

Town of Weston Development Review Board

DRAFT

Minutes of Meeting Kinhaven Hearing January 11, 2024

Board Members Present: Deborah Granquist (Chair), Anne Fujii, Laura Katz, Jeff Lennox, Debra Lyneis, Susan Morris

Board Members Absent: Tom Foster, Dan Hanenberg (Alternate)

Public: Will Goodwin, Zoning Administrator (ZA)

Tony Mazzocchi, Co-Executive Director, Kinhaven Music School, Applicant

Note: Will Goodwin attended the meeting at the Weston Town Office. All others attended remotely by Zoom. The meeting was recorded.

Deborah Granquist, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5.23 PM.

1. **Election of Officers**

Motion: Ms. Fujii nominated the following slate of officers: Ms. Granquist, Chair; Ms. Morris; Vice Chair; Ms. Lyneis, Secretary. The motion was seconded by Ms. Katz and passed unanimously.

2. **Hearing: Kinhaven Music School Application to Extend Their Season**

- a) Ms. Granquist called the hearing to order at 5:25 PM and waived the reading of public notice. She noted that the application would be reviewed under the Weston Zoning Regulations, 706 Conditional Use and 708 Site Plan Review. All DRB members listed above were present. The following documents were received for review:
 1. Letter from Mr. Mazzocchi received by email on 10/4/23
 2. Letter from Mr. Mazzocchi dated 11/14/23
 3. Application from Kinhaven Music School dated 11/14/23 with accompanying site plan dated 9/12/19
- b) Mr. Goodwin confirmed that the following abutters were duly notified:
O. Barnabei, P. Dushkin, B. Elliot, W. Engels, P. Michalski, W. Perkins, A. Price, M. Scanlon, Weston Recreation Club
- c) The meeting was conducted under the DRB Rules of Procedure. There were no disclosures of conflicts of interest or *ex parte* communications. Only those participating in the hearing will have the right to appeal the decision; no members of the public except the applicant Mr. Mazzocchi were present. Ms. Granquist administered the oath of evidence to Mr. Mazzocchi and asked him to present his case for extending the Kinhaven season.
- d) **Kinhaven Season Extension.** Mr. Mazzocchi explained in detail that the Kinhaven Music School would like to extend beyond their traditional summer season to offer a first-in-the-nation semester-long music boarding school running from September to mid-December. Their vision is “to provide a nurturing and immersive environment for gifted young musicians, ages 15 to 18, where they can receive a world class music and academic education, fostering their artistic growth and academic excellence.” They plan to collaborate with Burr and Burton Academy (BBA) and host renowned faculty at Kinhaven for music instruction, concerts and guest artist appearances. They will partner with the Weston Theater Company and other regional arts organizations to provide a rich cultural experience for the students and the town of Weston. If approved, Kinhaven would launch the program in 2025.
- e) Mr. Mazzocchi reviewed the conditional use and other requirements outlined in his letter of 11/14/22.

- Section 706(1)a: The original capacity of the Kinhaven facility will not be exceeded. The session will have 16-24 students and 10 faculty/staff, one fifth of the maximum summer capacity.
 - Section 706(1)b: There will be no change in effect on the character of the area. There will be no new development.
 - Section 706(1)c: New traffic will only include busses to transport students to and from Burr and Burton Academy Monday through Friday. In response to questions, Mr. Mazzocchi stated that student transportation details are still being worked out, but will use current BBA routes and schedules.
 - Section 706(1)d: Kinhaven will follow all applicable bylaws.
 - Section 705(1)e: To maximize the use of energy resources, Kinhaven will work with Efficiency Vermont, specifically on cabin insulation needs.
 - Section 706(2): Kinhaven will not change its lot size or distances from roadways or adjacent uses.
 - In compliance with 24 VSA Section 4413(5), Kinhaven will not emit noise, smoke, noxious gases or other safety hazards or harmful wastes. In addition, Kinhaven will continue to prevent parking on Lawrence Hill Road, screen service and parking areas from neighbors, and maintain current signage.
 - Kinhaven is not changing the site plan dated 9/12/19.
- f) Prior permits. The board considered Conditional Use permits granted over many years, noting that there were some restrictions on the length of the programs in prior decisions. To address the current application, the DRB will need to amend the existing conditional use permit to lengthen the season.
- g) Five-year plan. In response to questions, Kinhaven plans to seek grant funding to launch and support the program for the first three years with the expectation that it can become self-sustaining with tuition income and other resources once the program is firmly established. They will recruit students nationally and internationally and expect many applicants to this unique opportunity. They will not increase the size of the enrollment, however beyond the maximum number of 24 students.
- h) Motion to Close Hearing.** Ms. Fujii moved to close the hearing at 6:11 PM to enter deliberative session. Ms. Morris seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Ms. Granquist stated that the DRB must render a decision in writing to the applicant within 45 days. She thanked Mr. Mazzocchi for his presentation.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:11 PM. Board members then entered deliberative session.

Respectfully submitted,
 Debra Lyneis
 Development Review Board Secretary