilities in which a person can store their automobiles, motorcycles, wave runners, and boats, however they will not be used for sleeping units. He reviewed the floor plans and explained that each building will have 7 units which can be purchased as a single unit or a combination of units. Building elevations were reviewed along with conceptual drawings of the interior, which reflect vehicle lifts and workbench areas, enabling owners to work on their vehicles.

Mr. Oliver discussed the proposed retail building which will house a boating supply store, public bathrooms for events, and a vehicle showroom which is not expected to result in many vehicle sales but rather to draw attention to the facility. He discussed the drive up boat storage area and landscaping proposed along Chapel Hill Road to buffer the view from the street as well as the elevation of the unit adjacent to Chapel Hill Road which will be consistent with the elevation of the retail building. He explained that the units are rented monthly and are to be utilized for the storage of vehicles only and cannot be used to store boxes and miscellaneous items. Mr. Oliver explained that the storage units provide the financial balancing for the overall development. He identified public areas on the site plan and explained that some of the boat slips will be reserved for condo owners and others will be for public use. He stated that a Wooden Paddle Pizza restaurant proposes to operate in the restaurant space in the hotel.

QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMISSION - Commission Member Dixon questioned if gas will be sold on sight, the number of pier rights; and if a “no wake” has been discussed with the Fox Waterway Agency. Mr. Oliver stated that gas will not be sold on the property and explained that there are 12 multi-use piers and the remainder will be transient piers, which will not be used for overnight use. Mr. Oliver stated that there are different positions regarding a no wake and he is remaining neutral on the matter. Commission Member Dixon asked Mr. Oliver to elaborate on the proposed dredging. Mr. Oliver identified the current harbor area and how he proposes to expand it. He pointed out the location of the ramp which will be protected within the harbor. Commission Member Dixon questioned the proximity of Salem Avenue to Bay Road and the impacts the proposed development will have on the intersection. He further questioned if consideration is being given to the realignment of Salem Avenue at Bay Road. Mr. Oliver stated that he does not have a determination from the County yet regarding the relocation of Salem Avenue. He explained that he is asking the Commission to approve the plan being presented and if the realignment of Salem Avenue is required, he will have to come back to the Commission with a new plan. Commission Member Dixon questioned how many jobs are expected to be brought with the businesses. Mr. Oliver stated that he does not know at this time.

Commission Member Calhoun stated that if Salem Avenue is not relocated, it appears it will be used to access the boat storage units. In that regard he questioned if it will be repaved and widened to accommodate the boat traffic. Mr. Oliver stated that once the boats are brought into the facility seasonally, the majority of them will remain in the interior of the facility. Commission Member Calhoun questioned the use of Building G. Mr. Oliver stated that it will be used for storage. Commission Member Calhoun questioned if the pond will be used for detention. Mr. Oliver confirmed that it will be expanded and used for detention. Commission Member Calhoun questioned how Mr. Oliver proposes to police the facility. Mr. Oliver stated that he will make sure that people do not use the condos for sleeping quarters and will require the owners to sign an agreement to that effect. Commission Member Calhoun questioned why livable condos are not being considered behind the car condos rather than boat storage. Mr. Oliver stated that livable condos will not bring in funding fast enough. Mr. Oliver stated that the seawall/marine work will be pursued in Phase I with the boat storage units. He added that the development will be served by the Village’s wastewater treatment system and stated that he is the contract purchaser of the property. Commission Member Calhoun questioned how auto condos are taxed. Mr. Oliver stated that he did not know how they would be taxed, but would look into the matter.

Commission Member Barrett remarked that everyone is concerned with the current condition of the property and would like to see it improved. He asked Mr. Oliver to elaborate on the phasing and timing of the development. Mr. Oliver stated that he plans to begin the first phase in the Fall of 2025 and expects to have the harbor work done in approximately 8 months. He then plans to break ground on Phase II one year after the first phase is complete. Commission Member Barrett questioned what Phase II is dependent upon. Mr. Oliver stated that Phase I provides the financial stability to give the investors the minimal return on their investments and the sale of the car condos will get investors paid out. Commission Member Barrett questioned if the development will be closed over the winter. Mr. Oliver stated that he envisions some special events and activities in the winter and expects the show room, retail store and restaurant to remain open.

Commission Member Barrett questioned the reason for the reduced setbacks. Mr. Oliver stated that the County is requiring additional right of way but agreed to reduced right of way requirements. Commission Member Barrett asked for clarification of the proposed setback on Della Lane. Mr. Oliver stated that he needs to have a certain number of storage units to make the project work and wider drive lanes are needed to accommodate the boat traffic. Commission Member Barrett pointed out that there is a residential area behind the property and allowing buildings that close to the right is not typical. Commission Member Barrett questioned who has jurisdiction over Salem. Mr. Oliver stated that it is in the Village’s jurisdiction. Village Engineer Tim Hartnett explained that the McHenry County DOT will determine access or any restrictions at the intersection of Salem Avenue and Chapel Hill Road. Mr. Hartnett discussed lining up the entrance to the development with Charnbrook Avenue and widening the road section in that area to accommodate turn lanes. Commission Member Barrett questioned if the corridor plan impacts the property as well. Mr. Hartnett stated that it does and explained that an agreement was entered into between the County, the City of McHenry and

the Village of Johnsburg related to the right of way needed along the corridor which is why you see other developments along the corridor set back a greater distance to accommodate the road widening which will be required of the developer. Mr. Oliver stated that he is waiting for McHenry County DOT to determine what right of way and improvements will be required. He stated that he submitted for the initial review just before Christmas and made his second submission in February.

Commission Member Block questioned the design of Building G given its close proximity to homes. Mr. Oliver stated that it will not be a cinderblock building, it will be designed to match the storage buildings and he plans to obscure its view by placing the building in the wooded area off of Salem Avenue. He added that the units will look like those at Chain of Lakes Super Storage on Route 12 by Fox Lake/Volo.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Richard Clemons of 2805 Kama Ave stated that the river is a great asset to Village and feels the proposed development will also be a great asset.

Landon Sharp of 2013 Indian Ridge Drive stated that he feels the development will be a great addition to Village.

Steve Schmidt of 1620 Oakleaf Drive stated that the property has been an eye sore for a long time and what is being presented will be great for people to be able to store their boats.

Michael Wilbarri of 4212 Riverview Drive expressed support for the development. He stated that it is difficult to launch a boat there now and he likes the proposed concept.

Laura Moysey of 3615 Garfield Road questioned if the motor condos will be sold. Mr. Oliver confirmed they will be sold. Ms. Moysey questioned the price of the units. Mr. Oliver stated that they will be slightly less than buying a house on the riverfront and pricing will start around \$300,000 for unfinished units. He added that finished units could be over \$1 million. Ms. Moysey questioned if slips be available to the public. Mr. Oliver stated that the majority of the slips will be public but some will be private. Ms. Moysey questioned if the storage units will be used for general storage. Mr. Oliver stated they will be for vehicles storage only.

Greg Kelly of 3312 Cardington Way stated that he believes the development will be a great addition to the community. He stated that he lives in the neighborhood directly across the street and will be impacted by the project. He remarked that the traffic impacts will only be for about 4 months of the year at a time when school is not in session. Mr. Kelly stated that he supports the project.

Jim Williams of 5715 Saddle Ridge stated that he met Mr. Oliver in a professional capacity and has worked with him. He remarked positively regarding Mr. Oliver as a project manager and expressed support for the project.

Brad Fox of 5714 Meadowlark Lane expressed his support for the development. He remarked that the property is an eye sore and stated that he understands how the first phase needs to be done to support the additional amenities in the development. Mr. Fox added that he is optimistic about the river walk.

Kenneth Kawa of 3123 Della Lane questioned if the general public can use the launch. Mr. Oliver stated that the launch is limited to owners of a condo or a renter of a boat storage unit. Mr. Oliver stated that there will be no trailer parking. Mr. Kawa stated that he lives directly adjacent to the property and will be affected by it. He questioned if in and out service will be provided. Mr. Oliver confirmed that they will offer in and out storage or the boat owner can launch their own boat. He added that he will not have large boat lifts like at larger marinas. In response to concerns raised by Mr. Kawa regarding vehicle back up alarms, Mr. Oliver stated that he will find a way eliminate disruptive backup alarms related to the boat launching. Commission

Member Calhoun questioned if there will be any dry dock storage. Mr. Oliver stated there will be no dry dock storage, boats must be on trailers.

Roberta Miller, a resident in Oakland Subdivision, questioned what will be done to insure residents will be able to access their homes from Salem Avenue during construction. Mr. Oliver stated that he plans seek a temporary construction access off of Chapel Hill Road and not utilize Salem Avenue for construction. Ms. Miller stated that it is difficult to get out of the subdivision on Salem Avenue and the realignment would be helpful. She questioned the development's impact to Della Lane. Mr. Oliver stated that he is proposing a fence along the property line adjacent to Della Lane. Ms. Miller stated that she is concerned with access and with the proposed storage building and its use. Mr. Oliver stated that the building would not be for public use and only staff will have access to it. Ms. Miller also expressed concern with the additional noise resulting from the proposed operations. She explained that she is not against the development, but she is concerned with some of its impacts. Mr. Oliver stated that the staff will likely be done by 7:00 p.m. and he believes the buildings will help create a sound barrier.

Steve Huff stated that he has known Mr. Oliver for a long time and he believes he will do well.

Laura King of 2718 Tichfield Terrace stated that zoning of the property should wait until all feasibility studies are done.

Sarah Hagen of 3910 Pitzen Road questioned how water will be provided to the property. Mr. Oliver stated that he is working with a local well driller and plans to have buildings A & B on one well and building C and D on another. He added that the hotel currently has a well but he will likely add another. Ms. Hagen questioned how fire suppression will be addressed. Mr. Oliver stated that he will pursue firewalls in lieu of sprinklers.

Debbie Freitag of 3406 Oakdale expressed her support for the project and questioned how it will be marketed. Mr. Oliver stated that he has done a lot of research through social media and has marketed his plans at locations throughout the Chain. He stated that he feels there is a demand that can fill the boat storage units in one summer season. He added that the motorcaves are a specific target market and he believe there is a market in Johnsborg for them.

Pamela Decker of 3109 River Park Drive questioned if Salem is realigned with Bay Road, what properties will be cut out. Mr. Oliver presented an exhibit of the proposed road realignment but stated that he is asking for consideration for his proposed plan without the relocation of Salem Avenue.

Bob Dalessandro expressed concern that unless the Village requires all of the public infrastructure to be in place up front, the public improvements will not get done if the development unsuccessful.

Keith Johnson of 2119 Woodlawn Park stated that he has known Mr. Oliver for an extended period of time and supports the project.

With no further questions the public hearing closed at 9:05 p.m.

COMMISSION DELIBERATIONS

Commission Member Calhoun questioned the proposed hours of operations. Mr. Oliver stated that the employees would be gone at 7:00 p.m. Commission Member Calhoun questioned how persons launching after hours will be regulated. Mr. Oliver stated he will give further consideration to the matter to report further at the next meeting. Commission Member Calhoun questioned where the boats will be staged for in and out service. Mr. Oliver pointed out areas that can be used in the center dock for staging boats from the storage units. Commission Member Calhoun pointed out that if several boats come in and are left overnight,

it will take away a significant amount of slips from transient boats. Mr. Oliver stated there are 62 slips in total.

RECESS

Committee Member Calhoun moved to recess the meeting to Wednesday, May 14, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at the David G. Dominguez Municipal Center, 1515 Channel Beach Avenue, Johnsburg, Illinois. Commission Member Barrett seconded the motion. Commission Member Barrett expressed his support for the proposal but stated that he will not be able to support it until final determinations are made by McHenry County DOT and the Army Corp of Engineers. Mr. Oliver asked the Commission to consider a conditional approval and if the plan has to change because of the Army Corps or McHenry County's response, he will have to return to the Commission for further consideration. All Commission Members voted aye to recess the meeting at 9:13 p.m. Motion carried

Respectfully Submitted,

Claudett Sofiakis
Village Administrator