

CANTERBURY ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
CANTERBURY, NEW HAMPSHIRE

APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION

For ZBA use:

Received: 10/9/24

Fees Paid: \$455 - cash.

Accepted: _____

Case No.: _____

Owner Name and Address:

Ben Stonebraker

Kelley Stonebraker

141 New RD

Canterbury NH

Telephone No.: _____

Map & Lot No.: 000258 016000

Location of Site: 141 New RD

Total Acreage: 24 Acres

Applicant's Name and Address if different from owner:

Mercedes Martinez - Gould

Jamie Gould

51 Peterson Cir Concord

NH 03303

Zoning District (AC, C, CH, I, N, RE or RU): 07 RU Rural IMP

A Special Exception is requested to allow: _____

** See Attachment **

This Special Exception is requested from Article 5 Section 3-C of
the Canterbury Zoning Ordinance.

Name & Address of All Abutting property owners: Use Separate Abutters List Sheet

Page 2 Application for Special Exception

It is the responsibility of the applicant to supply the following information, as applicable, to allow the Zoning Board of Adjustment to make findings on each of the points below relative to a request for a Special Exception. (See Section 8.2) Attach additional pages as necessary.

1. That granting the permit would be in the public interest: _____

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2. Describe how the proposed use would not adversely affect the property values in the district: _____

~~***~~

3. That the site specific site is an appropriate location for the proposed use: _____

~~***~~

4. That the proposed use would not adversely affect the health and safety of the residents and others in the area and would not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent or neighboring properties: _____

~~***~~

5. That the proposed use would not constitute a nuisance because of offensive noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, glare, or unsightliness:

✱ ✱

6. That granting of the permit would be in the spirit of the ordinance. _____

✱ ✱

7. That the proposed use would not constitute a hazard because of traffic, hazardous materials, or other conditions. _____

✱ ✱

NATURAL RESOURCE SUPPLEMENTAL CONDITIONS -*Natural Resource Zone Only*

1. Landscaping and development be compatible with existing development. _____

N/A

2. Proposed uses be planned and oriented to respect natural features, solar access, scenic vistas and natural drainage areas. _____

N/A

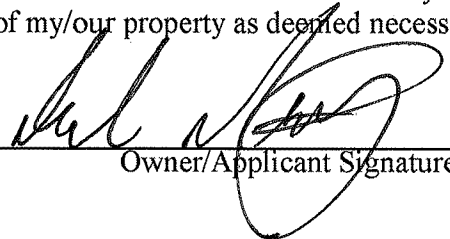
3. Access ways and provisions for motor vehicles be planned to minimize their impact. _____

Plot Plan to Accompany Application. This application must be accompanied by a plot plan which is drawn to scale and is of sufficient detail to support the statements made in this application, and to illustrate compliance with the special conditions required in the ordinance. At a minimum, the plot plan must show the location and dimension of existing and proposed building footprints, setback distances to the property lines and road right of way; the location of well and septic systems; significant physical or topographic limitations to development of the lot; and parking and loading areas as applicable. Setback distances from roads must be based on the distance from the edge of the right of way, not the pavement edge. If you are uncertain of the road right of way location, contact the Town Road Agent for more information.

By signing this application I/we understand that the information provided herein is accurate and is in accordance with the Canterbury Zoning Ordinance and other land use regulations of the Town and other applicable state and federal regulations which may apply.

If the applicant is not the same as the owner, a letter of authorization must be submitted along with the application.

I/we consent to allow the Canterbury Zoning Board of Adjustment or its designee to make onsite inspection(s) of my/our property as deemed necessary for the evaluation of my/our application.



Owner/Applicant Signature

10.9.24

Date

Owner/Applicant Signature

Date

A special exception is requested to allow:

The property located at 141 New Rd to be used as a multi-purpose educational facility under the My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit organizations. The facility will support nature-based educational programs for children ages 4-18, including but not limited to:

- A nature-based micro school offering, multi-age education through place-based and project-based learning, focusing on real-life skills, environmental stewardship, and community engagement.
- Summer camp programs run by Wildkidd, a nonprofit initiative, to promote outdoor skills, leadership, and connection with nature.
- Before and after-school programs to provide working families with extended care options that align with the school's nature-based and holistic educational philosophy.
- Homeschool enrichment programs offering real-life skills, vocational training, and community engagement opportunities.

All activities will prioritize low-impact use of the land, promoting environmental sustainability, outdoor learning, and a deep connection to the local ecosystem. The property will be used in a manner consistent with the educational mission of My Village and Wildkidd, supporting the development of future leaders and responsible citizens.

1.

That granting the permit would be in the public interest:

Granting this permit would greatly benefit the public by offering unique educational opportunities for local children and families. My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit will provide nature-based education and programs that emphasize community involvement, real-life skills, and environmental stewardship. These programs aim to fill gaps in traditional education by fostering leadership, critical thinking, and a connection to nature, which are increasingly essential in today's world.

The property will serve as a hub for innovative, place-based learning, where children of all ages can thrive in a hands-on, outdoor learning environment. The school and its associated nonprofit programs will engage with the local community, offer employment opportunities,

and create partnerships with local businesses and organizations, further contributing to the economic and social well-being of the area.

By offering summer camps, before and after-school care, and homeschool programs, we will also support working families and provide safe, enriching spaces for children.

Additionally, our focus on sustainability and low-impact land use aligns with the broader goal of protecting and appreciating the natural environment, which is vital to the long-term health of the community.

Ultimately, this project will strengthen the community by providing meaningful educational alternatives, supporting families, and fostering a greater connection to nature and the local ecosystem.

2.

Describe how the proposed use would not adversely affect the property values in the district:

The proposed use of the property as a nature-based educational facility under My Village Micro Schools and the Wildkidd nonprofit will not adversely affect property values in the district. In fact, it is likely to have a positive impact on property values for several reasons:

1. **Enhanced Community Appeal:** The presence of a well-regarded, innovative educational facility can increase the appeal of the neighborhood to families seeking high-quality, alternative education options. As families move into the area to access these programs, the demand for housing may increase, positively affecting property values.
2. **Sustainable and Low-Impact Development:** The nature-based focus of My Village emphasizes sustainability and minimal environmental impact. The property will be maintained with the utmost care for the natural environment, preserving the beauty and integrity of the surrounding land. This low-impact approach ensures that the area remains scenic and desirable, contributing to the overall character and appeal of the district.
3. **Community and Economic Benefits:** The programs run by My Village and Wildkidd will promote local economic growth by providing jobs and partnering with nearby businesses. Additionally, the facility will attract community events and families, creating a positive ripple effect for local businesses and services, which can contribute to a more vibrant, prosperous district.

4. **Maintaining Property Aesthetics:** The property will be developed with a focus on natural design and aesthetics, ensuring it blends with the surrounding rural or suburban landscape. Any infrastructure improvements or structures added to the property will be in harmony with the environment, preserving the overall visual appeal of the district.

By fostering a positive community environment, preserving the natural beauty of the land, and offering valuable educational services, the proposed use will not detract from, but rather enhance, the value and desirability of properties within the district.

3.

That the site is an appropriate location for the proposed use:

The proposed site is an ideal location for My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit programs for several reasons:

1. **Natural Environment:** The property's natural landscape aligns perfectly with the nature-based focus of My Village and Wildkidd programs. It provides ample outdoor space for learning, exploration, and hands-on activities in a setting that fosters a deep connection to nature. This is essential for the curriculum, which emphasizes environmental stewardship and place-based education. The rural or semi-rural setting also allows children to engage in activities like gardening, wildlife observation, and outdoor skills development in a safe and enriching environment.
2. **Space for Multi-Use Programs:** The size and layout of the property are conducive to hosting a variety of programs, including the year-round micro school, summer camps, and before and after-school programs. With sufficient space for outdoor classrooms, play areas, and nature trails, the site supports the diverse needs of the school's programs while maintaining a low impact on the surrounding area.
3. **Proximity to Community:** The property is located within reasonable proximity to the local community, making it accessible for families in the area. At the same time, it offers enough seclusion to maintain the peaceful and immersive atmosphere required for a nature-based learning environment. This balance makes the site both convenient and appropriately situated for its intended use.
4. **Zoning Compatibility:** The property's zoning allows for educational and nonprofit uses, making it compliant with local regulations. The nature-based, low-impact

design of the school fits well within the character of the area, preserving its rural or suburban qualities while providing a valuable community resource.

5. **Environmental Sustainability:** The site's natural features will be preserved and enhanced as part of the school's sustainability practices. By using eco-friendly infrastructure and maintaining the land in its natural state, the property will serve as both a functional educational space and an example of sustainable land use, which further underscores its appropriateness for the proposed use.

Given these factors, the site is an appropriate and well-suited location for My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit, providing a unique and enriching environment for children while preserving and enhancing the property's value to the community.

4.

The proposed use of the property for My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit programs will not adversely affect the health, safety, or well-being of residents or others in the area. Additionally, it will not be detrimental to the use or development of neighboring properties for the following reasons:

1. **Low-Impact Nature of the Program:** My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit programs focus on small, multi-age pods of children (no more than 10 per group), which minimizes traffic, noise, and general disruption to the surrounding area. The outdoor, nature-based approach promotes quiet, sustainable land use and encourages a peaceful learning environment that aligns with the natural surroundings.
2. **Traffic and Safety Measures:** The proposed use will not generate excessive traffic or create dangerous road conditions. The school and associated programs will operate within structured hours, effectively minimizing traffic during peak times. To further ensure the safety of participants and local residents, a comprehensive traffic management plan will be implemented during drop-off and pick-up times. This plan will include designated areas for parking and clear traffic flow directions to prevent congestion and ensure smooth, safe movement on and off the property.

In addition, to reduce traffic in the immediate area, we will establish a centralized "bus stop" near exit 17, where parents can conveniently drop off and pick up students. This stop will serve as a hub, allowing us to shuttle students to and from the school in a safe and efficient manner. We will offer three scheduled pick-up and

drop-off times at this location, significantly decreasing the number of cars accessing the school directly, thereby minimizing traffic impact on local roads and neighborhoods. This system will not only alleviate congestion but also improve overall safety for the community.

3. **Health and Environmental Safety:** The programs will adhere to all local health, safety, and environmental regulations. This includes maintaining clean and safe facilities, complying with fire and building codes, and ensuring that any outdoor learning areas are well-maintained and safe for participants. The nature-based curriculum promotes environmental stewardship, with a focus on sustainable, low-impact activities that preserve the land and protect the natural ecosystem.
4. **Respect for Neighboring Properties:** The property will be used in a way that respects the privacy and tranquility of neighboring properties. Since the educational programs primarily take place outdoors and involve quiet, nature-focused activities, there will be no excessive noise or disruption to adjacent properties. The facility will also maintain appropriate boundaries and buffering to ensure that neighboring properties are not affected by the school's operations.
5. **No Negative Impact on Property Development:** The proposed use will not hinder or detract from the development potential of neighboring properties. On the contrary, the presence of an innovative and well-regarded educational facility can enhance the desirability of the area, contributing to a positive environment for future development. The careful, thoughtful use of the land will ensure that it remains attractive and beneficial for the broader community.

By fostering a safe, sustainable, and community-focused environment, the proposed use will have a positive impact on both the residents and the neighboring properties without any detrimental effects.

5.

That the proposed use would not constitute a nuisance because of offensive noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, glare, or unsightliness:

The proposed use of the property for My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit programs will not create any nuisance related to noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, glare, or unsightliness.

1. **Noise:** The nature of the programs focuses on small, multi-age groups of children engaging in outdoor learning and exploration, with a maximum of 10 students per pod. Activities will be primarily educational, peaceful, and nature-based, with little to no loud or disruptive noise. Additionally, the property's size and layout will ensure that any noise generated from normal outdoor activities is well within acceptable limits and will not disturb neighboring properties.
2. **Vibration and Smoke:** There will be no industrial operations, large machinery, or equipment on-site that could cause vibrations or generate smoke. The programs will rely on simple, hands-on activities such as gardening, nature walks, and outdoor lessons, which do not involve any sources of vibration or smoke.
3. **Dust and Odors:** The property's use as a nature-based school and camp will prioritize maintaining the natural environment, with no large-scale construction or activities that generate excessive dust or odors. Gardening, composting, and outdoor learning will be conducted in an eco-friendly, sustainable manner, ensuring no unpleasant odors or dust are created that would affect neighboring properties.
4. **Heat and Glare:** The school and nonprofit programs will not involve activities or equipment that produce significant heat or glare. The property will be developed with a focus on maintaining its natural beauty and will not include any structures or materials that could reflect or generate excessive heat or glare that would affect the surrounding area.
5. **Unsightliness:** All buildings, outdoor areas, and structures will be designed and maintained to be aesthetically pleasing and in harmony with the natural environment. There will be no unsightly structures or storage of materials that could negatively impact the visual appeal of the property or the surrounding neighborhood. The property's design will focus on blending with the local landscape, emphasizing natural materials and sustainable practices to maintain an attractive and inviting appearance.

Overall, the proposed use is designed to be low-impact and environmentally friendly, ensuring that it will not create any nuisances or disturbances for neighboring properties or the community.

6.

That granting of the permit would be in the spirit of the ordinance:

Granting the permit for My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit programs aligns with the spirit and intent of the ordinance by promoting responsible land use, community well-being, and educational development in harmony with the local environment.

1. **Educational and Community Benefits:** The ordinance likely aims to support uses that benefit the community and enhance residents' quality of life. By creating a nature-based school and nonprofit that offers educational programs for children and families, this project directly contributes to the social, educational, and economic fabric of the area. These programs align with the spirit of the ordinance by fostering community engagement, lifelong learning, and real-world skills that benefit the entire community.
2. **Sustainable and Low-Impact Land Use:** The proposed use respects the land and the surrounding environment by promoting sustainability, nature conservation, and outdoor learning. The project will maintain and preserve the property's natural beauty and ensure that all activities are in harmony with the local ecosystem. This responsible and thoughtful use of the land aligns with the ordinance's goals of preserving the character and environmental integrity of the area.
3. **Appropriate Zoning and Land Development:** The use of the property as an educational facility and nonprofit aligns with the zoning intent of allowing community-focused, low-impact developments that serve the public interest. The proposed use complements the surrounding area without creating undue stress on infrastructure or natural resources, ensuring that development is consistent with local planning guidelines and the overall vision for the district.
4. **Promotion of Family and Youth Development:** The ordinance likely supports the development of programs that improve the lives of residents, particularly youth and families. By offering nature-based education, after-school programs, summer camps, and homeschool enrichment, My Village and Wildkidd contribute to the well-being and growth of children in a way that is consistent with the ordinance's goals of fostering positive, family-centered growth in the community.

In summary, the granting of this permit not only complies with the technical requirements of the ordinance but also embraces its underlying purpose of promoting sustainable, community-enhancing, and family-focused development.

7.

The proposed use of the property for My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit programs will not create any hazards related to traffic, hazardous materials, or other dangerous conditions.

1. **Traffic Safety:** The programs will operate with small groups of students, typically 10 per pod, which minimizes the amount of traffic to and from the site. Traffic will be spread out during structured drop-off and pick-up times, reducing the likelihood of congestion or unsafe conditions on surrounding roads. Additionally, traffic management plans, such as designated parking areas and clear signage, will ensure smooth and safe entry and exit to the property. The location is also well-suited for the expected volume of vehicles, and any increase in traffic will be minimal compared to the existing road capacity.
2. **No Use of Hazardous Materials:** The nature-based educational programs do not involve the use, storage, or disposal of any hazardous materials. Activities will be centered around outdoor learning, gardening, and real-life skills, all of which are eco-friendly and safe. There will be no industrial processes or chemicals that could pose a risk to students, staff, or the surrounding community. All materials used for educational purposes will be non-toxic and environmentally sustainable.
3. **Safe Environment:** The property will be designed and maintained with the highest safety standards in mind. This includes ensuring that outdoor areas are free of hazards, such as uneven terrain, and that structures and facilities comply with all health and safety regulations. Regular inspections and maintenance will be carried out to ensure the site remains a safe environment for children, staff, and visitors.
4. **Emergency Preparedness:** The school and nonprofit programs will have safety protocols in place, including emergency evacuation plans, first aid resources, and trained staff to handle any potential incidents. The property's design will include safe access for emergency vehicles and will comply with all fire safety and building codes to ensure the well-being of everyone on-site.

Given these measures, the proposed use of the property does not pose any hazards to traffic, involve dangerous materials, or create unsafe conditions for the community. It will operate safely and responsibly in compliance with all local and state regulations.

TOWN OF CANTERBURY, NH
ABUTTERS FORM

Instructions: Please indicate the name and mailing address of all abutters to the property which shall be reviewed by the Zoning Board. "Abutter" means any person whose property is located in New Hampshire and adjoins or is directly across the street or stream from the land under consideration by the local land use board. For purposes of receiving testimony only, and not for purposes of notification, the term "abutter" shall include any person who is able to demonstrate that his land will be directly affected by the proposal under consideration. For purposes of receipt of notification by a municipality of a local land use board hearing, in the case of an abutting property being under a condominium or other collective form of ownership, the term abutter means the officers of the collective or association, as defined in RSA 356-B:3, XXIII. Please also include the names of all Attorneys, Engineers, Surveyors, Planners, or Architects whose stamp appears on the plat to be submitted to the Board for review and the owner of the property on the plat. **PLEASE MAKE ADDITIONAL COPIES OF THIS FORM AS NECESSARY.**

** See labels*

Name: Okey Brian W.
Map / Lot: 257/012
Street: 247 Merrill Rd
City: Canterbury
State/Zip: NH 03224

Name: Martinez, Mercedes
Map / Lot: _____
Street: 51 Peterson Circle
City: Concord
State/Zip: NH 03303

Name: Entwistle, Timothy W.
Map / Lot: 258/011
Street: 146 New Rd
City: Canterbury
State/Zip: NH 03224

Name: Hauptman Mary Trustee
Map / Lot: 257/014
Street: 233 Merrill Rd
City: Canterbury
State/Zip: NH 03224

Name: Bowman, David & Susan
Map / Lot: 258/017
Street: 135 New Rd
City: Canterbury
State/Zip: NH 03224

Name: Biswert Beryl
Map / Lot: 258/015
Street: 161 New Rd
City: Canterbury
State/Zip: NH 03224

Name: Stonebraker, Benjamin
Map / Lot: 258/016
Street: 141 New Rd
City: Canterbury
State/Zip: NH 03224

Name: Audet, Louis
Map / Lot: 258/010
Street: 140 New Rd
City: Canterbury
State/Zip: NH 03224

Name: _____
Map / Lot: _____
Street: _____
City: _____
State/Zip: _____

Name: _____
Map / Lot: _____
Street: _____
City: _____
State/Zip: _____

11/14/2024

To the members of the Canterbury Zoning Board,

We, Ben and Kelley Stonebraker, are currently under contract with Mercedes Martinez and Jamie Gould for the transfer of our property at 141 New Road. Such transfer to take place on or before November 22, 2024.

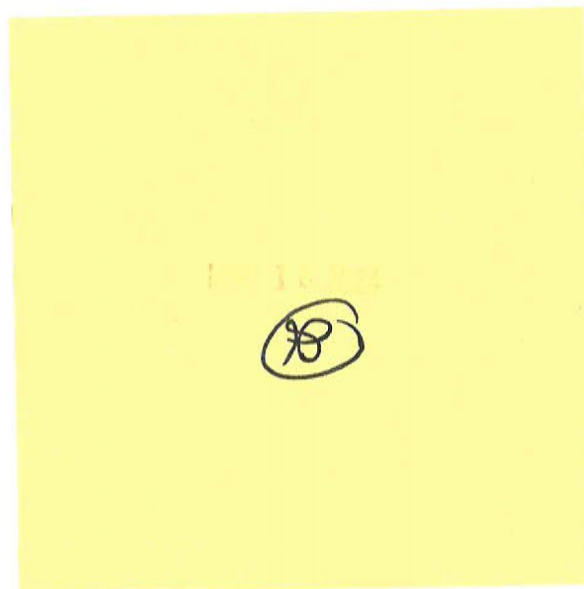
We hereby authorize Mercedes Martinez and Jamie Gould to request and/or receive approvals at this time from the Canterbury Zoning Board until such transfer takes place. Should the transfer not occur on or before November 22, 2024, and/or should the parties fall out of contract, such authority is automatically revoked.

We believe the mission of the Forest School as it was described to us by Mercedes embraces the legacy of the property and agrees with the ethos of Canterbury. We would like to support Mercedes and Jamie if we can in matters before the Zoning Board.

Kind regards,

Ben and Kelley Stonebraker



Board of Adjustment

Canterbury, NH

Minutes of Hearing

21 November 2024

Case No. 2024-7 Special Exception

Present were: Chairman Jim Wieck, Web Stout, Christopher Evans, Calvin Todd, Sean O'Brien and Alternates Brendan O'Donnell and Scott Herrick.

Also present were abutters Beryl Boivert and Louis Audet, abutters.

Chairman Wieck advised those present **Mercedes Martinez Gould** is seeking a special exception as regards property located at 141 New Road, Tax Map 258, Lot 016 located in the rural zone. The proposed use states "to be used as a multi-purpose educational facility under the My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit organizations". The application references Article 5, Section 3-C. He gave a detailed description as to the conduct of the hearing procedure.

Ms. Martinez Gould read her six-page narrative describing her intentions fully (available in the public file). Chairman Wieck asked Ms. Martinez Gould to read aloud her responses to the seven criteria needed to be met to secure a special exception which she did (avail in the public file). She added she has curriculum information and the binder from the seller of the property if the Board is interested in seeing those. Chairman Wieck asked if she has plans for the use of the house/building. The school is going to be an outside learning classroom experience as much as possible. The house will serve as a place to teach certain lessons like cooking. The living room will be a library and a place to store educational materials. The majority of learning would be outdoor classrooms. They would hope to build one outdoor classroom that would be covered...I call it a tree house; it is not really a tree house but a raised building, a small classroom for when it rains or it's too windy or the weather conditions are too difficult to be outside. The majority of the time would be gardening, learning about the trees around you and playing. There is a stream that goes by, focusing on doing schoolwork outside in an outdoor setting where we set up comfortable seating with logs. Chairman Wieck asked if they have any plans developed for this out building. She advised she is working currently to get them, but there is nothing in stone. We sign on the property tomorrow. They have not wanted to ask to be on the property a lot and having people come and doing drawings and seeing the site to tell me what I can do. So, no, not at the current time, but I spoke with the gentleman who I believe is about the building permit to get a better understanding of what would be required when it comes time that I want to build something. The application process is what I would be looking at to do that. He went on....the area that the children would be in, can that be observed from surrounding properties and homes. She replied, the majority of it, no. Maybe like passing by the majority of it was like behind the house. There are a lot of trees, you can see people driving in and dropping their kids off and maybe sometime out there we plan to have a flag out front so we would do like a morning gathering at the flag. But the majority of our learning will be behind the house in the woods on the property. He asked if she has any plans showing the parking, the hub you mentioned for people being dropped off. She advised she has spoken briefly with someone who manages exit 17 Park and Ride. Near exit 17 is where I'd like the

hub to be, close to the highway. I don't know if I can do it in the Park and Ride, if I can do it in a parking lot, one of the buildings there. The goal is to get as many people as possible to take the bus, connected to do some kind of day long appointments, a parent would come to the school to pick them up. Chairman Wieck asked for clarification your intention is to have up to 30 students at once. In the first year perhaps fewer to begin with but 30 would be the maximum number. We would like to host community events, like a community day once a year, a public open house for people to come see and learn about the school grounds, if someone has a skill to come and offer a class to the students whether an 8-week course or a one-time afternoon course for a couple of hours. Chairman Wieck asked her to put a number on the most number of people might be on the property on a given day or event. She replied what she envisions is doing a 9-2 event where people can come and stop by, and she does not know how much people would want to come and get involved like that. Web asked do you mean more like an open house? Yes. Chairman Wieck asked once a year? As of right now what she envisions in her plan, yes. Having like once a year, a community event where people can come and look for things they could volunteer with or come teach a skill. Chairman Wieck asked about the age range. They are hoping to have K-12. In their high school age program, she would like to implement vocational classes and have the students make up a list of things they are interested in. So, say they are interested in mechanics, plumbing and roofing, I would look within the community and businesses to see if we could get them connected to do some kind of day long, follow along so they could see if they are interested in that field for when they graduate. Web asked would it be a course in that, like teaching the fundamentals...she replied we are kind of hoping to get the community involved to create courses like that. She does not have people actively with a schedule actually created yet, but she is hoping she can get this going and get connected with the community and the people around us that have the skills that the students want to learn about.

Chris asked if he understands about the location she is purchasing it is currently in a single family home use and there is no intention of occupying that....your intention is to use it exclusively.... They will initially move in and be on property getting the place ready to host the school, making the play and leaning areas, going through the Department of Education, getting everything approved and then we would transfer from our home....our current home we plan on putting on Airbnb until we can move out of this home, till the school is up and going. And at that point it will be a school, and we will move back to our home. Chairman Wieck asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition. No one spoke. He asked if anyone wished to speak in favor. Beryl Boivert spoke saying she has concerns about the road. It is not a heavily trafficked road. She is not opposed to the school but is more concerned about what traffic would do during mud season. In ice it becomes treacherous, especially the black ice that forms. She is also concerned about abutters and gun use around the property. There is a lot of shooting and hunters. One of the abutters actually has a shooting range, she just wants them to be aware. Beryl said she was curious if they are applying for a 501.C.3 status so they have a tax ID number? It might be owned by you now, but might eventually be transferred to a 501.C.3? They are buying the property in their name, not the school's name. Ms. Martinez Gould explained the non-profit is Wildkidds; it assists as a partnership to help bring programs to the school and a summer camp program. The school is for profit.

Louis Audet spoke saying he does not believe it's a vote thing. He needs more information before he can voice concerns about it. Chairman Wieck asked if the applicant had further comments for

the Board. She did not. He asked for additional questions from the Board. Web asked how many employees. Employees would be three and then herself. If they could reach capacity one teacher per pod of ten students would be assigned that way. Their goal is to get ten students for the first year. Chaiman Wieck noted he thinks the special exception is for the operation of a school which is allowed in that zone. Brendan noted you said you'd be moving in, but ideally you would be moving out once the school is running, so is the idea if there was inclement weather or something when children can't be outside all day, the house would be big enough to fit all, a maximum of 30 students in it? Mr. Martinez responded if for some reason the outbuilding isn't finished, yes. He asked about the after-school program, do you have a specific time range you are seeking? Yes, 3 to 6 pm. If they had ample parents requesting a certain earlier time, if the school bus would prefer to drop off at 2:30 or a 6:15 pick up was needed, we would try to accommodate it. But in our plan, it is 3 to 6. Brendan asked so normal school hours are 9-3. Yes. Summer camp they would look to have 30 students as well as the school. Brendan noted that as far as the summer camp goes there is a separate category in the zoning ordinance for recreational facilities as opposed to schools. If you are calling it summer camp, are you envisioning educational camp with school activities through the summer where they are doing school things or more of a summer camp where they are doing more traditional summer camp stuff.... water features and the like. Ms. Martinez Gould responded they mean like a nature/education summer camp, but it would be a summer camp, it wouldn't be a separate enrollment from the school, and it would be open to the public during the summertime, like if public school students came. She is envisioning a core group of students learning about gardening, canning and preserving, food lessons. We have like an 8-week course of what each week would focus on for the summer program. Calvin asked how many weeks they plan to run the school program. The school would comply with the Department of Education state requirements. Essentially, the school system is 40 weeks. It is spread out with holidays and days off, some three-day weeks, but it is essentially a 40-week curriculum. It would essentially follow the public school system schedule. Chris, this is a state requirement. They have to meet for so many hours and I have to keep track of absences and report all of that to the state. The building would have to be approved by the fire department. If this got approved, the department would have requirements for the building to be approved and the areas that they are learning, be sure that they are safe and that our curriculum meets the state requirements, that our hours meet the state requirements. Brendan asked what their plans are if their plans for offsite pick ups and drop offs at private property or the Park and Ride do not work out. Do you have alternative plans? He explained the Board of Adjustment approval is for the land use of a certain thing. We cannot really tie into offsite use. This Board can only grant specific land uses. They do not have a second set location as of now. The back up plan for that would be to come to the community and see can we meet at the library or working with the town to figure out how we can do this to keep the impact of the road down. Brendan asked if you had everyone dropped off and picked up on the property, could the property accommodate that traffic. Could the road accommodate that traffic? Ms. Martinez Gould replied, I would say yes. I don't know that everybody would agree with me. I don't see why not. I am familiar with driving on back roads and dirt roads throughout the seasons, but I know that roads change over time. She feels that if you were to commit to enrolling your students in a program like this, that is just part of the experience and it's not for everybody. Chris asked who the primary regulatory body is for starting any kind of organization such as a school. The Department of Education. She had to file an LLC with the state, but because it was having to do with education before they would

even approve it I had to have I had to have a special meeting, had to get a special letter from the Department of Education overruling what I wanted to do. It's not approval from them, they go over it and say yes we are going to work with this person to create something.....Chris interjected asking and where are you in this process? She responded that once I nail down a property, I can present my by-laws and the curriculum and the property to the department and they will go over it and they approve that. Then they will come out and I must set up fire inspections and different and various inspections of the property. Chris asked if it's a federal office that is state managed. Do I have that correct; it's actually managed by the State of New Hampshire. Brendan advised the State of New Hampshire Department of Education. There is a federal one and a state one. Chairman Wieck asked for those in opposition to speak and a caution to address any comments to the Board and anything new that has not been said before. No one spoke. He asked if anyone wished to speak in favor. Beryl Boisvert spoke, reminding the Board the Canterbury Fair directs traffic on New Road one day a year. Chris noted, the last Saturday in July each year. Chairman Wieck asked if there were any other questions from the Board. Scott made a comment (inaudible). Chairman Wieck closed the testimony portion of the hearing at 8:10 PM.

Calvin commented 30 students, 30 cars going back and forth every day, that's a tough road to be on. He would want to know what Town Road Agent John O'Connor thinks about driving on that road and that far in. Chairman Wieck added also concern about cars coming in and out. You cannot guarantee there is not a bus as an option for people to drop off anywhere, which people are generally inclined to do. You've got a lot of cars coming in and out and we have no plans to show how traffic would be managed on the property. Then there is the concern for the road. Also concerns there are no fixed plans about where the building is, what the outbuilding will be like, how does that change the character of the area. Calvin noted it is about 20+ acres. He noted the property has cliffs and is near a swamp, so it has potential. Chairman Wieck replied it could work, but do we have enough information to put in the record. Brendan noted he heard for profit so, regardless it feels like they need a commercial site plan, traffic, access, parking, a driveway, whether New Road would need regrading. Basically with all of the students and all of the staff going there....this land could have a special exception allowed as a use, but this use sort of assumes there are drop off spots which we can't control in any way. Calvin asked doesn't some of that come in during site plan review. Brendan some of it yes, but just in terms of the fire code, what's the building capacity, do they have enough egress for that. My understanding is we are looking at just the use of something that could occur on this property. Site plan might find the land is not big enough for more than 20-25 students. Chairman Wieck said he understands that we are required to consider whether or not there is a hazard in the traffic. We haven't sufficient information to determine that. Chris noted there certainly is no testimony from abutters that it would present a problem. Brendan noted the road itself is dirt and has issues in the spring. Chris added he would think a school and an environment of this type is going to attract a certain type of person. It's not going to be 30 cars.....Chairman Wieck stated it's 30 students plus teachers, you are talking something that's almost larger than a third of CES (Canterbury Elementary School) on a residential setting. Is that appropriate, is it going to change the character of the neighborhood. Chris spoke saying I think this type of school is so important that I would strongly support it almost to any end. Chairman Wieck said we can't do that....we have to follow....Chris interjected, I understand, but you were saying that the only real hang up is the traffic, is the road. Chairman Wieck restated his

concerns about incoming and outgoing traffic to the property as well as changing the character of the neighborhood having a school with 30 children and teachers all functioning all outside all the time or nearly all the time, how does that change the character of the neighborhood. I don't know if we have enough information provided to.....Chris asked what would we need more to thoughtfully consider this. Chairman Wieck stated a site plan showing us there is adequate distance between where the activities will be held and the opening where the neighbors are, some sort of understanding.....Chris responded so address the site itself and if they could demonstrate the building and property is big enough. Chairman Wieck agreed all this is concept, we need something more concrete. Chris asked could we put something together to help them come back to us. Scott noted there are seasons when New Road is impassable. Brendan concurred the site plan must show how specifically the land will be used and how it is very important to get input from the Town Road Agent. Chris asked could the school close during the mud season. Chairman Wieck stated it sounds like we are looking for a continuance. Brendan noted other bigger issues will be addressed at site plan review. Web wondered what signage would look like.

Chairman Wieck made a motion in the case of Case No. 2024-7, a request for a special exception, that the Board continue the hearing so that the applicant can provide additional information to address concerns of the Board including:

1. A site plan showing how the land would be used, specific areas for various outdoor activities, including parking and how the parking would be managed on the property safely so the number of vehicles that might come to the property to park or safely offload or pick up.
2. Input from the Town Road Agent relative to the ability for New Road to be able to handle that kind of traffic, specifically looking at seasons of the year when the road condition will be poor, mud season.
3. Also provide information on buffers, landscape, so we can understand how the proposed use might affect neighboring properties, to that same end, distance to residential structures from the areas that are planned for use by the school.
4. And signage, a plan that you may plan on.

Web seconded the motion. The Board vote was a unanimous decision by the five regular voting members present to **CONTINUE** this hearing until Wednesday, **22 January 2025 at 7 PM in the Meeting House**. The Board voted to approve the minutes of 2024-5 with a correction made to the spelling of Ken Folsom's name.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Carlson, Clerk
Board of Adjustment

Good evening, members of the board and community. My name is Mercedes, and I'm here to request your approval to change the use of 141 NEW ROAD to operate My Village, a micro-school designed to serve our community in a unique and impactful way.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this proposal. My Village is not just a project—it's a personal mission inspired by my role as a parent. As a mom of four, I quickly realized that the traditional educational options available didn't fully align with the vision I had for my children's education. While there are local schools that share some of our values, I felt called to create a place that fully reflects what I imagined for my kids and for other families looking for an alternative approach to education.

My Village is that place—a school that brings families together, embraces nature, and equips children with the skills they need to thrive in the real world.

About My Village

My Village is a micro-school concept rooted in the principles of nature, community, and real-life skills. It offers small, multi-age pods of up to 10 students, allowing for personalized, hands-on learning. The program is designed to meet each child where they are and nurture their growth academically, socially, and emotionally.

Our curriculum combines core academics with practical, real-world skills like gardening, cooking, and financial literacy. Students also

spend significant time outdoors, learning about local ecosystems and developing a deeper connection to the environment.

Our mission is simple: to foster a love of learning while preparing children for success in the real world. At the heart of this mission is a commitment to community, both in how we engage with local families and how we use the talents and resources within our town to enrich the educational experience.

Expanded Offerings to the Community

While My Village is a school, it's also designed to benefit the broader community. In addition to serving our enrolled students, we will provide several programs that are open to the public:

- **Before and After School Program:** This program will provide safe and enriching care for students outside of traditional school hours. It will be open to families throughout the community, not just those enrolled in My Village.
- **Partnership with WILDKIDD:** We are collaborating with WILDKIDD, a nonprofit with a mission to connect kids to nature. We are creating nature-based summer camps and enrichment classes for local homeschool families. These programs focus on outdoor education, leadership development, and real-world skills.
- **Future Public School Partnerships:** One of our long-term goals is to collaborate with local public schools to offer enrichment classes. These classes will help students gain hands-on experience with skills like gardening, carpentry, and

environmental stewardship—skills that are often missing from traditional education.

These programs are designed to make My Village accessible to more families, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to benefit from what we offer.

Proposed Land Use

I am seeking approval to use 141 NEW ROAD as the first site for My Village. We plan to use the property.....

- **Three Pods:** The site will host up to three pods of 10 students each, grouped by age. These small class sizes allow for highly personalized learning. (6-10, 11-14, 15-18)
- **Outdoor Spaces:** A significant portion of the property will be dedicated to outdoor classrooms, gardens, and play areas to maximize hands-on, experiential learning.
- **Community Programs:** The space will also be used for our before and after school care, enrichment classes, and summer camps.

Every aspect of the site's design and operation will comply with zoning, safety, and environmental requirements.

Benefits to the Community

Approving this project will bring significant benefits to our town:

A Unique Education Option: My Village offers families an alternative to traditional schools, with a small, personalized environment that prioritizes each child's individual needs.

Increased Accessibility: Programs like before and after school care, summer camps, and public school partnerships will allow a wide range of families to benefit from our offerings.

Economic Impact: My Village will create local jobs for educators and staff while supporting partnerships with local businesses and organizations.

Community Engagement: We plan to host events, workshops, and enrichment classes that bring residents together and promote lifelong learning.

Addressing Potential Concerns

I understand there may be concerns about how this project could impact the surrounding area, and I want to address those proactively:

- **Traffic and Parking:** Our bus stop plan will minimize road traffic and provide an organized, safe drop-off point for students. We also plan to stagger drop-off and pick-up times to help reduce congestion.
- **Noise Levels:** With only 30 students on-site and scheduled outdoor activity times, noise will be minimal. We also plan to maintain natural sound barriers on the property.

- **Compliance with Regulations:** The site will meet all zoning, fire safety, and health inspection requirements. Outdoor areas will be designed to preserve the natural landscape and minimize environmental impact.

Partnership with WILDKIDD

Our collaboration with WILDKIDD further enhances the impact My Village will have on our community. Through this partnership, we will:

- Offer nature-based summer camps open to all children, connecting kids with the outdoors and teaching critical life skills.
- Provide enrichment classes for homeschool families, with a focus on leadership, nature education, and practical skills.
- Partner with public schools to create enrichment programs that bring outdoor and real-life learning into traditional classrooms.

These programs will ensure that more children and families have access to high-quality, nature-based education.

Closing Statement

In closing, My Village represents an opportunity to bring something truly special to our community:

- A school that prioritizes connection to nature, real-life skills, and community engagement.

- Programs that support families throughout the town, not just those enrolled.
- A commitment to fostering the next generation of leaders, learners, and problem-solvers.

This proposal is deeply personal to me because it's not just about my children—it's about creating opportunities for every child in this community to thrive. I respectfully ask for your approval to move forward with this project, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Town of Canterbury, NH
Zoning Board of Adjustment
Date: 2025 January 22
Location: Meeting House
Case No. 2024-7 Special Exception Continued Hearing

Board Members Present: Jim Wieck (Chair), Christopher Evans, Calvin Todd, Sean O'Brien, Scott Herrick (Alternate)

Board Members Absent: Web Stout, Brendan O'Donnell (Alternate)

Others Present: Mercedes Martinez-Gould, Jamie Gould, Tim Entwistle, Evan Hauptman, Mary Hauptman, Beryl Boisvert, Brittany Courchesne, Dan Bowman, Kevin Harriman, Louis Audet, Maureen Santanello, John Santanello, Cathy Lucas

1. The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m.
2. Chris Evans made a motion to approve the minutes for the ZBA meeting on November 21, 2024 for Case No. 2024-7. Sean O'Brien seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
3. Continued Hearing for Case No. 2024-7 Special Exception
 - a. Mercedes Martinez-Gould is seeking a special exception as regards property located at 141 New Road, Tax Map 258, Lot 016 located in the rural zone. The proposed use states "to be used as a multi-purpose educational facility under the My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit organizations". The application references Article 5, Section 3-C.
 - b. The first hearing for this case was on 11/21/2024. At the end of that meeting, the Board decided to continue the hearing so that the applicant could provide additional information to address concerns of the Board.
 - c. Chairman Wieck read aloud the additional information that was asked for:
 1. A site plan showing how the land would be used, specific areas for various outdoor activities, including parking and how the parking would be managed on the property safely so the number of vehicles that might come to the property to park or safely offload or pick up.
 2. Input from the Town Road Agent relative to the ability for New Road to be able to handle that kind of traffic, specifically looking at seasons of the year when the road condition will be poor, mud season.
 3. Also provide information on buffers, landscape, so we can understand how the proposed use might affect neighboring properties, to that same end, distance to residential structures from the areas that are planned for use by the school.
 4. And signage, a plan that you may plan on.
 - d. Chairman Wieck read aloud a letter received from Road Agent John O'Connor.

"Canterbury Road Agent, John O'Connor met with applicant that is seeking a Special Exception for a Multi-Purpose educational facility at 141 New Rd. today.

The applicant asked the Road Agent if he felt that there were any concerns with the school operating at the address particularly with the use of the road for 20 or so students.

The Road Agent feels that there would be no significant impact to the road with this additional traffic. The road is a public-school bus route and has to be maintained for this purpose as well as the regular residential traffic."
 - e. Chairman Wieck asked the applicant to address the additional information that was asked for.
 - i. Ms. Gould began reviewing documentation she brought with her. She had several satellite photos of the property with diagrams showing where the existing trails are and where the

- classroom, yurt, and parking spaces would go. There were also markers showing the distance between the classroom and the homes at 140 and 135 New Road.
- ii. She showed a picture of the woods and discussed how the land has natural barriers between the proposed classroom structure and neighbors, and the garden area and side by side trails were already established by the previous owners.
 - iii. Chairman Wieck reiterated that the Board was looking for a site plan. The provided documentation was passed around to the Board.
 - iv. There was discussion about exactly how far structures were from the road and other properties. The diagrams were not detailed enough to show most of the distances asked for. Some people tried figuring it out on their phones.
 - v. They intend to have 30 kids at the school, 4 of which would be their own. They expect about 20 cars a day since many families have multiple children.
 - vi. The diagram showed a parking area with six spots and a turnabout. Ms. Gould said they do not intend to pave.
 - vii. Ms. Gould passed around a picture of what they would like their sign to look like. She noted that they still need to figure out what size of sign would be allowed.
- f. The documents brought by Ms. Gould were passed around to the others present and a short break was taken so everyone could review the documentation.
- g. Chairman Wieck asked if anyone present wanted to speak in favor of granting the special exception.
- i. Beryl Boisvert (161 New Road)
 - 1. Ms. Boisvert is an abutter. She is in favor of the school. She was happy to hear that the Road Agent approved the road for this use.
 - ii. Brittany Courchesne
 - 1. Ms. Courchesne is a friend of the Goulds and a teacher in Concord. She spoke about how she supports their efforts to make this school and the positives of alternative education options.
- h. Chairman Wieck asked if anyone present wanted to speak against granting the special exception.
- i. Tim Entwistle (146 New Road)
 - 1. Mr. Entwistle is an abutter. He is not opposed to the idea of the school, but does not want it at this location. He presented a petition signed by 15 other abutters who are also opposed.
 - 2. He expressed concerns about the increased traffic. He said that when the Canterbury Fair uses that road, there are about 200 cars that go by and he has to wash his windows after. He explained that New Road is often used for recreation (e.g. running, walking, horseback riding), and additional traffic poses a safety concern.
 - 3. He thinks that the school would mostly benefit people outside of the neighborhood and it would not benefit the Town because of the road repairs that would need to be done.
 - 4. He quoted the new Plan For Tomorrow and said this project goes against the idea of preserving the residential character of the neighborhood and reducing sprawl into rural areas.
 - 5. He posited that this would negatively affect property values and presented a study from Ohio in 2012 that showed doubling traffic can reduce house prices by 2.1%.
 - 6. The DOT recorded the number of crossings at the end of New Road and found 310 cars passed a day. Mr. Entwistle believes that this will nearly double the road use per day.
 - 7. Mr. Entwistle said that he moved to this property for peace and quiet and so did the other neighbors he spoke with. He quoted the Zoning Ordinance's definition of the Rural

District and explained how he believes introducing this commercial business to the area is against the spirit of the ordinance.

- ii. Louis Audet (140 New Road)
 - 1. Mr. Audet is an abutter. He would like the Gould's to move in as a family, but does not want them to open a school.
- iii. Dan Bowman (135 New Road)
 - 1. Mr. Bowman is an abutter. He supports the idea of the school, but does not support this location.
 - 2. He is concerned about the implications of being in/near a school zone. He uses guns and worries that a school could impact the use of his property.
 - 3. He is also worried that the school will grow and is concerned about the noise from that many children.
- iv. Cathy Lucas (120 New Road)
 - 1. Ms. Lucas is in favor of the family moving in, but does not want the school.
 - 2. She expressed concern about the safety of the road during mud season. She said the road often gets bad enough to stop a car or cause a car to slide off the side.
 - 3. She also was concerned about the safety of her dogs when she walks them on the road and the nuisance it would be to have them barking at all the cars going by.
- v. Kevin Harriman (166 New Road)
 - 1. Mr. Harriman explained that he is also opposed to the school because of the condition of the road during mud season. He described a sharp curve that is not wide enough for two cars to go in opposite directions. He believes increased traffic and people unfamiliar with the road would increase the likelihood of an accident there.
 - 2. Mr. Bowman added that he saw a plow truck in the ditch at that corner this year.
- vi. Evan Hauptman (233 Morrill Road)
 - 1. Mr. Hauptman is an abutter. He did not speak against or in favor, but he did ask how far they intend to keep from the property line. He hunts on his property and wants to make sure this won't impede that.
 - 2. The only new structure they intend to build is the treehouse/classroom. That will be at least a few hundred feet from the property line.
- i. Chairman Wieck asked the applicant if they had any additional comments.
 - i. Ms. Gould explained that they plan to offer a bus service to Exit 17 to reduce the amount of traffic on New Road. They don't plan to ever have more than 30 students and 4 would be their own children.
- j. Chairman Wieck closed the hearing. The Board then deliberated.
 - i. Mr. Todd agreed with the concerns about the traffic, but doesn't think that 20 kids in a heavily wooded lot would cause much of a noise issue. He agreed that having alternate educational sources would be good for the community.
 - ii. Chairman Wieck was concerned about the affects on the neighboring properties, that an actual site plan wasn't provided, the side by side trails weren't discussed in the previous hearing, the Road Agent commented but there are contradictory opinions in the room, and a picture of trees doesn't really answer their request for details about natural buffers.
 - iii. Mr. O'Brien agreed that noise wouldn't likely be an issue, but was concerned about the condition of the road and the effect this could have on property values.
 - iv. Mr. Todd wanted more data about how this could affect property values; schools often raise values, but if a school prevents you from using the property for why you bought it (e.g. hunting), that would be a problem.

- v. Mr. Evans thought that even though a site plan hadn't been presented, they did bring enough information to give the Board a good idea about what they want to do. Mr. Wieck disagreed and expressed worries about approving something that isn't sufficiently documented.
- vi. Mr. Evans felt that getting approval from the Road Agent was enough to not worry about the roads. There was discussion about how bad a dirt road can get in mud season.
- vii. Chairman Wieck felt that if the problem is insufficient information, the Board could ask for another continuation. However, if the issue is that there is something fundamentally wrong with the proposed used, then they should vote to deny tonight.
- viii. The Board discussed potentially decreasing the maximum number of students, but there was not sufficient reason to do so.
- ix. There was further discussion about if this would decrease or increase property values. More traffic, a poorly maintained road, and increased noise could hurt values, but the Road Agent says the road can take it and that number of children in the woods may not cause a lot of noise. A school may or may not decrease the pool of buyers for neighboring homes.
- x. Chairman Wieck explained that the Zoning Ordinance does allow for educational facilities in the Rural District so there would need to be something specific about this proposal to justify denying it.
- xi. Mr. Evans and Mr. Todd argued that this was a uniquely good location for a nature-based school and valued the Road Agent's assessment that the road was good enough.
- xii. There was discussion about the side by side trail. It was there before the Gould's bought the property. Ms. Gould said that they only intend to use it to get to the kids in an emergency.
- xiii. Mr. Herrick questioned how the Board could know if the woods would be enough of a buffer for the noise. Mr. Todd pointed out that the same noise issue exists for guns. Both hunting and children playing are fair uses of property.
- xiv. There was more discussion about the safety of the roads. The Board decided they would like more details from the Road Agent about why the extra traffic wouldn't affect safety.
- xv. The board discussed what restrictions a school zone could place on neighboring properties. They did not know and could not accept comments from anyone in the room to find out.
- xvi. The board discussed having the applicant consult with the Land Use Administrator to learn what a site plan is so they could come back with complete information. They also discussed sending the applicant to the Planning Board for a site plan pre-conceptual meeting, but the meeting schedule likely wouldn't permit that.
- xvii. Chairman Wieck made a motion in Case No. 2024-7 Special Exception, that the Board continue the hearing so that the applicant can provide additional information to address the concerns of the Board including:
 - 1. A site plan showing how the land would be used, specific areas for various outdoor activities, including parking and how the parking would be managed on the property safely so the number of vehicles that might come to the property to park or safely offload or pick up. The site plan should also include information on buffers, landscape, and distance to residential structures from the areas that are planned for use by the school.
 - 2. Information on how the presence of a school could impact neighboring property owners. (i.e. Would there be a school zone and if so, what does that mean?)
 - 3. Additional information from the Road Agent about the sharp curve on the road, the condition of the road during mud season, and how that could affect operation of passenger cars.
- xviii. Mr. Evans seconded the motion. All in favor by roll call, motion carried. Mr. Herrick did not vote as he is an alternate.

xix. This hearing will be continued at the next Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting on Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 7 p.m. in the Meeting House.

xx. The Board explained to the applicants more about what a site plan is. Kal told them to come see the Land Use Administrator tomorrow.

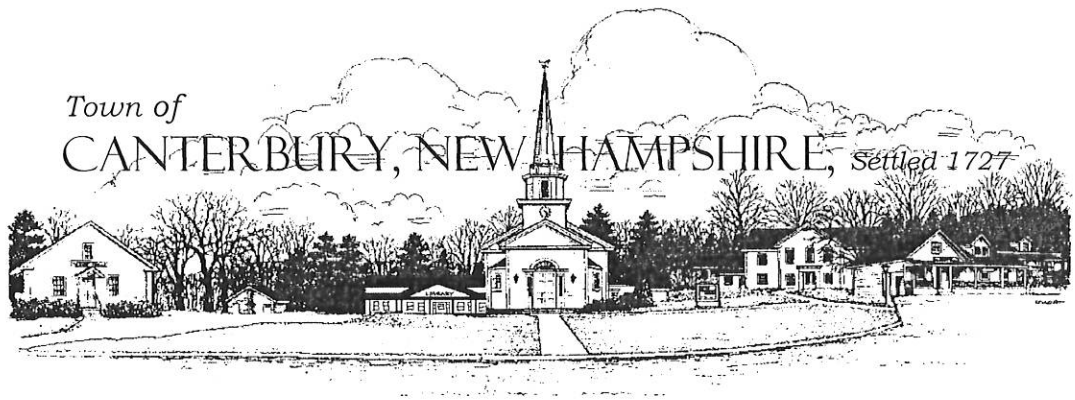
4. Approval of Previous Minutes continued

- a. Sean O'Brien made a motion to approve the minutes for the ZBA meeting on May 8, 2024 for Case No. 2024-2. Chris Evans seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- b. Chris Evans made a motion to approve the minutes for the ZBA meeting on July 24, 2024. Calvin Todd seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- c. Chris Evans made a motion to approve the minutes for the ZBA meeting on November 21, 2024 for Case No. 2024-6. Calvin Todd seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- d. Chris Evans made a motion to approve the minutes for the ZBA meeting on December 11, 2024 for Case No. 2024-5. Calvin Todd seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

5. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Kathleen McKay, Administrative Assistant



January 22, 2025

Canterbury Road Agent, John O'Connor met with applicant that is seeking a Special Exception for a "Multi-Purpose educational facility at 141 New Rd. today.

The applicant asked the Road Agent if he felt that there were any concerns with the school operating at the address particularly with the use of the road for 20 or so students.

The Road Agent feels that there would be no significant impact to the road with this additional traffic. The road is a public-school bus route and has to be maintained for this purpose as well as the regular residential traffic.

John O'Connor, Road Agent

**Board of Adjustment
Canterbury, NH
Notice of Continued Hearing**

Case No. 2024-7 Special Exception

You are hereby notified that a **CONTINUED HEARING** will
be held

22 January 2025

at 7 pm in the Meeting House in the Town Center regarding a
request by **Mercedes Martinez-Gould and Jamie Gould**.

The application involves Tax Map 258, Lot 016 located at 141
New Road. It is located in the rural zone. The proposed use
states” to be used as a multi-purpose educational facility under
the My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit
organizations”. The application references Article 5, Section 3-
C.

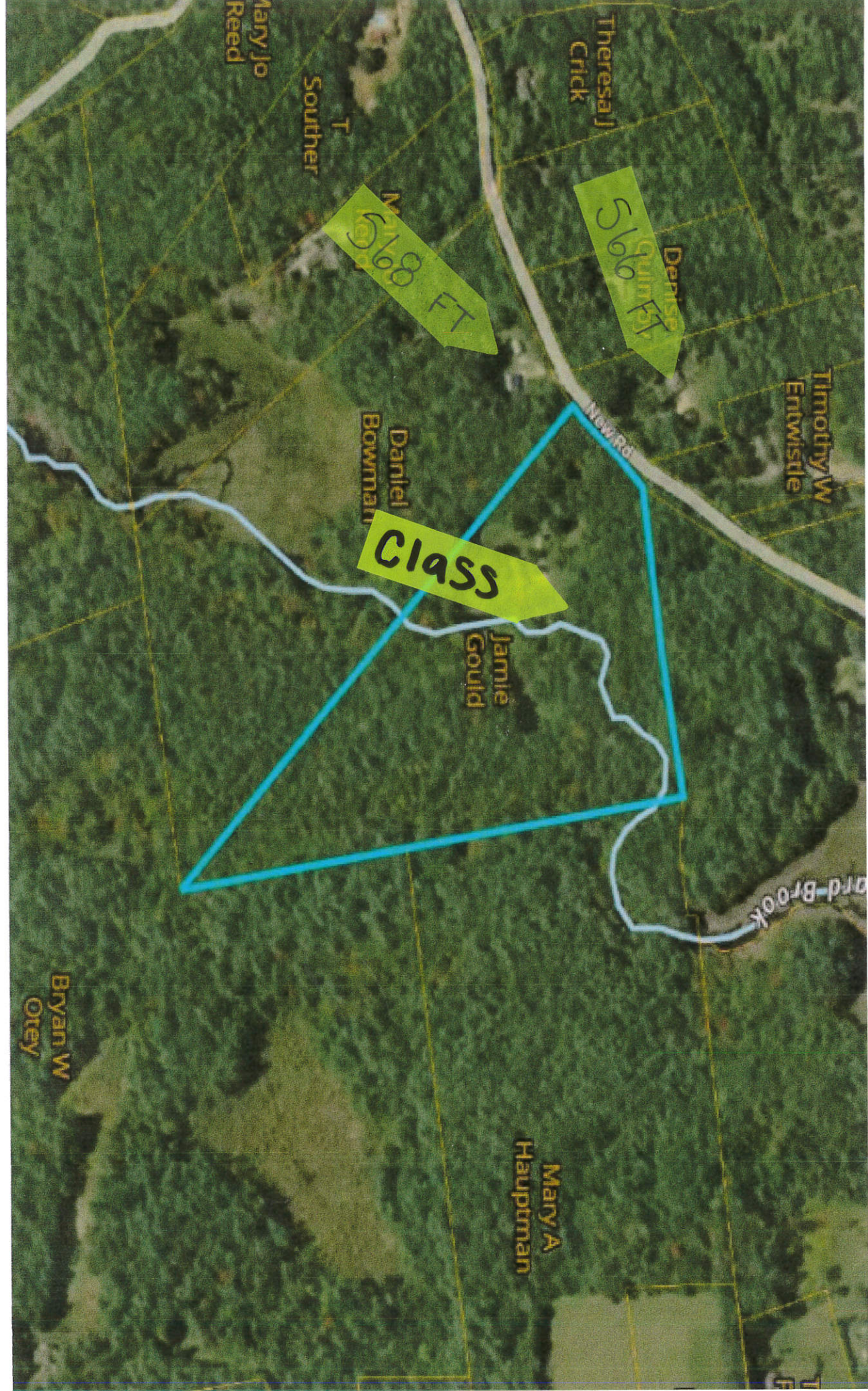
You are invited to appear in person or by agent or counsel and
state the reasons why the request should or should not be
granted.

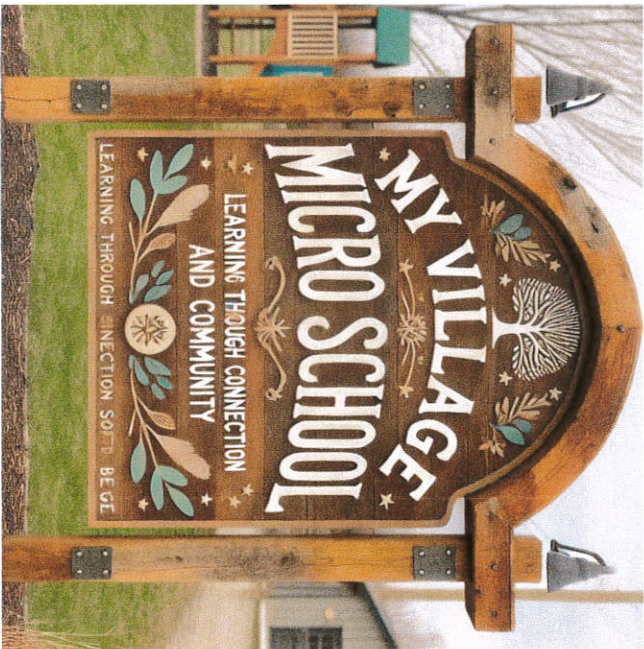
Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Carlson, Clerk
Board of Adjustment



141 New rd





← 4' →



*placement rules?





1 inch = 700 feet

- Heavy wooded
- Moderate wooded
- field/grass
- Stream/Pond
- Driveway
- Utility Trails
- Sugar Bush

- Residential House
- Outdoor Class Rooms
- Gardens
- Sign
- Flag
- Walking bridge
- Solar Panels



Town of Canterbury, NH
Zoning Board of Adjustment
Date: 2025 February 26
Location: Meeting House
Case No. 2024-7 Special Exception Continued Hearing

Board Members Present: Jim Wieck (Chair), Web Stout, Christopher Evans, Calvin Todd, Sean O'Brien, Scott Herrick (Alternate), Brendan O'Donnell (Alternate)

Others Present: Mercedes Martinez-Gould, Jamie Gould, Beryl Boisvert, Evan Hauptman, Mary Hauptman, Stephen Wearn, Louis Audet, Kevin Harriman, Cathy Lucas, Theresa Crick, Dan Bowman

1. The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m.
2. Chris made a motion to approve the minutes for the ZBA meeting on January 22, 2025 for Case No. 2024-7. Sean seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
3. Continued Hearing for Case No. 2024-7 Special Exception
 - a. Mercedes Martinez-Gould is seeking a special exception as regards property located at 141 New Road, Tax Map 258, Lot 016 located in the rural zone. The proposed use states "to be used as a multi-purpose educational facility under the My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit organizations". The application references Article 5, Section 3-C.
 - b. The first hearing for this case was on 11/21/2024. At the end of that meeting, the Board decided to continue the hearing so that the applicant could provide additional information to address concerns of the Board.
 - c. The second hearing for this case was on 1/22/2025. At the end of that meeting, the Board decided to continue the hearing so that the applicant could provide additional information to address concerns of the Board.
 - d. Chairman Wieck read aloud the additional information that was asked for on 1/22/25:
 - i. A site plan showing how the land would be used, specific areas for various outdoor activities, including parking and how the parking would be managed on the property safely so the number of vehicles that might come to the property to park or safely offload or pick up. The site plan should also include information on buffers, landscape, and distance to residential structures from the areas that are planned for use by the school.
 - ii. Information on how the presence of a school could impact neighboring property owners. (i.e. Would there be a school zone and if so, what does that mean?)
 - iii. Additional information from the Road Agent about the sharp curve on the road, the condition of the road during mud season, and how that could affect operation of passenger cars.
 - e. Chairman Wieck asked the applicant to address the additional information that was asked for and reminded everyone that only new information relating to the 3 items requested may be presented.
 - i. Ms. Gould presented a site plan and explained the features displayed on it. It shows existing and proposed buildings, paths, gardens and how densely forested the area is. She displayed a photo demonstrating what they considered "moderately wooded" when creating this plan.
 - ii. Ms. Gould brought in a document titled My Village School Family Agreement. She explained that this would have parents agree to use the bus services whenever possible to reduce the number of passenger cars traversing the road.
 - iii. Ms. Gould reviewed what issues had been addressed already at the last hearing. Predicted attendance, noise levels, operation hours, and alignment with rural character were already addressed. She cited a study showing that schools can increase property values.

- iv. Ms. Gould stated that private schools don't carry a "school zone" and the federal gun-free school zone law, which prohibits guns within a 1,000 ft distance of a school zone, doesn't apply to private property that is not part of the school grounds. So the ability of neighbors to use guns on their property wouldn't be impacted by this school.
- v. Regarding the 3rd item requested, Ms. Gould contacted Road Agent Donald O'Connor and he gave his response letter to Kathleen McKay this morning.
- vi. Chairman Wieck read the letter aloud.
 - 1. Mr. O'Connor stated that the width of the road is 18 ft, but moving the mailbox for 123 New Road could visually widen the narrow-looking corner.
 - 2. He listed traffic counts for 2001 – 2022.
 - 3. He said the road can get slimy and develop ruts during mud season, but Highway works to keep all dirt roads open and passable. The Dept. will add material where needed.
 - 4. "The road will not be pavement hard and slow travel is expected. New Road has a long mud season..."
- vii. The size of the property in question is 24 acres.
- viii. Ms. Gould was unable to get accurate numbers for the distances to the nearest structures on the neighboring properties, so she calculated the distances to the property lines instead.
 - 1. The property line closest to Mr. Audet (Map 258, Lot 10) would be 328 ft. from Classroom A, 675 ft. from Classroom B, and 822 ft. from Classroom C.
 - 2. The property line closest to Mr. Bowman (Map 258, Lot 15) would be 318 ft. from Classroom A, 395 ft. from Classroom B, and 697 ft. from Classroom C.
 - 3. The property line closest to Ms. Boisvert (Map 258, Lot 10) would be 312 ft. from Classroom A, 477 ft. from Classroom B, and 322 ft. from Classroom C.
 - 4. The property line closest to the Hauptman's (Map 257, Lot 14) would be 700 ft. from Classroom A, 393 ft. from Classroom B, and 139 ft. from Classroom C.
 - 5. They did not calculate the distances to the Otey property (Map 257 Lot 12).
- ix. Ms. Gould explained that they would need to go to the State to get accredited as a school and part of that process is going through the Town for building inspections and food inspection.
- x. Ms. Gould explained that the learning will mostly be held outdoors and they would only stay inside the classrooms during extreme weather. The classrooms would have heat.
- xi. They plan to follow the Canterbury Elementary School calendar, holding classes from September to June. They will also do a non-profit summer camp.
- xii. They will have composting outdoor toilets and will use bubblers to supply water in the classrooms. The bathrooms in the house wouldn't be used except during extreme weather days when they are stuck inside.
- f. Chairman Wieck asked if anyone present wanted to speak in favor of granting the special exception and reminded everyone that only new information relating to the 3 items requested may be presented.
 - i. The site plan was displayed so everyone could see it.
 - ii. Beryl Boisvert (161 New Road)
 - 1. Ms. Boisvert stated that she has lived on this road for over 50 years and despite 20 new houses being built in that time, the road is still passable.
- g. Chairman Wieck asked if anyone present wanted to speak against granting the special exception.
 - i. Dan Bowman (135 New Road)
 - 1. Mr. Bowman expressed concern about the septic system. Chairman Wieck explained that is not something this board can consider.

- h. Chairman Wieck asked the applicant, attendees, and board members if they had any additional comments/questions.
- i. Chairman Wieck closed the hearing. The Board then deliberated.
 - i. Only those who have attended all 3 hearings may vote, but all board members may discuss.
 - ii. The Board agreed that the request for a site plan has been met. The Planning Board will likely ask for a more detailed one.
 - iii. Mr. Todd said that when he looked it up, the closest structure on a neighboring property appeared to be 600 ft. away. He doesn't think noise will be an issue now that they can see how densely wooded the property is.
 - iv. Mr. Evans said that his only concern had been the impact of a school zone on neighboring properties and that question has been answered.
 - v. The Board continued to express concern about the condition of the roads. Chairman Wieck was not reassured by the Road Agent's letter.
 - vi. Mr. O'Donnell said that the condition of the road may require the Town do capital improvements, but increased traffic doesn't create a hazard.
 - vii. Mr. Stout pointed out that the Planning Board could ask for offsite impact fees to improve the road.
 - viii. Ms. Gould was given permission to hand out copies of the My Village School Family Agreement that she read from during the hearing. The Board read the document.
 - ix. Mr. Evans made a motion to approve the Special Exception as they have met the 7 requirements.
 - x. No one seconded due to continued concern about the road, so discussion resumed.
 - xi. Mr. Evans and Mr. O'Donnell both reiterated that they don't believe the road is a hazard. It may need increased maintenance, but that applies to any new construction and isn't a reason to deny.
 - xii. Mr. Todd posited the scenario where a child gets hurt and the road isn't passable. Mr. Evans countered that such an issue would be a consideration for the parents when they decide if this is the school they want to send their children to.
 - xiii. Mr. Stout agreed that the road being muddy for a month doesn't constitute a hazard.
 - xiv. Mr. Herrick agreed that there aren't safety issues but expressed concern about the expense and headache this may cause later if the road needs to be improved.
 - xv. Mr. O'Brien agreed that the road conditions can get bad and the school could make it somewhat worse, but not to the point where it is worth denying.
 - xvi. Mr. Todd asked for confirmation that everyone had their concerns about noise addressed. The Board agreed and Chairman Wieck pointed out that any changes to what was presented would need to come back before the Board.
 - xvii. Mr. Evans made a motion to grant the application in case 2024-7 for Mercedes Martinez-Gould and Jamie Gould as they have met the minimum requirements for a Special Exception; conditioned on site plan review through the Planning Board and obtaining all State approvals.
 - 1. They have shown that granting the permit would be in the public interest;
 - 2. The proposed use would not adversely affect the property values in the district;
 - 3. The specific site is an appropriate location for the proposed use;
 - 4. The proposed use would not adversely affect the health and safety of the residents and others in the area and would not be detrimental to the use or development of the adjacent or neighboring properties;
 - 5. The proposed use would not constitute a nuisance because of offensive noise, vibration, smoke dust, odors, heat, glare, or unsightliness;
 - 6. That granting the permit would be in the spirit of the ordinance;

7. And the proposed use would not constitute a hazard because of traffic, hazardous materials, or other conditions.
 - xviii. Mr. O'Brien seconded the motion.
 - xix. Mr. Evans, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Todd, and Chairman Wieck all voted aye. The other Board members abstained due to not being present for all meetings and/or being an alternate.
 - xx. Chairman Wieck reminded the applicants that there is a 30-day period where someone can appeal. The approval was based on the provided testimony and if any changes are made, they will need to come back to the Board.
 - xxi. Ms. Gould discussed the next steps and clarified what types of changes would require re-approval. The Board advised that setbacks likely won't be an issue, but the Planning Board will need a much more detailed site plan.
4. Adjournment
 - a. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Kathleen McKay, Administrative Assistant

Answer to email from Jamie Gould's highlighted sections of 1-22-25 Zoning Board meeting.

Section 3.h.iv.2.

"She [Cathy Lucas (120 New Road)] expressed concern about the safety of the road during mud season. She said the road often gets bad enough to stop a car or cause a car to slide off the side."

Ms. Lucas mentions a car stopping or sliding during mud conditions.

I agree that is possible. There will be a slimy top and at times ruts to the road.

Section 3.h.v.1.

"Mr. Harriman explained that he is also opposed to the school because of the condition of the road during mud season. He described a sharp curve that is not wide enough for two cars to go in opposite directions. He believes increased traffic and people unfamiliar with the road would increase the likelihood of an accident there."

Mr. Harriman is concerned with the width of the road in the corner.

I measured road travel surface snowbank to snowbank at 18ft.

Section 3.h.v.2.

"Mr. Bowman added that he saw a plow truck in the ditch at that corner this year."

Mr. Bowman saw a stuck plow truck.

Yes, trucks do become stuck.

Section 3.j.iii.

"Mr. O'Brien agreed that noise wouldn't likely be an issue, but was concerned about the condition of the road and the effect this could have on property values."

Mr. O'Brien is concerned about road condition vs. property values.

This is a question for the assessor.

Section 3.j.vi.

"Mr. Evans felt that getting approval from the Road Agent was enough to not worry about the roads. There was discussion about how bad a dirt road can get in mud season."

Mr. Evans is concerned about how bad the road can get during mud season.

Valid and highway works to keep all dirt roads open and passable during this season.

Section 3.j.xiv.

“There was more discussion about the safety of the roads. The Board decided they would like more details from the Road Agent about why the extra traffic wouldn’t affect safety.”

The Board is concerned about traffic.

Traffic counts are trending down.

Year	Traffic Count
2001	324
2016	350
2019	310
2022	290

Section 3.j.xvii.3.

“Additional information from the Road Agent about the sharp curve on the road, the condition of the road during mud season, and how that could affect operation of passenger cars.”

The Board questions the sharp corner.

If they are talking about the corner at mailbox #123. The travel way is 18 ft snowbank to snowbank. Moving the mailbox to the west side of the driveway will give a visual widening.

As to the conditions during mud season.

I would expect a slimy top at times with some rutting forming along with soft areas. Highway adds stone, sand/stone mixture as needed to keep passable. The road will not be pavement hard and slow travel is expected. New Road has a long mud season as the east end lets out 1st and the section east of Scales Road lets out last in town.

Thank you,

Submitted by Donald O’Connor Road Agent

2/26/2025

Notice of Decision
Board of Adjustment
Canterbury, NH

Case No. 2024-7 Special Exception

Hearing Dates: 21 November 2024, 22 January 2025, 26 February 2025

You are hereby notified that the application of **Mercedes Martinez-Gould** that involves Tax Map 258, Lot 016 located at 141 New Road in the rural zone has been **GRANTED**. The proposed use states, “to be used as a multi-purpose educational facility under the My Village Micro Schools and Wildkidd nonprofit organizations”. The application references Article 5, Section 3-C.

The Board vote was a unanimous decision by the four regular voting members who had attended all three hearings, conditioned on site plan review through the Planning Board and obtaining all State approvals.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen McKay,
Administrative Assistant

NOTE: If any person wishes to appeal this decision, you must act within 30 days of the date of this notice and apply to the Board of Adjustment for a rehearing. The Motion for Rehearing must set forth all the grounds upon which you base your appeal.