

Claremont Zoning Board of Adjustment

Site Visit Meeting Minutes – November 24, 2018 Approved 3/4/2019

Board Members Present: Michael Hurd, Chair; Rich Collins; and Tracy Pope, Alternate
Board Members Absent: Carolyn Towle; James Petrin; Abigail Kier, Vice-Chair;
Patrick Howe, Alternate
Others Present: Scott Pope; Gary Merchant, abutter; Victoria Davis, Interim
City Planning & Zoning Administrator, UVLSRPC; Chris
Anastapoulos, Owner/Applicant

The site visit was at the property of Chris Anastapoulos at 269 Pleasant Street in Claremont beginning at 1:00 pm to look at the “home occupation” proposal for a dog training business. This is a new case separate from an earlier application for a larger clientele.

Mr. Anastapoulos gave the site visit attendees a tour of the facility. He began with the 50’ x 70’ fenced enclosure for outdoor training and exercise. The fence and gates (to be installed) will be alternating from 4’ – 5’ in height. He made the fence an attractive wood and wire fence at the request of one of his neighbors who worried about an industrial looking fence. ZBA attendees agreed it is a good fence and there is no zoning height requirement. Mr. Anastapoulos explained that he could not shield the view of the enclosure from the neighboring Miles rental property second and third floors. ZBA members commented that two supervised dogs in a relatively small enclosure should not be a visual issue under the zoning ordinance.

He continued the tour around the building and into the training room. He explained the setup of the training room and how he would be training the dogs.

He explained that the dogs are under constant supervision to keep them from barking, fighting, mounting, touching the fence or even staring at it as if they might try to escape.

The dogs will be delivered via the Charles Street driveway to the enclosed garage. Mr. Anastapoulos will direct customers to the proper entrance until he can install an appropriate sign. He will then take custody of the dogs from the vehicles within the garage. He demonstrated the special collars he uses to maintain control of the dogs. The dogs are then taken a.) directly upstairs into the training room; b.) through the shed to a door leading into the outdoor enclosure, or c.) just outside the garage to a gate entering the outdoor enclosure. In addition, a new set of stairs will be built next summer from within the enclosure up to the second floor training room.

Mr. Anastapoulos gave a basic rundown of his dog training structure:

- He will only take up to two dogs at a time, typically for up to two weeks though possibly to three weeks
- He will not be taking any dog or human aggressive dogs for training
- The dogs will initially be on a long line in the enclosure until they become comfortable
- The dogs are only alone when they are crated.
- He keeps a video camera on the crated dogs in the training room
- The camera is connected to his phone so he can keep tabs on the crated dogs if he is walking his personal dog or the second training dog
- The dogs will wear an electronic collar to teach no barking and good behavior
- He takes the dogs outside two to three times a day for pooping and peeing and the dog manure is composted off site by someone e

Once the dogs have become adjusted to the facility (probably one week), he will take the dogs on walks along the sidewalk around the City but staying within the half mile range of the electronic collars of any dogs crated in the training room. This will allow him to use his camera monitor to correct behavior of dogs not on the walk.

Mr. Anastapoulos made it clear that there might still be some barking due to play, but inappropriate or excessive barking will be curbed.

Abutter, Gary Merchant asked about licensing for animal protection review. ZBA Chair Mike Hurd said this is not a zoning issue, but he recalled that the NH Department of Agriculture might do some type of inspection.

Respectfully Submitted by
Victoria Davis, Interim Planning & Zoning Administrator
City of Claremont/UVLSRPC

Cindy Hysler, Program Assistant II
Department of Ag
State Vet Office
Animal Industry