

Scott Bissell
156 Dug Road
South Glastonbury, CT 06073
scottbissell@hotmail.com

Khara Dodds, AICP
Director of Planning and Land Use Services
Town of Glastonbury

May 25, 2020

Dear Ms. Dodds:

I hope this finds you healthy and well.

I write in reference to the Hops on the Hill Brewery on Dug Road. As I am sure you recall I live at 156 Dug Road.

We are glad that this local business appears to be successful. Not unexpectedly this success has resulted in a substantial amount of increased traffic up and down Dug Road. The likelihood that this business would increase traffic along the narrow dirt portion of the road was recognized by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission during the public hearings that were conducted in 2018. I reference the minutes of one of the meetings below:

**“GLASTONBURY TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY,
MAY 15, 2018**

Chairman Purtill suggested that the applicant install a sign directing people exiting the site to make a right turn to get to Route 17, and Attorney Alter said the applicant would accept this as a condition of approval.”

Would you kindly provide evidence that this signage has been installed and has been in place since the start of business operations. Given that this was an accepted condition for approval I would assume the town verified its existence before allowing the business to open. If the sign is not proving adequate to direct traffic should other measures such as an attendant be placed at the base of the driveway to ensure compliance?

On another point, would you be able to provide some insight:

MAY 15, 2018

“Attorney Alter confirmed for the record that there will be no outdoor consumption of beer allowed and no outdoor music/speakers. He also stated that there are no plans for food service on site.”

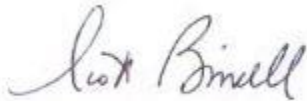
NOVEMBER 21, 2019

“275 DUG ROAD – proposal to have seasonal festivals with food trucks at the Hops on the Hill farm market & brewery – Rural Residence Zone – Phil Lohr and Alexander Gondek, Jr., applicants Khara Dodds introduced the project and gave background information to the Subcommittee members. Phil Lohr of Hops on the Hill gave an overview of the proposal to have food trucks on a temporary basis at the farm brewery. Mr. Lohr stated the request to have food trucks was not in the original application for the farm brewery because he thought they would be permitted like food services on other farms in town. There was a general discussion between the Subcommittee members and the applicant regarding what would constitute a temporary use as opposed to a permanent use. Mr. Lohr then stated that in lieu of having the trucks there on a permanent basis he was requesting to have them at the farm brewery at seasonal festivals. He presented a schedule to the Subcommittee members indicating the dates of the proposed seasonal festivals. Commissioner Botelho asked if there would be only one truck per event. Mr. Lohr stated that there would only be one truck and that would be sufficient. Mr. Lohr stated that he would like to see the regulations amended to allow food trucks in more locations than currently allowed. Commissioner Botelho agreed that the regulations should be changed.”

These statements seem to not be in keeping with what is happening in practice. I recognize that I may not be aware of how CT legislation secondary to the COVID-19 pandemic may temporarily change the nature of the operations. My inquiry, however, is broader in scope as outdoor seating and food trucks have been advertised on site prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. I recognize that I may not have all of the relevant decisions from the Town and I would be happy to have the information to review.

I thank you for your attention to these matters and your commitment to keeping our community safe.

Sincerely,



Scott Bissell

cc: Chairman Robert Zanolungo, Jr. Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission

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Khara Dodds, AICP
Director of Planning and Land Use Services
Town of Glastonbury

January 25, 2021

Dear Ms. Dodds:

I write in follow up to my prior correspondence of 5/25/2020 regarding Hops on the Hill Brewery. I am looking for some additional information and clarification.

I have reviewed, what I believe to be the available information from the TPZ minutes.

As you recall I inquired about the presence of a sign directing traffic to turn right out of the brewery towards Tryon Street and away from the dirt portion of Dug Road. A small sign has since been placed, although based on the traffic continuing up the dirt portion of Dug Road it has proven largely ineffective. Would the town consider additional signage to help encourage patrons to follow directions?

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The applicant, Alexander Gondek Jr., is seeking approval of a Section 12.9 Minor Change to allow Food Trucks as part of a series of seasonal harvest festivals and indoor acoustic (non-amplified) music at the farm market and brewery, known as Hops on the Hill.
- The festivals will coincide with the seasonal harvest of crops grown on site.
- The applicant will have indoor acoustic (non amplified) music at times when the farm market and brewery is open to the public. The approved hours of operation for the farm market and brewery are Tuesday through Friday 4-8 pm, Saturday & Sunday 1-6 pm from March to December.
- The Plans Review Subcommittee reviewed the proposal at its February 27, 2019 meeting; the Subcommittee had no issues.

Could you please confirm the hours of operation that are approved for the brewery. It seems clearly outlined above. Based upon the brewery website and observed traffic, operations appear to be ongoing currently despite the TPZ minutes reflecting hours March to December. I would also point out that the brewery is open outside of the stated hours for events and activities. Finally, it has been observed that cars are often departing the premises hours after the stated closing time. I am not sure if the commission is aware of this. Who is responsible for monitoring this? I would appreciate clarification on this and if there is additional information available that allowed expansion of the hours and scope of operation.

Events & Food Trucks

Food Trucks

We're now open Fridays!

1/29 – Square Peg Pizzeria
4-8pm

1/30 – Bear's Smokehouse BBQ
1-6pm

1/31 – Skyscraper Sandwich Truck
1-6pm

I would also pass along for the record that the dirt portion of Dug Road remains in overall poor condition. I have submitted work notices to the Town regarding this. I have also reported speeding and erratic driving on Dug Road to the police department.

As I mentioned in my prior letter I am happy for the success of the brewery business, however, as the business grows (hundreds of cars on premises during the summer weekends) Dug Road is unsuitable to support this type of commercial operation. There appear to be ongoing substantial deviations from the original proposal that was made at the public hearing in 2018. For instance:

Attorney Alter confirmed for the record that there will be no outdoor consumption of beer allowed and no outdoor music/speakers. He also stated that there are no plans for food service on site.

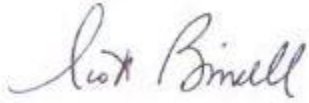
Beer consumption is now widespread outdoors at the brewery. Food service has become a standard part of the operations.

In response to the concern raised about the business expanding in the future, Mr. Lohr explained that their business model doesn't include distribution and they do not have the space or infrastructure to become a large manufacturer. He said that the intent of the application is to provide a place that brings people together in a natural, outdoor environment and to improve the community; they have no interest in expanding to make more beer. Attorney Alter added that the applicant is bound to what is represented on the plans, and is also limited by State statute.

I would appreciate comments on the above. I assume that production is being monitored. In particular I note the last statement by Attorney Alter indicating the applicant "is bound" by what is represented on the plans.

I thank you for your attention to these matters and your commitment to keeping our community safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott Bissell". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

Scott Bissell

cc: Chairman Robert Zanlungo, Jr. Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission

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Richard J. Johnson
Town Manager
Town of Glastonbury
2155 Main Street
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Glastonbury, CT 06033-5523

April 28, 2021

Dear Mr. Johnson

I write in follow up to my 5/25/2020 and 1/25/2021 letters concerning Hops on the Hill Brewery. I received your 2/10/2021 letter indicating the Mr. Mullen would be following up. At this time I have not had any follow-up despite exercising reasonable patience.

My concerns remain unchanged. Please reference my prior letter. The hours of operation appear to be different than what was approved by the TPZ. Additional examples follow:

Save the Date!

Join us for our second Vendors Day at Hops on the Hill on **Saturday, May 1st, 2021 from 11am-4pm!** (Rain Date: Sunday, May 2nd)
Shop small and support local businesses!

Brewery will be open 11am-6pm

Food trucks on-site:

Oz'NBones BBQ & Skyscraper Sandwich Truck

See our **Facebook Event** for list of vendors!

****Vendor registration is CLOSED****



MAY 8TH @ 11:45-12:45
MAY 29TH @ 11:45-12:45

**\$20 FOR 1 HOUR MAT CLASS
 AND 1 BEER TICKET!!**

Pilates and Pints

at Hops on the Hill Brewery
 275 Dug Rd. South Glastonbury, CT

**Gentle core Pilates flow taught by Samantha, a
 Physical Therapist and Pilates Instructor**

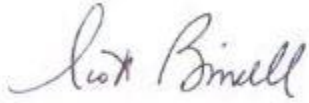
All levels welcome! Please bring your own mat.
 No sign up needed, arrive early for waivers and set up
 outside next to the brewery **Weather permitting

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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- The applicant will have indoor acoustic (non amplified) music at times when the farm market and brewery is open to the public. The approved hours of operation for the farm market and brewery are Tuesday through Friday 4-8 pm, Saturday & Sunday 1-6 pm from March to December.
- The Plans Review Subcommittee reviewed the proposal at its February 27, 2019 meeting; the Subcommittee had no issues.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Bissell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Scott Bissell

cc: Chairman Robert Zanlungo, Jr. Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission
Jonathan Mullen, Planner

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Jonathan Mullen
Town Planner
Town of Glastonbury
2155 Main Street
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June 5, 2021

Dear Mr. Mullen:

I write in follow up to my 5/25/2020, 1/25/2021, and 4/28/2021 letters concerning Hops on the Hill Brewery. I apologize for some of the redundancy contained within my correspondence.

I understand that a request may be moving through subcommittee for additional food trucks on site at the brewery during regular hours, not just during “festivals”. Additional concerns have also presented themselves.

The brewery has resulted in a substantial amount of increased traffic on Dug Road. As you are well aware, Dug Road is narrow, has poor sightlines, and is unsuitable for large scale commercial traffic patterns.

Commissioner Hassett commented that the applicant’s initial proposal was presented as a tasting room with very limited activity but with this new request, the project has significantly changed. He asked if the Commission is willing to accept these changes, which can substantially increase the activity at the venue. Ms. Dodds clarified that in the original approval, the hours of operation were included in the description of the proposal itself, which made the hours a key component of the application, and therefore it was not necessary to also include the hours within the conditions of approval. Chairman Shaw also noted a concern about the level of alcohol consumption that may rise with the food trucks. Commissioner Saunig countered that the additional food options may dilute some of that concern. Commissioner Hassett said that is fine, but his worry lies with the fact that the original application has changed.

I share Commissioner Hassett’s concerns that the project that was originally presented and approved has substantially changed. As I have pointed out in my prior correspondence, the brewery is open far more often than the Commission approved. Most obvious was that the approval was for March through December, yet this year it was open in January and February. The brewery is also available for events and other activities outside of the hours that were discussed at the public hearing. As you can imagine, any

event results in traffic. At the public hearing I only recall discussion occurring around the “open hours” which were approved. For reference please see below taken directly from the Hops on the Hill website.

What we can accommodate:

- Work day business meetings or training sessions for up to 80 participants
- Complete venue rentals for groups of 60-150 for business socials, fundraisers, professional associations, cocktail parties, etc.
 - Monday-Wednesday all hours
 - Thursday and Friday before 4:00pm
 - Saturday and Sunday evenings after 7:00pm
- Brunch/luncheon gatherings on Saturday & Sunday prior to opening

During Open Hours...

- Table/space reservations for birthdays, anniversaries or other celebrations:
 - Up to 50 guests during the winter and on summer Thursdays
 - Up to 30 guests on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday during the summer
- Tent (30' x 60') with tables and chairs to accommodate groups of 30-120
- Groups setting up outside with their own accommodations (food, tables, chairs, tents, etc.):
 - No fee required, but advance notice is appreciated

Attorney Alter reviewed the architectural elements of the tobacco barn/farm market building as well as proposed lighting and signage. With regard to an anonymous document that was circulated around the neighborhood, Attorney Alter noted that it contained several false statements and stated that the proposal is not for a bar/taproom or for a distribution brewery that would involve large daily deliveries, and the beer will not have a high alcohol content. He explained that alternate access from Main Street is not

Speaking to the scope of the project, Hops on the Hill appears to be a bar/taproom as they applied for and were granted a CT Craft Cafe Liquor Permit. They now serve beer from other vendors. This is different than what was presented at the public meeting.

Beers on Tap

Sunset IPA ›

Farmers Tan **New!**›

Rusty Triangle DIPA ✓

DIPA with juicy mango orange flavor and crisp fruit aroma.

ABV: 9.2% (8oz)

Hefe ›

Blondie ›

Broadleaf Brown Ale **New!** ›

Roaring Brook Red ›

American Pale Ale ›

Mel-Mel Stout ›

Raspberry Sour **Guest Tap** ›

I would respectfully point out that a beer with 9.2% alcohol level is not in keeping with the above statement from the May 2018 meeting. It is notable that the applicant at that time took umbrage with the notion that beer with high alcohol content would be available (referencing the document referred to by Attorney Alter that was circulated which “contained several false statements”). I have no knowledge as to the source of that document and never saw the source document referenced, however, the person or persons concerns appear to have been correct on more than one count.

Attorney Alter confirmed for the record that there will be no outdoor consumption of beer allowed and no outdoor music/speakers. He also stated that there are no plans for food service on site.

I have referenced this statement from the May 2018 meeting consistently. In my mind it pretty much speaks for itself. Once again, speaking to the change in the scope and nature of the operation I would call your attention to police report #21-9303 from 5/29/2021. After a few hours of loud music emanating from Hops on the Hill I made a noise complaint around 9pm. This is well after the published and approved brewery hours had ended (Saturday closes at 6pm). As you can see from the police report an event being held at the brewery with amplified music was observed.

I would again point out that based on a variety of social media posts from the brewery outdoor consumption of beer appears to be the norm.

Moving on – to state the obvious - Dug Road is partially dirt. It is frequently in disrepair with erosion and potholes. **The amount of dust generated by the increased traffic is substantial.** Clouds of dust kicked up from the line of traffic moving to and fro from the brewery hang like smog over the road and eventually drift into neighboring yards and homes. On several weekend occasions it has been challenging to be in our backyard due to the dust kicked up by the traffic. I have resorted at times to watering the road to keep the dust down. There is a reason that businesses dependent on commercial traffic are not located on a rural residential dirt road.

The top portion of Dug Road as it intersects Main Street is dangerous due to insufficient sight lines for traffic looking left and turning onto Main Street. I know that the town has been made aware of a significant accident that occurred recently involving a vehicle pulling out in that location.

I ask that the following be considered:

1. An employee or preferably a hired off duty police officer should be stationed at the entrance/exit of the brewery to direct all traffic exiting to turn right and exit via the paved road to Tryon Street. This will lead to a signalized intersection back to Main Street. Despite the presence of a small sign asking patrons to turn right many do not heed the suggestion. It is notable that even the food trucks that are hired by the brewery turn left and come up Dug Road!
2. Every effort should be made to encourage traffic coming from Main Street to use Tryon Street, not Dug Road. I recognize this is challenging as many people use GPS programs these days.
3. Consider paving the dirt portion of Dug Road to mitigate the significant dust and poor road conditions. I have placed several requests to the town via the web portal over the last two years for consideration of this but have not received a response.
4. Widen the upper portion of Dug Road to accommodate two cars passing safely to reduce the risk of a head on collision. There is also little to no room for bikes or pedestrians on that area of the road to safely move to if a car driving fast or erratically is encountered.
5. Revisit the possibility of an alternative entrance directly off Main Street or Carini Road. Now that there is a demonstrated significant traffic flow this possibility should be strongly considered.
6. The agreed upon terms of operation from the May 2018 approval should be enforced.

It has become apparent that what was approved on May 15, 2018 is not what is being practiced. The number of deviations in my mind is striking.

Respectfully,



Scott Bissell

cc: Chairman Robert Zanolungo, Jr. Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission
Rebecca Auger, Director of Planning and Land Use Services