

To: Charlotte Zoning Board of Adjustment
From: Iver Bjerke, 297 Wildwood West, Charlotte, VT 05445
Subject: ZBA-17-176-CU Civil Engineering Associates / R.L. Vallee Inc.

January 29, 2018

I attended a meeting of the zoning board on January 24th. I was very impressed with the presentation that the applicant group gave to the zoning board. Could they have done a better job, of course they could, but this was a preliminary meeting which did not require such.

I was not however impressed with how the meeting was run nor with some of the questions both from the board and the public that were asked of the presenters.

So, the meeting was well attended with standing room only and should have been held at the school. The Board Moderator described how the meeting would be run. First the applicant would give their presentation, **and then** the board would ask questions. After that, the public would have a chance to give input and ask questions. Less than a minute into the presentation by the applicant, he was interrupted by board members with questions.

During the back and forth between the board and applicant, there were some really strange comments and questions coming from the board. One board member could not understand the "concept" of how the building would look. He could not understand that this was a "concept" and not a finalized design nor would it look exactly like the store in Middlebury. Another member could not understand what the applicant meant by "Farm Products" and wanted to know if the applicant could supply a list of the products. Then there were questions about lighting, traffic studies etc. that were all addressed in the current application that the board had a copy of. The lighting was described in detail by the applicant. Why does the board require the applicant to furnish a traffic study for Root Road when the road only has minimal use and the applicant has already agreed to pave the road?

Now to some of the public comments. One person did not like the looks of the canopy over the pumping stations. The canopy is there for protection. One, the lights under the canopy help people to see when they are pumping gas and two, the canopy protects individuals from inclement weather. Another person had a petition because they were not consulted about waste removal. The applicant is not required to consult with individual organizations, but did so to several organizations out of courtesy to the town. There was a question concerning the loss of the park and ride spaces at the garage. The town "LEASES" five spaces for park and ride at the garage. These become null and void with the sale of the property. The only real park and ride the town has is at the railroad station. There are however other places for park and rides. One such place is at Jimmos in N. Ferrisburg, a short distance from Charlotte.

These types of comments from the board and the public shows just how much a few individuals from the town center are trying their best to keep this applicant from making Spears corner a lot better place.

This upgrade at Spears garage will give the towns people a place to go for gas, some food and a place to gather and talk. Let's not let a select few drive this development out of town just because they don't like some small detail.

Let's get behind this process so that we can make that intersection a better place not only to look at, but bring some much needed business to the town.

Some other food for thought. When / if R.L. Vallee Inc. is allowed to go forward, the area on the north east side of the intersection which is the area they are proposing for their septic system will remain a **green space** that conforms to the town plan. Also, taxes paid to the town by R.L. Vallee Inc. will help with our tax base.

Respectfully,
Iver Bjerke