



City of Auburn, Maine

Office of Planning & Permitting

Eric Cousens, Director

60 Court Street | Auburn, Maine 04210

www.auburnmaine.gov | 207.333.6601

Item #3

To: Auburn Planning Board
From: John Blais, Urban Development Specialist
Re: Underwood Farm, Horse Farm and Equestrian Center on 616 West Auburn Road.
Date: October 12, 2021

I. PROPOSAL: The parcel is in the Rural Residential (3.50 acres) and Agriculture Resource Protection (11.79 acres) for a total of 15.29 acres and is shown on the City GIS system as Parcel ID 341-056 with an address of 616 West Auburn Road. The applicant is submitting a Development Review Application to be reviewed under special exception and the site plan review process. The applicant is proposing a female-owned and operated 12 horse boarding facility and riding lesson horse farm.

The property is currently owned by Michele A. Whitmore and Andrew P. Knudston, by warranty deed and currently the property contains 15.29+/- acres on one lot by site plan, Michele Whitmore is currently developing the horse farm for a recreation use project under SEC 60-145 (b) (5) of the AG/RP & RR zoning ordinance. The proposed project will have about 136.8' of frontage on West Auburn Road. The parcel does currently have in place an approved farm under the AG/RP and RR Zoning Districts. Within that approval the applicant has previously submitted the following: Phosphorus Control Plan, Farm Plan, Wetland Delineation, Fill Permit and Army Corp Self-Verification Notification Form. Each of these items has been reviewed and approved by both City Staff and Auburn Water District. The pasture in the farm has been identified as 8 acres with 5.5 acres in the south section of the property and 2.5 acres on the upper sections of the property. With that, the definition Farm, livestock is limited to section (2) Horse 1.5 animal units per acre of cleared hay-pastureland. Which limits the number of horses to 12 animal units at 616 West Auburn Road.

The proposed improvements are shown on the plan set prepared by Main-Land Development Consultants show a new riding ring, two new round pens, three outbuildings for storage which are over 200+ feet away from any property lines. Utilities for the project include electrical, water service line and stormwater treatment for phosphorus control on site. Three-sided horse shelters are scattered throughout the pasture area which will be 50+ or more feet away from any property lines, and the plan sections have been modified by the applicant to address parking, lighting, and buffers. The farm is proposing (5) RAB slim 57w LED full cut off fixtures which light the outdoor riding ring, parking, tack room and pasture areas. The arena lights would only be used in fall during the hours of 5:30-7pm and 3x a week. Dust will be kept down by placing magnesium flakes in the arena, which is standard dust control in horse arenas. The project septic system onsite has 90 gpd available, we have referenced in the 2014, chapter 241 subsurface wastewater disposal rules. Design flows under Table 4c, with type of facility children's camps, day use of 15 gpd per child plus 12 gpd staff person. Therefore, the approval under recreational use (sec. 60 145 (b), (5) of the ag zoning will have a maximum of 6 student at any given time if the applicant is running the instruction.

A maximum of 5 cars will be located for parking near the ring which includes a dedicated 96" ADA parking spot with signage approximate 165' across the neighboring property at 598 West Auburn Road. Please see attached parking diagram. Parking is approx. 150' off West Auburn road down the access road. This area will have RAB slim 57w LED full cut off light which meet dark sky international standards.

The applicant plans to plant fir/evergreen trees along street facing property line shown. Also, if requested the applicant can install a privacy fence for 598 West Auburn property line. Furthermore, the access farm road down to the parking area is also 150' feet across from the property line at 598 West Auburn Road. The other direct abutters at 632 West Auburn Road signed a full support letter. (See attached).

Hay deliveries up to three times a month, and feed store deliveries twice a month will use the farm access road. The applicant also expects occasional horse transport via trailer to horse events or to the veterinarian in case of an emergency. Most transport is expected to be in the summer and fall months using the access road. The proposed plan will not create more than 6 trips in the peak hour of use. The owners will be the head instructor along with another part time instructor as well as one part time stable hand. The applicant plans to place a simple roadside sign which will be made of wood stating, "Underwood Farm". The applicant notes this sign will not be illuminated and will conform with city ordinances of 2 square feet in dimension found in the Home Occupation Ordinance.

Manure will be removed from pastures every day, which will minimize flies/odors. Manure will then be placed in a covered manure containment area to eliminate run off. The applicant will also apply fly predators, which interrupts fly life cycles and mitigates nuisance flies. They have contracted with a manure removal service that will periodically stop by throughout the year and remove the manure from the covered storage area. A contract for this service is attached in the submission packet. The applicant's house is nearby, and vows to be vigilant about keeping the property in good order. Staff notes this meets and exceeds USDA/NRCS standards for nutrient management.

The water run-off along with storm water run-off is addressed in the attached phosphorus control plan. A site plan has also been approved through the Auburn Water District. The property was also delineated by a professional environmental scientist, Joseph Stevenson of the Kings Arrow Company. Wetland impact is less than 4,300 sq. feet and doesn't warrant any DEP permits. See attachment. The applicant plans to fence off the first 20' of the meadow buffer and level lip spreader to keep horses out and stormwater control BMPs in good working condition.

The applicant well runs 50 GPM which will supply the horses with water. Horses drink 5-10 gal/day. With 12 horses we will be using approximately 60-120 gallons a day depending on the season. The applicant has indicated that horses tend to drink less in the winter.

Once the project is complete, traffic will substantially decrease to no more than 6 trips peak hour use. Site distance has been verified on West Auburn with site lines of 350' both left and right eliminating any safety concerns when pulling out of the farm access road.

Underwood Farm plans to hold 3 summer day camps a year with 6 kids at a time running from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Which intends to provide valuable supervision for working parents of children in the Auburn area. The applicant is looking to grow there program to collegiate students in the area, as well as Bowdoin College in the upcoming seasons.

This project is estimated to cost approximately \$125,000. Financial Capacity has been identified by the applicant through a SBA line credit, business credit, and cash savings as provided in the applicant packet.

II. DEPARTMENT REVIEW:

- Police - No Comments
- Auburn Water and Sewer – No Comments
- Fire Department/Code Enforcement – No Comments
- Engineering -Public Services - No Comments

- Airport – No Comments
- 911 - No Comments

PLANNING BOARD ACTION/STAFF SUGGESTIONS: Staff suggests the Planning Board approve the Site Plan for new riding ring, two new round pens, three outbuildings for storage with 5 parking spaces, which meets the requirements of Sec. 60-1277, and further that the application meets the requirements of Special Exception Ordinance, Sec 60-145 (b) (5) of the AG/RP zoning ordinance with the following conditions:

- a. 40 feet of privacy fencing 6 feet high with 5 evergreen planting along the property line of 589 & 616 West Auburn Road.
- b. Stormwater inspection and maintenance log provided yearly to Auburn Water District and City Staff.
- c. Limit operations to 8 PM year-round.

Suggested Motion: I make a motion to approve the Site Plan for the construction of the new riding ring, two new round pens, three outbuildings for storage with 5 parking spaces, which meets the requirements of Sec. 60-1277, and further that the application meets the requirements of Special Exception Ordinance, Sec. 60-145 (b) (5) of the AG/RP zoning ordinance with the following conditions:

- a. 40 feet of privacy fencing 6 feet high with 5 evergreen planting along the property line of 589 & 616 West Auburn Road.*
- b. Stormwater inspection and maintenance log provided yearly to Auburn Water District and City Staff.*
- c. Limit operations to 8 PM year-round.*