



## SARATOGA COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

TOM L. LEWIS  
CHAIRMAN

JASON KEMPER  
DIRECTOR

August 28, 2015

John Franck, Commissioner of Accounts  
City of Saratoga Springs  
City Hall 474 Broadway  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

**RE: SCPB Referral Review#15-161-Text Amendment-City of Saratoga Springs**-Text Amendment to Chapter 240, Appendix A, "Definition of Terms"- to codify the definition of "Clubhouse" within the Rural Residential Zone.

Received from the City of Saratoga Springs Planning Board on August 14, 2015.

Reviewed by the Saratoga County Planning Board on August 20, 2015.

**Decision:** Approve

Although the proposed text amendment emanated from Saratoga National Golf Club's proposal for an amendment to the city's Comprehensive Plan, the Saratoga County Planning Board has reviewed the referral as being a textual change to the zoning ordinance affecting the RR District throughout the city.

Historically, there have been instances of opposition expressed regarding certain types of development east of the Northway off Exit 14 in Saratoga Springs, primarily because of concern for environmental impacts and a desire to keep "the city in the country" appeal of the area. Cognizant of such issues, the applicant noted above originally sought a resort overlay zoning district for the Saratoga National Golf Club property, surrendering development rights on 378 acres of its holdings of roughly 407 acres.

In March of 2015 there was a public information meeting regarding the proposal and possible amendment to the Comp Plan. On July 22<sup>nd</sup> the city planning board reviewed a zoning text amendment – proposing to add a definition for Clubhouse to Appendix A, Definition of Terms. On August 10<sup>th</sup> a project workshop was held, followed by an August 12<sup>th</sup> public hearing held by the planning board. At that meeting of the planning board the proposed amendment was reviewed and on August 19 a new text amendment (now being considered) was derived and a positive advisory opinion from the city planning board was forwarded to City Council – Add Golf Resort to Definition of Terms and to the Schedule of Uses and also add Golf Resort under the Supplemental Regulations. Again, while the proposed zoning text amendment clearly has arisen in response to one particular proposal for property development, the zoning

changes that are being considered are applicable to the substantial number of properties now currently zoned as Rural Residential throughout the city and, we believe, said changes do favorably help meet the needs and protect the interests of various elements of the community as a whole.

It is important to note that in each and every review of a zoning amendment that has been referred to this body by the city council, the principal criteria use by the city planning board in its review and determination as outlined in its Advisory Opinion (this time being for Golf Resort) are:

1. Is the proposed amendment consistent with the Comprehensive Plan (if so, no amendment to Comp Plan needed), and
2. That the proposed amendment is not contrary to the purposes and intent of zoning ordinance.

From that point of affirmation, the planning board considered a) adding a new definition – A full regulation size 18-hole golf course and associated structures which may include amenities such as clubhouse, locker rooms, spa, health and fitness center, golf and fitness-related retail, restaurant and banquet facilities, business center and temporary lodging; b) adding Golf Resort as a permitted use in RR District with the required approvals of a Special Use Permit and Site Plan Review; and c) adding Golf Resorts to the Supplemental Regulations.

It is in the detail of the Supplemental Regulations that we see the city planning board as having addressed the concerns for development in certain locations such as that proposed by the underlying initial applicant. While there is no need to restate the subcategories of the Supplemental Regs, we do note the sensitivity to voiced issues and concerns (stages of review procedures, minimum lot size, clustering of structures, protected open space, protection of soils and subsurface waters, setback distances and building heights for visual mitigation, dedication of unconstrained/valued open space, with public availability to property for recreational opportunity).



---

Michael Valentine, Senior Planner  
Authorized Agent for Saratoga County

xc. Bradley Birge

**DISCLAIMER:** Recommendations made by the Saratoga County Planning Board on referrals and subdivisions are based upon the receipt and review of a “full statement of such proposed action” provided directly to SCPB by the municipal referring agency as stated under General Municipal Law section 239. A determination of action is rendered by the SCPB based upon the completeness and accuracy of information presented by its staff. The SCPB cannot be accountable for a decision rendered through incomplete or inaccurate information received as part of the complete statement.