

From: "[REDACTED]" <[REDACTED]>
Date: Monday, July 6, 2020 at 4:58 PM
To: "www.bldgdept@townofossining.com" <www.bldgdept@townofossining.com>
Cc: RoyaltyPros Admin <admin@royaltypros.com>
Subject: Bethany Arts Community Zoning

Dear Mr. Carrera,

I live at 22 Tavano Rd. and am a neighbor to BAC.

I want to add my support to the Amendment for the Special Permit Zoning as presently filed by BAC.

While I recognize that there is a great vision that David Lyons has for a Community of the Arts, I know that there is also a learning curve that has to happen as each phase of his plan is realized. I am willing to take the chance, that should an issue arise with respect to the use of his property and how it affects my neighbors and I, that he will stand true to his word and meet with us to resolve any issues.

While I truly love having the buffer of forest and nature in my back yard, I must recognize that I do not own it. I know that David's intention to build a world class center is sincere and in the same spirit will continue to be a good steward of the land he owns.

Thanks,



GERSHNER REALTY SERVICES

Commercial Brokerage ■ Consulting ■ Management

42 Stonegate Road • Ossining, New York 10562-4015 • tel: 914.762.6024 • fax: 914.762.6719 • email: jerry@gershner.com

July 6, 2020

Mr. Salvatore J. Carrera
Chairman
Town of Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals
101 Route 9A
P.O. Box 1166
Ossining, New York 10562

RECEIVED

JUL 07 2020

Town of Ossining
Building & Planning Department

Dear Mr. Carrera:

I am not normally in the habit of expressing a *mea culpa* but I am doing so now in regards to my previous written comments regarding the application of the Bethany Arts Community (BAC) for approval of numerous variances for their property at 40 Somerstown Road. Their request was submitted to the Town of Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and was the subject of an online public hearing held on June 29, 2020.

Dozens of neighbors and other Ossining residents submitted their comments on the application and many of them addressed them publicly during the meeting. Representatives of the BAC explained the programs that they wanted to implement, and members of the public questioned them and expressed their feelings regarding the request. BAC explained that the variances were necessary to the implementation of their mission because their property is currently zoned for residential use only (R-40) and the town code did not permit these uses in that zone.

All of the property owners that abut the BAC property on Cooper Drive, Stonegate Road, Tavano Road and Somerstown Road (Route 133) received a notice of the meeting and which included a list of numerous activities proposed by BAC. I, amongst many others, objected to their proposal and stated so in my written comments to the ZBA on prior to the meeting. Conversely, there were a similar number of residents who supported the proposal of the BCA.

My objection to the proposal was based upon my belief that these proposed uses were, besides being illegal, (1) out of character to the neighborhood, (2) potentially a huge nuisance to the abutting homeowners and (3) a traffic issue to everyone else. I actually described their proposal as being tantamount to an "Amusement Park" and emphasized and questioned the concept of installing Beehives.

As I listened to the various speakers during the meeting I came to the conclusion that I had over-reacted to the BAC's proposal and simply opposed it based upon its unique uses in a zone that was for a completely different use. Perhaps it was my professional

real estate knowledge and background that told me that “Amusement Parks” are not permitted in residential zones.

Numerous speakers at the meeting spoke in favor of BAC’s proposal as positive to the community and important for Ossining’s economic development. Most of those who spoke against BAC were abutting owners who related stories about incidents of slight noise during a children’s activity taking place on the BAC property and many of them stated that this was not a serious problem at all. As these stories were told, my negative opinion of the BAC proposal was withering away.

I have been on the BAC property a few times over the past years to attend certain events but never paid attention to which homes actually abutted the property. After the June 29th meeting, I drove onto the property to see for myself how many homeowners were possibly negatively affected by the variance proposal. My total count is approximately as follows:

Street	# of Homes
Cooper Drive	9
Tavano Road	10
Somerstown Road (Route 133)	10

For visualization purposes, at the end of Cooper Drive there is a huge white water tower which is the approximate boundary where the BAC level land becomes heavily wooded and drops off into an unusable state at this time. About 13 houses on Stonegate Road actually abut the BAC property but they are located in the heavily wooded lower rear part of the property. On Tavano Road perhaps a half dozen homes abut the cleared level land of BAC. The homes on Somerstown Road are actually across the street from the BAC entrance and do not abut it.

So, what is the potential negative impact of granting to BAC the requested variances in order that they can offer and conduct a great many programs to the community and implement the reasons why BAC was established? In my refreshed opinion the answer is not much. However, in my professional real estate opinion I believe that there is a significant potential that could have a much more serious negative effect on the entire neighborhood. Please allow me to explain.

We know that this property contains just under 25 acres of land and is zoned for single-family homes, each on a 1-acre parcel. I am not an engineer but assuming that all of the land is usable and allowing some acreage for streets, etc. perhaps 20 buildable parcels can be created. With each home on a 1-acre parcel of land these could be sizeable and expensive homes. Alternatively, they might be less expensive, but socially desirable, residences under a variety of federal and state programs. I would not want to live on an abutting parcel during the development and construction years. While I am not appraising or valuing the entire BAC property, just looking at it for its development

potential I believe that it is worth well into 7 figures today and it would undoubtedly draw the interest of numerous developers. I am also not encouraging that this be done.

My point in my "real estate" or "development" analysis is that it seems to me that the current use, including the slightly more expanded use of the property, that is suggested by the current application, is far more benign and far better aligned with the neighborhood and its residents' expressed aspirations than any probable "as of right" use to which the property could be put by a potential developer. We have a good neighbor, with an idealistic and largely non-intrusive vision for the property. It seems to me that we are far better off coming to some reasonable compromises with the BAC, which would support and enable the uses for which the property is currently intended, than to alienate them and introduce the possibility of a massive development that is within the R-40 constraints and which would likely be far more intrusive and unresponsive to the expressed desires of our neighbors.

Post-public hearing, it appears to me that the Town of Ossining is presented with a zoning issue that has two potential answers: 1) grant the variances in whole or in part, or 2) anticipate that one day in the not too distant future the development of this property may very well be the subject of a Planning Board meeting.

I would be pleased to discuss my current thoughts on the BAC variance issue at your convenience.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Sandra Anelli

From: Richard Christ [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, July 02, 2020 4:20 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Community

To the Town of Ossining Building Department,

It has come to my attention the Bethany Arts Community has submitted an application to expand the use of their outdoor space.

I have known the principals and supported the activities of BAC and its artists for several years now and couldn't be more impressed. The principals clearly have a deep commitment to the property and institution. The artists are talented and very much in need of the exposure and nurturing that BAC provides. I have recommended family and friends to BAC and it has been a delight to all ages.

Sent from my iPad

Sandra Anelli

From: Jacqui Hoffman [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, July 04, 2020 12:06 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Community

Dear Members of the Zoning Board,

I support the approval by the Zoning Board for the use of the outdoor space belonging to Bethany Arts Community for the purpose of sharing programming, events and art. I grew up in Ossining and chose to return here to raise my own family because of the diversity the town has to offer. I feel that the addition of BAC has added tremendous value to that diversity, culturally and artistically.

Our son has been a member of the Theater O Company for several years now and we have enjoyed attending performances there, as well as fundraisers for the school system. BAC has already added tremendous value to our town and an extension of the amazing offering there to include the surrounding property would only further enhance the value it brings to our town and our community.

I believe their request for a special permit to be suitable for the area, appropriate to the balance of their offering and will be well contained so as not to create any disturbance or inconvenience for neighbors. I thank you in advance for your careful consideration of this matter and I look forward to enjoying all that BAC has to offer for years to come.

Sincerely,
Jacqueline Virag Hoffman
9 Overlook Road
Ossining, NY 10562

**SUSAN METTLER
86 BELLWOOD AVENUE
DOBBS FERRY NY 10522**

June 26, 2020

Sal Carerra
Chairman
Town of Ossining
Zoning Board of Appeals
PO Box 1166
Ossining NY 10562

RECEIVED
JUL 06 2020
Town of Ossining
Building & Planning Department

Dear Mr. Carerra and Ossining Zoning Board,

I urge you to grant Bethany Arts Community, and it's founder David Lyons the amendment to their special permit approval to include additional activities and programs that would take place outdoors. Bethany is a wonderful addition to our community, and nothing would benefit the children of Westchester County, and particularly Ossining more than the excellent outdoor offerings that Bethany will surely provide. I have taken a number of their classes and attended events, and I can assure you that the utmost care will be taken, as everything they do is of the highest quality.

Regards,
Susan Mettler

The residents of the Stonegate area and Tavano Road were hushed by many speakers who do not live anywhere near BAC, nor do they live in Ossining for that matter. As a resident of Stonegate Road, the proposal of a public trailway going through the back yards of many of the people who live here is a little disturbing. There is already a road that provides connectivity to Ryder Park. Anyone can walk down the road or ride a bike to Ryder Park from the street. Why would anyone want an additional public trail in the back yards of 20 to 30 residents that live in a single-family neighborhood. What will happen to their privacy? When you have a back yard, in most cases you are connected to another property by back yard or side yard. The general public, or bike riding, wouldn't be permitted in between those property lines. Stonegate Road has a cul-de-sac at the end and that little bit of privacy is why most people like living there. We are not in favor of cutting through with a public trailway to connect Bethany property to Ryder Park.

One of the comments from the speakers suggested that BAC events would be like having a graduation party at a regular home in the backyard, but based on BAC's request, they would be having a graduation party every day. That wouldn't be allowed to happen in the back yard of a single family home. People would call the police.

Also, some of the BAC speakers may not know that we already have daycares, baseball and Ossining Summer Camps using Ryder Park, so now this would be happening on both sides of the Stonegate neighborhood. The speakers at the meeting who said this is a great idea probably wouldn't like it if this was in their backyard.

RECEIVED

JUL 06 2020

Town of Ossining
Building & Planning Department

Sandra Anelli

From: steve hellman [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2020 2:46 PM
To: bldgdept
Cc: Mary Hellman
Subject: comment re BAC zoning application

As a homeowner whose backyard abuts the BAC property, I would like to emphasize the need for adult supervision of summer camps and other outdoor activities on the BAC property. There have been several occasions last summer of kids from summer camp running wild and unsupervised and entering onto our property. I have also needed to clean up trash and soda bottles that wash down the small stream running from the BAC property. Let's also be sure to keep noise at appropriate levels for a residential area--it's easy for kids (and young counselors) to forget that people are living very close to their summer playground; they are not in limitless woods with no one else around. Thank you and best of luck. -- Steve

Hellman

33

Stonegate Road

Sandra Anelli

From: Mark Schultz [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 2:54 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Center Permit Applicationn (Zoning Board of Appeals)
Attachments: BethanyLetterwithSignatures.pdf

Hello,

Please find attached a letter regarding one aspect of the pending BAC permit application. The letter is accompanied by a signature page including a significant fraction of the bordering neighbors. Others will be presenting their own positions in many cases incorporating this particular issue and so did not sign this particular letter. If you would confirm receipt of this email and that you are able to read the attachment (.pdf) I would appreciate it. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Mark Schultz

To: Town of Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals From: Undersigned Bordering Neighbors

Re: Bethany Arts Center Permit Application Dated: June 24, 2020

Let us first say that we find the overall vision and goals of the Bethany Arts Center petitioning this board to be laudable, in common with the churches and schools that share special use designation within the subject R40 zoning. Regardless of the laudable goals of all these organizations, the Town of Ossining Zoning Code and the language related to the town's planning and zoning boards' responsibilities regarding special uses recognize that these special uses require constraints to limit their impact on the neighborhoods within which they are embedded. In accordance with this established mission and the guidance of the Town Zoning Code, these town agencies approved petitioner's prior special use permit application only after substantive changes were made to petitioner's original proposals. Petitioner's current proposal substantially increases petitioner's overall footprint in a number of ways relative to the previously approved special use permit. These increases make this application closer to a new application than a renewal application.

The special use restrictions incorporated in both the R40 zoning regulations and the required agency review of any special use permit recognize that facilities likely subject to regular and/or public use by the typically non-resident users of the subject special use property are fundamentally different in their need for regulation than property uses by residential homeowners and their guests. This is perhaps due at least in part to the fact that, in general, special use facilities are less able to exert control over the behavior of the users of the facilities than are resident homeowners. Special use facilities may also include substantially higher user numbers at higher frequency and abut residential properties with an inherent expectation of privacy. As a result of these and perhaps other reasons, setbacks of 100 feet from any lot line are required for most special use facilities located within the property of any special use applicant. This setback is specifically called out for at least buildings and parking lots, but the intent to separate facilities for the public/non-resident activity inherent in these community benefit special uses by at least this distance permeates the code. Petitioner's previously approved special use permit was based on a plan that called for new envisioned public/non-resident activity facilities (in this case walking trails) to be located a revised at least 100 feet from the lot line. This is the distance established as appropriate by both the preponderance of the Town Code and the prior operation of the town's regulatory agencies.

Despite this fairly clear intent of the code and the overall mandates of the regulating bodies, petitioner is now proposing facilities that extend to the perimeter of petitioner's property. In particular these facilities include at least "Community Gardens." Petitioner's property is quite large, with substantial areas located further than 100 feet from the lot lines. Despite the availability of such areas for the proposed uses, petitioner specifically rebuffed direct suggestions to change the plans so that such areas would be used instead of areas located immediately adjacent to neighboring residential lots. Constraining the proposed facilities to the areas located at least 100 feet from the lot lines would not materially impact petitioner's ability to provide the intended community benefits. Failure to do so would establish an unfortunate precedent for potential future petitioner requests or actions to locate additional facilities abutting neighboring properties.

As a result we believe that consistent application of the letter and intent of the governing code would require that in any special use permit provided to petitioner, this board would in such permit constrain all of petitioner's proposed or future facilities to areas located at least 100 feet from any neighboring lot line. Any and all alterations to promote use of petitioners property should likewise be constrained to areas located at least 100 feet from any neighboring lot line.

[illegible]

Sandra Anelli

From: Mary Beth Stosser [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 6:45 PM
To: bldgdept
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Bethany Arts Community Amendment

To Town of Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals:
RE: Bethany Arts Community (BAC) Amendment

We are writing with a number of concerns and questions regarding the Bethany Arts Community 2020 Amendment. **We urge the Zoning Board of Appeals to address these issues and consider not approving the permit.** We live at 29 Stonegate Road in the Town of Ossining and have resided in our house for 26 years. We are actively involved in the Ossining community, volunteering in many capacities over the years that we have lived in Ossining, and working as a science teacher at Ossining High School for 25 years.

Our house is adjacent to the Bethany Arts Community property. With the use of the wooded area as part of camps, there has been an increase in the noise level behind our house. We are concerned for a further increase in the noise level behind our house with the proposed amendment. In addition, we are apprehensive about the ecological impact of increased human activity in the wooded area.

Please address the following questions/concerns:

1. What will the size of each program be and will there be a maximum number of participants in each program? What will be the maximum number of students in the after school programs, summer camps, and theater camp? How frequent are the programs? Do they occur every day? What hours do they occur?
2. On the attached paperwork, it states that "all and any of events that would occur outside will happen only during daylight hours in keeping the immediate neighbors in mind." However, on the attached site plan, it states that proposed seasonal events would occur between 8:00 am to 9:00 pm. This extends beyond daylight hours. What hours will the outside activities occur?
3. How is the community garden going to directly involve the neighbors?
4. Will the walking trails be open to the public with the potential for an increased amount of people being on the extended trail behind our house?
5. How can the BAC become part of the trail system leading from Ryder Park through Bethany to connect to the Briarcliff Peekskill Trail and Teatown Reservation? There is no indication on the site plan how this would be done.
 - a. Where is the access point to Ryder Park?
 - b. Would the trail be extended to pass through private property?
 - c. How is this trail going to be maintained?
 - d. The site plan does not show how far the area and trail would be extended into adjacent properties. Can this be shown in a diagram?
6. How will the property be maintained to prevent litter and prevent individuals from leaving the trail and entering private property?
7. How will the increase in traffic to and from BAC be addressed?
8. Is there going to be busing of children from NYC?
9. Are any of these programs being subsidized by local government?

10. Is BAC planning on serving alcohol at Artoberfest? How many participants are expected? Will the walking trail be used and how will this be monitored to ensure the safety of the neighbors?

Thank you for taking the time to address these questions and concerns.

Sincerely,

Angelo Piccirillo and Mary Beth Stosser
29 Stonegate Road
Ossining, NY 10562



OSSINING UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dr. Raymond Sanchez
Superintendent of Schools

June 24, 2020

Dear Town of Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals:

I am writing in support of Bethany Arts Community's application for outdoor activities. Bethany Arts Community is a valued community partner of the OUFSD. Over the last 3 years, Bethany has hosted several successful after-school programs in collaboration with the district, including a Cumbia for Kids dance program and a bilingual theater program. Given the current pandemic, as a district, we are negotiating a complicated new normal for our students, faculty, and staff. In the fall, we would like to consider partnering with Bethany to offer after-school programming outdoors. The extensive space Bethany has to offer and their artistic partners make for an exciting opportunity for the young people in our community. Their space could be a deeply needed solution. We hope you will take this into consideration when considering their application.

Sincerely yours,

Raymond Sanchez

June 24, 2020

Town of Ossining Building Department
Zoning Board of Appeals
Attn: Chairman Sal Carrera and ZBA Members
John-Paul Rodrigues Operations Center
Route 9A
P.O. Box 1166
Ossining, NY 10562
Re: 40 Somerstown Road/ Bethany Arts Community Amendment to Special Permit

Dear Chairman Carrera and Town of Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals Members:

We are writing to voice our enthusiastic support for the proposed amendment to the Special Permit for Bethany Arts Community.

BAC's arrival has filled a vital need in Ossining by providing and supporting creative programming that has benefited both community members and community institutions. At the same time BAC has served as a unique vector introducing creative people from outside our community to everything Ossining has to offer. Our family's experience in Ossining is unarguably richer because of BAC.

The proposed amendment will augment BAC's value to our community by permitting them to take advantage of their spacious grounds. The request is not just consistent with the spirit of the current Special Permit, but it is vital to carrying out BAC's mission. Approval of the amendment is a simple and logical acknowledgment that some essential programming requires the space and fresh air that can only be achieved outdoors. While the current pandemic puts an amplifier to this need, the space to safely make and celebrate art outdoors will live on as a critical community resource, long after COVID is a memory.

BAC is approaching this request in a manner that is sensitive to its neighbors with appropriate limits to operation hours, and by thoughtfully programming the physical site. By putting this request before your Board BAC is ensuring that the Town is involved in ensuring that the community is being listened to.

Our family looks forward to your consideration and approval of this amendment.

Seth and Anjali Roye
41 Clinton Avenue
Ossining, NY

A thick, black, horizontal redaction mark covering the signature area.

Henry Welt
2 Oak Hill Terrace
Ossining, New York 10562

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
June 25th, 2020

Dear Members of the Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals:

I am writing to you to express my enthusiastic support for an application being submitted by the Bethany Arts Community (Bethany) to modify the use restrictions associated with its property at 40 Somerstown Road, Ossining to permit utilization of its beautiful outdoor campus in integration with its ongoing activities. I have read and support the Application submitted to this Board on February 21, 2020.

To be clear, I have no formal affiliation with Bethany; I am an Ossining Village resident who enjoys the arts and I have come to love and value Bethany. I also have a strong conviction that art and the arts contribute in a valuable way to the cultural, social and economic vitality of our community. As the first Chair of the Ossining Village Arts Committee (the "OAP"), I led the committee to underscore the connections between the reputation of our Ossining community as a place which welcomes art and creativity and the economic and social development of our community. Among other examples, our efforts, through Village government, led the way for the Village of Ossining to become the first community in Westchester County to pass a Board of Trustees resolution stating the importance of the arts to our community and establishing an affirmative Village policy to support the arts and develop and enhance our reputation as a place where art and creativity is welcomed.

Bethany is not simply a place where art is taught or where art is enjoyed; it is not simply a venue for entertainment or a studio for work. Bethany is a community, a place in which art and the creative processes are respected and nurtured and are recognized as essential components in our collective humanity. At its heart, Bethany is a place without walls and cubicles. A cornerstone idea of Bethany is that art is pervasive, that it infiltrates our spirit and elevates our innermost selves, that it binds us all into community in ways that are unlike and far more powerful than many of the forces competing for our attention and loyalty today. For Bethany, art is community and community is good for the soul. Bethany has already earned its place as a magnet for artistic activities in Ossining.

In the relatively short time since Bethany has been spawned in Ossining, it has demonstrated its openness, inclusivity and dedication to the idea of creativity and accessibility in so many ways. To my knowledge, despite initial and understandable concerns from some of its immediate neighbors, Bethany has operated in a manner that has always been respectful of privacy concerns and dedicated to continuously improve

and beautify the environment. These values of community, respect for and consideration of its neighbors are core to Bethany's values. they have behaved well because that's how they believe people should live with one another.

Bethany has behaved well because that's part of what makes Bethany, Bethany. I urge the members of the Appeals Board to afford Bethany the trust and respect that it has earned, to assume the best of intentions, and to permit Bethany to continue its activities in the same respectful and considerate manner in which it has conducted itself up until now.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Henry Welt
Ossining resident

Sandra Anelli

From: Stephens, Minerva [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 26, 2020 8:51 AM
To: bldgdept
Cc: Stephens, Minerva
Subject: zoning BAC

Hello
I am all for working with the children of the community, art and environment.

But, at the same time BAC wants to do a lot of things that will increase the traffic on Route 133 with is a big concern.

The road already has a lot of traffic which speed by and I feel this will greatly increase.

Minerva Stephens
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sandra Anelli

Subject: RE: Bethany Arts Community

-----Original Message-----

From: Peggy monastra [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, June 26, 2020 9:38 AM

To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>

Subject: Bethany Arts Community

Dear Town ZBA,

I am writing to express my deeply felt support for the programming at Bethany Arts Community and their ability to programming throughout their buildings and on their amazing grounds. What David Lyons, his board and all the creative people who work there have brought to our community is of such great value as to be immeasurable in my opinion.

As a professional in the international arts industry for nearly 30 years, I know first hand the power of what an arts organization brings to each and every community where they belong. And what's especially invaluable about BAC is it's engagement not only with every level of age and income of our community (and people who travel to BAC from outside our community) - but the means in which BAC enhances the OTHER arts organizations in Ossining and brings our smaller local arts groups to a larger stage in the county and the region.

Please continue to support the existence and work of Bethany Arts Community in Ossining. Please let me know any way in which I can further speak to this discussion.

All best wishes,

Peggy Monastra
38 Campwoods Grounds

Sent from my iPad

Sandra Anelli

From: Susan Mettler [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 26, 2020 10:19 AM
To: bldgdept
Cc: David Lyons
Subject: Bethany Arts Community Appeal

Dear Mr. Carerra and Ossining Zoning Board,

I urge you to grant Bethany Arts Community, and it's founder David Lyons the amendment to their special permit approval to include additional activities and programs that would take place outdoors. Bethany is a wonderful addition to our community, and nothing would benefit the children of Westchester County, and particularly Ossining more than the excellent outdoor offerings that Bethany will surely provide. I have taken a number of their classes and attended events, and I can assure you that the utmost care will be taken, as everything they do is of the highest quality.

Regards,
Susan Mettler
86 Bellwood Avenue
Dobbs Ferry NY 10522

Sandra Anelli

From: Sharon Rowe [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 26, 2020 11:01 AM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Community Outdoors Events - Summer 2020

Hi there,

I hope you are doing well.

I will not be able to attend the planning board meeting this Monday regarding Bethany Arts Center so I am writing a letter to share my thoughts and feelings.

I am writing as a studio community member at Bethany in support of having socially distanced outdoor environmental and educational events this summer on the beautiful and spirit-lifting grounds of Bethany. With so many cultural destinations and venues closed, the grounds at Bethany offer the community as a whole an opportunity to be part of something and break the isolation so many of us are feeling. I feel certain that the staff and volunteers of Bethany will be able to responsibly curate events for the safety of all.

There's plenty of open space, parking and the number of people who attend any event can be easily monitored on the long driveway entering and leaving, off Route 133.

We need our cultural and environmental organizations to continue to flourish.
Please consider opening Bethany for the summer outdoors 2020.

Thank you!

Sharon Rowe
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sandra Anelli

From: Jill Kiefer [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 26, 2020 1:02 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Community

ATTN: Zoning Board of the Town of Ossining

This letter is written in support of Bethany Arts Community (BAC) and its ongoing mission to create a space and environment where the many forms of art can be learned, produced and flourish. As an active resident of Ossining, an on site and online instructor at Bethany Arts Community, a studio community member there, and an attendee at many of Bethany's events, I can attest to its contributions and significance to the local community and beyond.

During this difficult period, BAC has done its part to offer virtual programs, classes, exhibits, and events in an effort to remind people that we are all still part of a community—and not alone. With its expansive grounds and dedicated team, BAC has the potential to develop on site programs that can be offered safely and effectively. The broader community has reached a point where it sorely needs such a venue, if we are to continue to move forward in a healthy way.

I strongly urge the Board to approve socially distanced outdoor events of all types for summer 2020, at Bethany Arts Community. Arts, education, culture, and a welcoming environment will all help people to heal. We need that.

Sincerely,

Jill Kiefer
[REDACTED]

June 26, 2020

Sal Carrera, Chairman
Town of Ossining Building and Planning Department

Re: Public hearing Monday June 29th – Bethany Arts Community (BAC) application for Special Permit

Dear Mr. Carrera and members of the Board,

By way of introduction, I own one of the properties (19 Stonegate Road) that is adjacent to the BAC. I am very concerned of the BAC's proposal that is currently under consideration by the Board. My Mother, who currently lives at the property, is 92 years old. I grew up at 19 Stonegate Road and my family has owned the home for more than 45 years. My family and I currently live at 23 Apple Lane, Briarcliff Manor and as a result of our lifelong commitment to Briarcliff and Ossining, my family and I are invested in this decision.

In my opinion, the special permit BAC is requesting would not only put my Mother's safety at risk, but also cause undo harm to the local residential community. Although the proposal sounds admirable at first glance, there are several considerations the Board should consider prior to deciding on the special application put forth by the BAC.

1. Increase of trespassing, intentional or not, to the local homeowners as a result of a new trail system proposal leading from Ryder Park through Bethany to connect to the Briarcliff Peekskill Trail and Teatown Reservation.

- a. The safety of my Mother and others in the residential area should be considered as there is an increase of individuals walking through the neighborhood and backyards. The new trail will not only attract BAC members and participants of the programs, but others that will utilize the trail outside of BAC's control.
- b. I would respectfully request BAC to propose how they will guarantee the safety of the residents, prior to the Boards decision.

2. Increase in noise level due to on-going camps.

- a. Although hearing children's laughter, banter and screaming is a wonderful sound, hearing it all day long could get to anyone after a period, even parents. The community of Stonegate, Cooper and the surrounding neighborhood has always been a quiet and peaceful community. This is one reason people choose to move there in the first place. Adding summer camps, basically in our backyard, changes joyful, peaceful summer days / months to loud and noisy days / months due to day camps.
- b. I would respectfully request BAC to propose how they will decrease the noise level for the residents that border the BAC property, prior to the Boards decision.

3. *Increase of traffic on 133 during peak pick-up and drop off times.*

- a. The increase in traffic will cause residents to have difficulty turning left out of Cooper or any of the neighborhood roads along 133 and will also put additional stress on an already dangerous intersection(s) of 9A and 133, specifically near the Getty gas station.
- b. I would respectfully request that BAC conduct a traffic study to advise the Board of what the proposal will do to the local traffic, prior to the Board's decision.

4. *Increase in cars and visitors will have an impact to the local environment.*

- a. With the increase in traffic, increase of visitors and the creation of new trails, I respectfully request the BAC to conduct an environmental impact study on the surrounding woods and flatlands in the area, prior to the Board's decision.

In summary, the decision by the Board to approve BAC's special permit should not be taken lightly and only after serious consideration of the impact to the local residential community. Thank you for your consideration on the above points and hope that there is a reasonable compromise that can be made for all parties involved.

Sincerely,
Karen and Craig Fendrich
23 Apple Lane
Briarcliff Manor
&
19 Stonegate Road
Ossining, New York 10562

From: Jerry Gershner [mailto:████████████████████]
Sent: Friday, June 26, 2020 3:51 PM
To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>
Subject: Bethany Arts Community

I am writing to you to express my concern regarding the application of the Bethany Arts Community for many additional variances to the use of their property at 40 Somerstown Road.

I have lived on Stonegate Road for 40 years and for all of that time the Bethany property has always been a good neighbor. This property is zoned R-40 yet it is not used for single-family one-acre homes and never has been. Their uses, especially under the fairly new, non-religious, owner has never, to my knowledge, been disruptive to its surrounding residential neighbors. Based upon the requested use variances specified in the Bethany application, that is about to potentially and severely change. From a history of quiet uses, the new owners want to materially expand their existing programs to include, among many others, children's camps, outdoor theaters and **BEEHIVES?** Are they serious about that use?

With this very expanded list of uses that Bethany is requesting I believe that you need to consider how they are going to be monitored and enforced? With all due respect to the excellent work that John Hamilton does as our Building Inspector, is it feasible that he will have sufficient time in his part-time job to fulfill all of his other responsibilities while also monitoring these newly-allowable uses including **BEEHIVES?** Also, please bear in mind that the Bethany property is **tax-exempt** and has been from day one all those years ago. How much uncompensated municipal labor do we want to devote to this proposed use in the never-ending enforcement of the requested variances?

While I understand the need for a virtual public hearing at this time, hopefully the time will come shortly when you will be able to hold a public hearing on this matter before a live audience of abutting property owners so that you will be able to personally listen to and question your fellow citizens about their feelings on this matter. Please put yourselves in the place of a homeowner whose property abuts the Bethany Arts Community today and who is now facing the addition of an Amusement Park in their backyard.

As an alternative to this long list of requested variances perhaps the proper procedure might be for the applicant to request a complete rezoning of the entire property to a zone that is newly-created and which allows these specific uses. That would require an Environmental Impact Study along with a traffic study and which would address all of these issues on a professional basis. This variance application is, in essence, a rezoning request that must be addressed in a manner that is in the best interests of the Town of Ossining and its residents and should not just be simply approved via the one-page multi-variance request. A one-page request should not be answered in a one-page response after just one short hearing.

Think of yourselves as abutting owners and how you would want your appointed and elected representatives to fulfill their responsibilities.

Jerry Gershner
Gershner Realty Services
42 Stonegate Road
Ossining, New York 10562
████████████████████

Sandra Anelli

From: Rebecca Fahey <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, June 27, 2020 1:48 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Community ZBA Special Permit Approval

Members of The Board:

I wanted to voice my opinion on the request for Bethany Arts Center special permit approval request to include additional activities and programs that would take place outdoors on the property.

I grew up in Ossining, and graduated from OHS. I moved back to Ossining in 2009 to raise my family. My son started attending Theater O when he was 8 years old, pre- Bethany Arts. In the last five years, we have been so grateful to be part of that community. The shows that they have put on have been moving, creative, artistic and have helped my son enhance his social skills, confidence, compassion, as well as many other skills. Theater O has always been able to bring their shows to life, even in the small venue on State Street. When shows started to be performed at Bethany Arts Community (BAC), that quality performance was magnified. It became even more real. Those kids were part of real shows at a larger beautiful venue where many more audience members could join and celebrate their accomplishments.

As my son is a huge fan of Harry Potter, we also needed to be part of the "Camp of Wizardry and Witchcraft" at its inception at Bethany Arts two years ago. It was amazing. My son came home every day of the week he was involved, exhausted, fulfilled, inspired, and excited for the next day. I cannot say enough about this amazing experience we have been able to have, mostly thanks to the sprawling BAC grounds able to accommodate such. My son looks forward to it all year long and talks about it non-stop while he's there and then again counting the days down until it will start again. From my own experience, in being able to try out Quidditch at the end of the summer camp party, it is a wonderful sport and I can't blame him for looking forward to it. I can't wait until my 5 year old daughter is old enough to take part. Removing this magical addition to Ossining would be a terrible mistake and it would take this opportunity away from other residents that could benefit from it.

We also came to the fall festival that was offered at BAC this past year. My family and I were able to go on a walk into the woods where real fairies greeted us as we admired art. We sampled amazing homemade ice cream, were able to admire the existing art work that lined their walls, tried out some African dancing, made decorative Halloween masks and even carved a pumpkin. It was wonderful and I hope that it will go on again this year.

Now that we have been able to be a part of some of what BAC has to offer, I cannot imagine an Ossining without it. It would be a detriment to Ossining. I can say that I have seen Ossining before and after BAC blessed Ossining with its presence, and it would be a huge step backwards for the residents to not offer its beautiful campus, programs and experiences both indoor and outdoor that children and adults alike will take with them. There is absolutely no down side to BAC having the ability to have these beautiful outdoor activities that it has been able to test and prove that they work the past two years. Investment in the arts that a Town offers is what makes communities stand out from other communities. Ossining has become a more desirable town for many of the arts programs it offers, so I am for keeping this wonderful opportunity around for us and other residents to benefit from.

Thank you for your time,

Rebecca L. Fahey
59 Stone Avenue
Ossining NY

Sandra Anelli

From: Jean Fitzpatrick <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, June 27, 2020 10:30 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: In support of Bethany Arts Community

Dear Building and Planning Department,

We are writing as neighbors of Bethany Arts Community. One reason we have chosen to live in Ossining for 40 years has been the rich local arts scene. We helped organize the Greater Ossining Arts Festivals, where John Cheever, Sonny Sharrock, Robert Sherman, Alan Cober, Mel Dixon, and so many other nationally prominent Ossining residents shared their talents.

Bethany Arts Community continues that tradition. We never dreamed that Bill T. Jones and his dance company would be in residence a few steps from our home. We are thrilled that BAC is nurturing in area children a love of the arts and literature through their very creative summer programs and theater program. We are delighted that Theater O has found a home there. The beehives and community gardens, the walking trails, and the outdoor after-school programs are also an excellent addition to our community.

Not only is BAC an excellent neighbor, but it is a feather in Ossining's cap, enhancing our town and conveying to others a cultural richness that is too often unrecognized by people outside our borders. BAC offers so many creative opportunities for both adults and children. Especially in this time of pandemic, when so many arts venues have been forced to close, we are thankful that Bethany has ingenious plans to take advantage of their beautiful property by staging events and programs outdoors.

We can still remember when Maryknoll owned the property and for many years held square dances outside, always pleasant to overhear on a summer or fall evening.

We are confident that permitting Bethany to implement their plans for outdoor programming this summer is in the best interest of the Town of Ossining and the surrounding community, and to prohibit them would be a missed opportunity.

Jean and Des Fitzpatrick
7 Tavano Road

From: Jennifer Casey [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 7:21 PM
To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>
Subject: Bethany Arts Community Application for Special Permit (Hearing 6/29/20)

I am writing in support of the application by Bethany Arts Community for an amendment to their special permit approval to include additional activities and programs that would take place outdoors on the property. I am an ardent supporter of Bethany Arts, Theater O and River Fund. These are all organizations that seek to engage and better the community. These unprecedented times require that we do what we can to encourage and support the community. Children have been forced to isolate and stay in their homes since March. This is detrimental to their physical and emotional well being on so many levels. Bethany is seeking to give these children a place to be and socially distance this summer. Nimbyism has no place in our society and especially not in these trying times. Bethany is located on 25 acres. Bethany is seeking to more fully utilize their property in ways to encourage environmental, community and art endeavors. This is a good thing. They are not seeking to tear down woods to build a shopping center or build industry, they are seeking to help the community and let the community enjoy the property. If more organizations had the foresight and generosity of Bethany, the world would be a much better place. Due to the challenges presented by the pandemic, it is safer for all that Bethany be allowed to continue their mission outdoors. There is no downside to approving this application, only the benefit of allowing the community to enjoy Bethany and all it has to offer. As Chair of the Suffolk County Planning Commission, I only wish we had an Art Community that's mission has delivered in such unprecedented times. I have traveled to Ossining often to visit Bethany and look forward to visiting this summer.

Very truly yours-

Jennifer A. Casey, Esq.

-----Original Message-----

From: Mark Heyert [REDACTED]

Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 7:25 PM

To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>

Subject: Bethany Arts Community application for a special permit

To whom it may concern:

I support Bethany Arts Community's application before you. During the four and a half years I have been traveling to Ossining for BAC events I have been impressed with the professionalism the organization has shown when producing a diverse slate of events. Now is the time to allow BAC to continue to serve the greater Ossining community by offering more safe and socially distant activities and events. The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a great toll on communities by not allowing citizens to gather inside. By allowing BAC to continue to fulfill their mission by granting their application the entire Ossining community will benefit from extraordinarily well produced activities and events.

Sincerely yours,

Mark A. Heyert

From: Eric Gearity [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 8:02 PM
To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>
Cc: Matt Curtin <matt@singsingkillbrewery.com>; Alexander Maclean Jeffrey <alex@macleanlawpc.com>
Subject: Bethany Arts Community – Special Permit for Outdoor Activities

Sing Sing Kill Brewery would like to express our support for Bethany Arts Community obtaining a special permit for outdoor activities.

We have collaborated with BAC on past projects and have a first-hand appreciation for all that they contribute to our town, both culturally and economically. We also understand the need, now more than ever, to expand the footprint of venues to include as much outdoor space as possible.

Decisions on matters like these have an incredible impact on the health and successes of local organizations. We hope that you approve the application, and look forward to celebrating Artoberfest this fall.

Thank you.

Eric Gearity
Sing Sing Kill Brewery, LLC
75 Spring St.
Ossining, NY 10562
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Lori Ganz [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 8:39 PM
To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>
Subject: Bethany Arts Community special permit

I am writing in support of Bethany Arts Community to expand its outdoor offerings. I'm not sure you have had the chance to walk the expansive grounds at Bethany. The trails, the sculptures, the beehives, the gardens, the fields and forest areas all offer unique opportunities to allow the art community to thrive in different ways. I'm currently an artist who has a studio at the Bethany Arts Community who has seen the wonders of what Bethany has produced this past year - theater shows, family art events, art classes, exhibits, open studios, dance rehearsals and performances, puppetry, writing workshops, etc. Expanding outdoors will create even more opportunities for artists and families to have access to activities that will enrich their lives. Please support their request to develop outdoor programs to support these initiatives. Especially during this time, it's imperative that we stand together and find ways to reconnect.

Thank you for listening,
Lori Ganz

From: Regina Luersen [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 10:01 PM
To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>
Subject: Bethany Arts Community Application

To members of the Ossining zoning board:

I am an Ossining resident writing in support of Bethany Arts Community application to extend their arts offerings to their outside space. Bethany Arts Community is a valuable resource for Ossining and has had a significant impact on our town. They have already made major improvements to the property and I trust that if granted this application they will continue to develop the property in ways that will expand the arts opportunities for people of all ages in our area.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regina Luersen

33 Hamilton Ave.

Ossining, NY 10562

Sent from my iPhone

From: Regina Luersen [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 10:01 PM
To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>
Subject: Bethany Arts Community Application

To members of the Ossining zoning board:

I am an Ossining resident writing in support of Bethany Arts Community application to extend their arts offerings to their outside space. Bethany Arts Community is a valuable resource for Ossining and has had a significant impact on our town. They have already made major improvements to the property and I trust that if granted this application they will continue to develop the property in ways that will expand the arts opportunities for people of all ages in our area.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regina Luersen

33 Hamilton Ave.

Ossining, NY 10562

[REDACTED]

6/28/2020

Town of Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals

Attention Board of Appeals,

I am writing with much concern over the proposed changes to the BAC Application coming before the Board on 6/29/2020. Below is a list of some of my concerns.

1. It appears by the map included in the BAC application they are proposing to vary from the 100' set back as agreed on the original application. This includes a "community garden", additional trails (including a proposal to join other park trails) and potentially beehives. I believe BAC has a lot of property and should find space within the original setbacks.
2. Hours of operation proposed seems to be all over the place. Application says 8 am - 9 pm, application narrative says daylight hours and an email sent out to residents by David Lyons on 6/26/20 says beginning at dawn.
3. Community Garden and Beehives In reference to the community garden. Proposed letter says "directly involve our neighbors" and the email sent by Mr. Lyons says "no access by general public". This seems to contradict itself.
4. Noise Mr. Lyons email refers to "noise issues with several neighbors" in the summer, but fails to mention him allowing (with out Town Approval or a permit) a film crew all day and late into the evening on Oct. 9, 2019. Large lights brightly illuminating our neighborhood. With idling tractor trailers. Large lights and big tents. When approached on this subject, BAC chose to use the excuse that they weren't aware they needed Town permission. Remember that they also used our Town water tower as a billboard for BAC with some type of projection machine on Feb 23' 2019.
5. Participant limit BAC is requesting a considerable amount of new pedestrian as well as auto traffic with this proposal. Because of past experiences I think it's very important that the Board pin BAC down to exact limits on quantity of people coming through the property. Along with Hours, frequency of the events, participant limitation, date ranges, and how to control crowd overflow into the community (parking and foot traffic). How will they actually monitor and control all of this?

From a local residents observation, Mr. Lyons doesn't seem to take The Town Planning Board, The Town Building Dept. or his immediate Town neighbors into consideration. He has stated in the Proposed Use Letter that he takes a "when in doubt reach out mentality". He didn't ask about a film permit. He didn't ask for permission to light up a Town water tower promoting BAC and if there needs to be permission for Bee Hives he has already erected them and they are in use.

Please hold My Lyons to specific details of all of his proposed projects because I feel that he will do serious alterations without permission with the excuse he didn't know. Which would be detriment to our lovely neighborhood we have worked so hard to maintain.

Thank you all for your service,

[REDACTED]

Beth Cohen
6 Tavano Road
Ossining, NY 10562

Sandra Anelli

From: Bradley Morrison [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 2:57 PM
To: bldgdept
Cc: David Lyons; Jessica Irons
Subject: Support fo Bethany Arts Community Request

To Whom it May Concern,

Please accept this letter of support for the requests placed before the Zoning Board of Appeals by the Bethany Arts Community.

In our current reality, outdoor events would appear to provide the safest environment for any gatherings of even small groups of people.

Because the arts require community and gathering together of groups of artists as well as artists and their audiences;

because Bethany has ample outdoor space to provide for outdoor arts events while maintaining social distancing, and without causing disturbance to neighbors;

because Bethany Arts Community has proven to have programming of the highest quality;

For all of these reasons and more, the Youth Wind Ensemble of Westchester, an Ossining-based arts organization, supports the request currently before the Zoning Board of Appeals.

In addition, as an Ossining resident, I also provide my personal support for this outstanding organization in our community.

Bradley Morrison
*Director & Senior Winds Conductor,
Youth Wind Ensemble of Westchester
Past-President, NYS Band Directors Association
Past-President, Westchester County Arts Leadership Association
Chairperson, Ossining Arts Projects Committee*

Sandra Anelli

To:

Subject:

[REDACTED]
FW: Bethany Arts Community Special Permitting Request

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 2:28 PM

To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Bethany Arts Community Special Permitting Request

My wife and I - and our young son - reside at 25 Stonegate Road, Ossining, 10562. We have been living here since July 2010. Our home directly abuts the Bethany Arts Community (BAC) property.

While the BAC has generally been a good neighbor - and the goals of the organization are admirable - we have concerns over the new plans submitted and the BAC is requesting special permitting for. The plans appear to be a significant deviation from current use of the property (zoned as R40 residential). It's also not clear from the plans as to whether the new BAC requests will allow for spacing at least 100 feet from neighboring lot lines.

We looked at the additional information provided by BAC on the ZBA site dated 6/25. We appreciate the additional information, but much of it seems confusing or different from the original Amendment. For example, the original request indicates camps that may provide for children in New York City. The additional information notes these camps would be for Ossining's children. Which is it?

Walking trails, Gardens and Outdoor Exhibits: It's not clear where these would be built and take place.

At the minimum, it seems more concrete information may be needed to properly address these requests - or perhaps it may be more suitable for BAC to apply to have the property rezoned.

Thank you for the Building Department and Zoning committee for reviewing this request and soliciting public feedback.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert and Jenifer Melstein
25 Stonegate Road
Ossining, NY 10562

Sandra Anelli

From: Dagny Emiliani [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 2:03 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Community - re: in support of submitted application for OUTDOOR GROUNDS program expansion

Monday, Jan. 29th, 2020

Town of Ossining Building Dept
101 Route 9A- PO Box 1166
Ossining, NY 10562

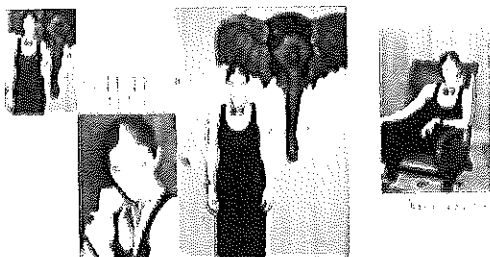
To whom it may concern:

I'm writing to support and to petition your approval of the Bethany Arts Community's application to expand their program offerings to their outdoor grounds. After dedicating much time and effort restoring and transforming their outdoor grounds/campus, BAC/Ossining now has a beautiful and valuable resources for children's camp offerings, artists and community.

We look forward to a positive outcome to their submitted application requesting "program expansion of their outdoor grounds" and thank you in advance for your support.

Best regards,

DAGNY EMILIANI
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



DAGNY EMILIANI
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sandra Anelli

From: Carla Lovastik [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:18 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Center

>> To whom it may concern:

>> I support Bethany Arts Community's application before you to utilize its outside campus to bring the arts to our community. I have been to events and I am impressed with the organization and their wide range of diverse programming . Now is the time to allow BAC to continue to serve the greater Ossining community by offering more safe and socially distant activities and events. And even given the pandemic, people are more appreciative of the safe utilization of outdoor space. Please allow Bethany to continue to fulfill their mission by granting their application. The entire Ossining community will benefit from arts activities and event.

>>

>>

>> Carla Lovastik

>> Ossining

>>

Sandra Anelli

From: Kristen Yurczak [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 12:03 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts

To Whom It May Concern:

I support Bethany Arts Community's application before you to utilize its outside campus to bring the arts to our community. I have traveled to Ossining for Bethany events and I have been impressed with the organization and their wide range of diverse programming. Now is the time to allow BAC to continue to serve the greater Ossining community by offering more safe and socially distant activities and events. Given the pandemic, people are more appreciative of the safe utilization of outdoor space. Please allow Bethany to continue to fulfill their mission by granting their application. The entire Ossining community will benefit from arts activities and events.

Sincerely,

Kristen Yurczak

Sent from my iPhone

Sandra Anelli

From: Michele [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 12:00 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Center

To whom it may concern:

I support Bethany Arts Community's application before you to utilize its outside campus to bring the arts to our community. I have been to events and I am impressed with the organization and their wide range of diverse programming . Now is the time to allow BAC to continue to serve the greater Ossining community by offering more safe and socially distant activities and events. And even given the pandemic, people are more appreciative of the safe utilization of outdoor space. Please allow Bethany to continue to fulfill their mission by granting their application. The entire Ossining community will benefit from arts activities and event

Michele Saich
33 justamere dr.
Ossining

Sent from my iPhone

Sandra Anelli

From: Cindy Geiger [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 9:15 AM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Community

I'm writing not as a Realtor but, as a resident of 25 years in the Village of Ossining. The Bethany Arts Community has been a welcomed addition to our community. The benefits to having something like this in our backyard is something other communities should be envious of. It is certainly a place, we as a community should be embracing and supporting. We are lucky they picked our town to reside in!

As a Realtor, this is great reason to move here. Anything a community has to offer its residents and can distinguish itself amongst other towns is an asset to increasing property values and the desireability to move here. These types of things draw people to wanting to live here and work here and visit here.

In these times of so much strife Art, collaboration and creativity should be encouraged. We NEED this!

Cindy

Cynthia Geiger
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sandra Anelli

From: Andrew Irons [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 7:44 AM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Special Permit

Dear Town of Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals:

I am writing to voice my support for Bethany Arts Community's request for a special permit for specific outdoor activities.

I have had the pleasure of being associated with Bethany in various capacities over the last two and a half years. My relationship with Bethany began when my wife, Jessica Irons, brought a Theater O performance into the performance space. I then became BAC's first Resident Artist. I was immediately impressed with the spirit of openness and support that drives the organization both philosophically and practically. I -and all the Resident Artists - have been given the space and unwavering support to create and a community to experience. It is truly a community that is driven by "Yes. And what can we do to help?"

Perhaps most importantly, however, is the relationship that is developing between BAC and my children. Bethany has become a place in Ossining where my kids regularly experience world-renowned artists and their work. They have done African dance and taken Spanish language theater classes. They have watched storytelling and modern dance. They have performed and worked on tech crews. They have been to art openings and created their own art alongside professionals. And they have done all this in a welcoming and kind environment that has quickly become a second home.

Quite simply, BAC is a benefit to the Ossining community unlike any other. I encourage the Board to approve BAC's Special Permit request. It is the community in Ossining that is providing a unique artistic environment. It represents the positive direction I hope the community is heading in, and warrants support to ensure it thrives as it develops.

Sincerely,

Andrew Irons
19 Stanley Ave.
Ossining, NY 10562

Sandra Anelli

From: Peter Scharff [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 9:11 AM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Outdoors

Good Morning,

I am writing as a Bethany Studio artist, an Ossining tax payer and as the grandfather of a granddaughter who spent a delightful week last summer at the Harry Potter Camp at Bethany. Please know that I fully support their request for additional outdoor use of their beautiful property. Bethany helps make Ossining the special town that it is.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

Peter

Peter Scharff
17 Beechwood Way
Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510

Sandra Anelli

From: Peter Leeds [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 9:23 AM
To: bldgdept
Subject: BAC Outdoor Grounds

Good Morning,

I am writing in support of Bethany Art Community application to expand the offerings to the outside grounds. I am part of the community and my family use the grounds throughout the year. Thank you for your time.

Regards,
Peter Leeds

Sandra Anelli

From: Justine Lackey [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 12:14 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Support for Bethany Arts Community

Dear Members of the Zoning Board,
My name is Justine Lackey and my husband, John Hicks and I live at 34 Stonegate Road; Bethany Arts Community (BAC) is our neighbor.

I am writing this letter in support of the special permit that BCA is seeking from the town.

Ossining is truly lucky to have such a beautiful, amazing community and facility devoted to the arts.

David Lyons and his team are kind, dedicated, and thoughtful. Our family personally knows at least two local artists with studios at the facility and we have attended many events there.

Our family is writing in support of Bethany and the permit they are seeking - Ossining and our community can only benefit from more arts programs, camps, and festivals. This helps our community in both in terms of personal enrichment, but it also brings people to our Ossining who might not normally come here. I believe this will benefit our local economy overall.

Please note we live just behind Bethany, and we often use their trail - we adore the idea of connecting it to the Briarcliff-Peekskill Trail.

Lastly - Theatre O is a tremendous asset to Ossining. We need to support the expansion of their programming and the use of the Bethany facility to bring more creative, artistic magic to the most magical population of all - our children.

Kind regards,

Justine Lackey and John Hicks

Justine Lackey
Good Cents' Instagram is Awesome :)
[REDACTED]

Sandra Anelli

From: Jessica Irons [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 3:00 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Community Application

Dear Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals:

I am writing in support of Bethany's application for a special permit for outdoor use. I am writing with several different hats on. I am the artistic director and owner of Theater O. We run the Harry Potter Camp and the Show Camp at Bethany. I am also a Board member of Bethany Arts Community. I am also a resident of the Town of Ossining, and a parent of two children in the school district, a rising third-grader and a rising 10th grader. My husband, Andrew, is a resident artist at Bethany and has a studio there where he makes puppets, writes plays and builds toy-theaters. I have several insights into this application and I would like to share them with you.

First, the camps: For two years Theater O has held the Camp of Witchcraft and Wizardry, a Harry Potter-themed arts-based educational camp at Bethany. About half the activities were indoors and half outdoors. To my knowledge, we (both Bethany and Theater O) never received a complaint in those two years from anyone, either in writing or verbally. No child was ever hurt beyond a scrape. The maximum number of children who attended the camp on any given week was 32. We had 4 counselors, one assistant counselor, and two lead teachers. The child-adult ratio was never higher than 8:1 and almost always closer to 5:1. After David Lyons' last ZBA appearance where we (both Bethany and Theater O) learned that outdoor camp was not approved, we made two plans. One: hold the camp indoors and outdoors again. We anticipated that David would go before the ZBA in early 2020 and that a special use permit would be granted and that we would be able to continue our activities as before. Two: hold the camp entirely indoors and fashion a quidditch pitch in the performance space, collect the natural materials we use in the forest and bring them inside and have our campers experience an Indoor Hogwarts like environment, complete with a magical projected changing ceiling and a "Room of Requirement", making magic that matches our campers' imaginations. Then came the pandemic, and now we are holding the camp virtually. The show camp, where campers put up a show in one week, soup to nuts, has always been held entirely indoors.

Theater O productions have all been held indoors.

I feel terrible that we (both Bethany and Theater O) unknowingly held a camp partially outdoors that we shouldn't have because the camp is universally loved by those who attend it. It is, by Westchester standards, inexpensive, and we offer scholarships. I know now that I personally should have done more research. I know as a Bethany Board member and as Theater O entering into a contract with Bethany, we (both Bethany and Theater O) should have asked more questions of Bethany's legal counsel at the time. But we didn't. And I am very sad and sorry about that. I am admittedly, very good at the art-making and cultivation of the imaginations of children and adults and building artistic communities. I am less versed at this end of things.

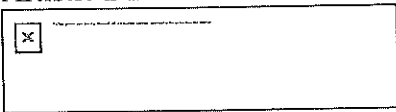
I would also like to address why I think Bethany should be allowed to hold outdoor programming. Bethany is only trying to enrich the experience of our community. The possibility of having an outdoor art walk, a place where people can experience beauty in solitude, or with a group is an exciting possibility for Ossining. The idea behind Artober fest is to have one day a year, in the middle of the Bethany residency, where local artists and our visiting resident artists can come together and make art, and experience beauty together. I have full confidence that David and the board and staff at Bethany only want to work with neighbors to find the sweet spot where things can happen.

As a theater director for all of my adult life, and now as a teacher, I spend much of my time with scripts and students, trying to understand a character's perspectives and motivations. I can see how from the perspective of some that it could look like Bethany and Theater O were flouting zoning laws, and operating under a "ask for forgiveness later" mentality. I want to assure you that this is not what occurred here. Ignorance, yes. We didn't do enough homework. We got some bad advice. We thought we were asking the right questions to the right people and we weren't. Please know, no one was purposefully ignoring zoning laws. The only thing that was consciously happening was we were trying to put beautiful, meaningful experiences into our community. I think in large part we have succeeded in doing that. I hope that a conversation can occur where all parties can be satisfied and that Bethany can offer unique outdoor artistic experiences that enrich all of our lives.

The intersection of art and community has always been an important part of the world to me, but it is also particularly important right now. In this moment where we need social distancing and outdoor space and beauty and joy, Bethany has all of this to offer.

Please let me know if you need any additional information from me.
Thank you.

Jessica Irons
Artistic Director



25 State Street Ossining NY 10562



Listen. Learn. Imagine. Perform.
Join the play.

Sandra Anelli

From: Virginia Pope [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 7:17 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: BAC

dear Ossining Building Department,

Bethany Arts Community is a wonderful resource for all of Ossining. I am all in favor of granting it special

typed on a phone

Sandra Anelli

From: Virginia Pope [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 7:29 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: BAC

dear Ossining Building Department,

Please excuse my last unfinished note. Here is what I meant to type:

Bethany Arts Community is a wonderful resource for all of Ossining. I am all in favor of granting BAC a special permit to allow it to hold events, classes, and general public access to both its inside and outdoor spaces. Having attended both art classes and community events there, I appreciate that Ossining can claim this welcoming private/public space as a true asset. Allowing BAC to open its property to a greater number of uses will allow more people to participate in the arts.

BAC is good for Ossining and it's neighboring towns. Please allow its offerings to be open to everyone.

Best,
Virginia Pope

typed on a phone

Sandra Anelli

From: Rorie Caparelli <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 11:39 PM
To: bldgdept

> To whom it may concern:

> I support Bethany Arts Community's application before you to utilize its outside campus to bring the arts to our community. I have been to events and I am impressed with the organization and their wide range of diverse programming. Now is the time to allow BAC to continue to serve the greater Ossining community by offering more safe and socially distant activities and events. And even given the pandemic, people are more appreciative of the safe utilization of outdoor space. Please allow Bethany to continue to fulfill their mission by granting their application. The entire Ossining community will benefit from arts activities and event

>

>

> Rorie Caparelli
74 Briarbrook Drive
Briarcliff Manor.

Sandra Anelli

From: Anne Carpenter [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 4:31 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Community

Dear Members of the Ossining Zoning Board, My name is Anne Carpenter and I am a resident of Ossining and a supporter (and huge fan!) of the Bethany Arts Community. I rent a studio in the building and have also had the pleasure of singing in their wonderful performance space and having my photos displayed in an exhibit which included art from all the artists renting space there. I have taken a class there and attended benefits and concerts there as well. BAC has been such a gift to Ossining and beyond with their mission being to provide opportunities for all artists and appreciators of the arts to come together and create and in so doing, creating community.

The grounds of BAC are beautiful and have been maintained to highlight and utilize the land on which they are found (the nature path, the orchard, the meditation circle, sculpture installations, etc.) and for the organization to be able to use this property to further their creative community building mission would be a tremendous addition to what they are already offering and would extend the boundaries of their outreach.

I am not able to attend tonight's zoom meeting but please know that this effort to expand Bethany's offerings by zoning this land for more outdoor activities and events would be of great benefit to this community. David Lyons and the excellent BAC board would see to it that this new potential to their programming would be fulfilled responsibly and with the utmost consideration of their Ossining neighbors.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Anne Carpenter

Sandra Anelli

From: janet abramson [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 5:54 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany art center

We are very fortunate to have an art center of this calibre in our backyard.
Please continue to support and encourage.

Thank you.
Janet Abramson

Sent from my iPad

Sandra Anelli

Subject: FW: Letter in Support of Bethany Arts Community

-----Original Message-----

From: Lola Judge [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 11:38 AM
To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>
Subject: Letter in Support of Bethany Arts Community

To Town of Ossining Building Department,

I am writing in support of an application being made by the Bethany Arts Community to expand usage of their outdoor spaces.

Over the last several years, I have had the opportunity to attend programs at Bethany, such as art history courses, art workshops, performances, gallery openings, receptions, etc. Bethany Arts is a vibrant community that not only serves residents of, and visitors to, Ossining, but provides a creative outlet that enriches the broader community.

The proposal under consideration by the zoning board is particularly important to the broader community during these challenging times. It will provide the opportunity for expanded programs and enrichment in a safe environment for both adults and children, particularly when the broader community has a heightened need for this in the face of restrictions on being able to convene in indoor spaces. In the longer run, the ability to leverage the outdoor spaces in a sensitive way as proposed will continue to preserve and enrich not only the Bethany Arts Community but the broader community of Ossining.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lola Judge

Sent from my iPhone

From: Rachel Murphy [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 10:55 AM
To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>
Subject: Bethany Arts Center

Hello!

I'm writing to urge the Zoning Board to approve outdoor programming at Bethany Arts Center. My entire family has enjoyed many events at Bethany, including after-school programs, and we consider it a vital and vibrant part our community in Ossining.

Thank you for your time!
Rachel Murphy

25 Ellis Pl, Ossining, NY 10562

--

rachel murphy
girl genius

-----Original Message-----

From: Susan Carissimo [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 11:33 AM
To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>
Subject: Bethany

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter in support of Bethany's application to expand the offerings to the outside grounds. I am an Ossining resident live on Ganung Drive. I often take walks through Bethany's beautiful grounds. Since inception, I have seen Bethany put in a true labor of love, restoring and transforming the outside campus into the beauty it now is. It is a valuable resource for our camps for children and the community. I support their endeavors to expand their campus and being able to add more art to the community.

Thank you so much

Susan Carissimo

914 391 8674

Sent from my iPhone

-----Original Message-----

From: Victoria Gearity [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 10:22 AM
To: bldgdept <bldgdept@townofossining.com>
Subject: Bethany Special Permit

Dear ZBA Chair and Members,

Bethany Arts Community is an incredible asset to Ossining. Their request to hold activities outdoor on their vast property is clearly a good use of land in our densely developed region.

I'm very familiar with the challenges of well intended zoning regulations that can sometimes get in the way of good land use. I'm pleased to learn that the Town ZBA has the power to grant a special permit to support the success of this organization that is integral to Ossining's cultural revitalization.

How fortunate we are that when Maryknoll sold that portion of their land, it was purchased by BAC. Very few uses of this land would have been able to preserve the open space and low impact on the surrounding residents, as well as bring a positive cultural resource for the whole community.

I applaud the local businesses and organizations that are finding creative solutions for surviving the economic devastation of the pandemic. I urge the ZBA to identify a path for supporting the continued success of Bethany for the good of Ossining.

Regards,
Victoria Gearity
Proud Ossining Resident & Appreciative Supporter of Bethany Arts Community
[REDACTED]

THE BOARD OF REGENTS
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Betty A. Rosa
Chancellor

89 Washington Avenue
Room 110
Albany, NY 12234

June 29, 2020

Via email to:

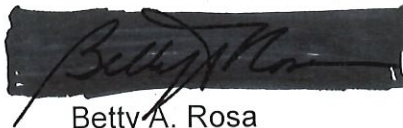
bldgdept@townofossining.com
SAneilli@townofossining.com

Dear Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals:

I am writing in support of Bethany Arts Community's application for a special use permit for outdoor activities. I visited Bethany last year with the late Regent Judith Johnson and we were thoroughly impressed with the current programming and potential of this burgeoning arts center. The vision of Bethany is impressive and inclusive. Ossining is extremely fortunate to have Bethany as part of its community.

As we look to the fall, it is more important than ever for schools and their community partners to find ways to collaborate and make use of outdoor space. Our children will need it. For these reasons, I encourage you to allow outdoor programming for the sake of the children and their families in your community.

Sincerely,



Betty A. Rosa
Chancellor
New York State Board of Regents

C:



Sandra Anelli

From: Elizabeth Bourne [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 4:12 PM
To: bldgdept; Sandra Anelli
Cc: davidl@bethanyarts.org
Subject: BAC Special Permit

Dear Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals:

It has come to my attention that Bethany Arts Community has filed an application for a permit for outdoor use. I am writing in support of that application for a special use permit for outdoor activities. I am an Ossining resident with two children. My daughter graduated Ossining High School and now attends Syracuse University and my son who has special needs is a student at Ossining High School. I also serve on the Recreation Advisory Board and the Village of Ossining Community Services Sub Committee.

In the spring of 2019, I co-chaired the Ossining MATTERS gala which was held at the Bethany Arts Community. It was an extremely successful event and I was happy to partner with this very professional and giving organization. I value the arts in our community and see a significant need to continue to support and partner with organizations like Bethany.

In my parent advocacy role, I am coordinating efforts to bring more art programs for youth with special needs to our community and partnering with Bethany is vital to this effort. The need for outdoor space is extremely important to these efforts and even more so with the need to have more options for space.

I appreciate you considering my whole-hearted support for Bethany in expanding the usage of its outdoor space to accommodate special needs art programs.

Best,
Elizabeth Bourne

Sandra Anelli

From: Richard Christ [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 3:24 PM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Community

To the Town of Ossining Building Department,

It has come to my attention the Bethany Arts Community has submitted an application to expand the use of their outdoor space.

I have known the principals and supported the activities of BAC and its artists for several years now and couldn't be more impressed. The principals clearly have a deep commitment to the property and institution. The artists are talented and very much in need of the exposure and nurturing that BAC provides. I have recommended family and friends to BAC and it has been a delight to all ages.

I know that proposals for change of use are difficult decisions. However this should be made easier by the clear commitment and vision of the principals and the positive impact on the community the program has already demonstrated. Please give this group the opportunity to expand on their vision to benefit all of us!

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard Christ

Sent from my iPad

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Sandra Anelli

From: Ray Prisament [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 1:59 PM
To: bldgdept
Cc: Evelyn Prisament
Subject: Letter of Support In Favor of Bethany's Outdoor Programming

To the Town of Ossining Zoning Board of Appeals:

My wife Evelyn and I are writing to express our strong support of Bethany's application for Outdoor Programming.

We are Ossining residents raising three children (ages 9, 12 and 14) in the village. ALL of our family members have benefited from the programming at Bethany, the outdoor as well as the indoor. In particular, our son and daughter have attended the Harry Potter Camp in the last two summers, which they enjoyed tremendously.

Through their collaboration with Theater O and other groups, Bethany has become a noteworthy artistic resource for our community. I see no logic to hobbling their success by limiting outdoor programming, which they have already proven can be done responsibly and with no actual complaints.

Please approve outdoor programming at Bethany. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Ray and Evelyn Prisament
147 Revolutionary Road, Scarborough, NY 10510
[REDACTED]

Sandra Anelli

From: Monica Martinez-Héss [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 10:32 AM
To: bldgdept
Subject: Bethany Arts Community and Theater O

Dear Zoning Board of the Town of Ossining,

We are writing to support Bethany Arts Community and Theater O camp. Our children, Mateo and Elena, have been attending classes in person before COVID-19 and online through Zoom during COVID-19. We truly believe in the amazing programs that they offer and more than ever we need places that offer outdoor activities for our kids.

They need to interact with other kids in a place where they can use their talents and imagination. What Bethany Arts Community and Theater O offer is magic!

Please take into consideration our petition to allow this place to hold outdoor events and summer camps.

Our family needs it and I am sure we are not the only ones looking for a fun, safe place for kids to enjoy during this challenging summer when the kids are home and the parents need to work.

In Elena's words:

I like when we have to make up our own characters, stories and the ball game when we throw it to Jessica and we throw it back. Oh! And the tongue twisters are fun!

In Mateo's words:

In Theater O I like that we get to act our own scenes and do funny jokes. I love my friends, and Jessica and Michele and the tongue twisters! And I miss them all!

Thanks!

Philip, Monica, Mateo, and Elena Hess
9 Lafayette Ave Ossining NY 10562
[REDACTED]