

Haven Oaks Farm



4 May 2024

To: Town of Moreau Planning Board

Subject: Cluster subdivision of Haven Oaks Farm

Background:

Before we address our request for a cluster subdivision on the property known as Haven Oaks Farm. I would like to provide a little background information and reasoning for the development.

My wife, Susanne, and I put our life's savings together 25 years ago to purchase a bankrupted, broken-down farm previously known as Blue Sky Farm. There were no horses on the farm and it was in terrible disrepair.

After 5 years and about \$250k in repairs we started a breeding and racing operation. We also created a residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation program for young adults. Over about a 6-year period we housed over 200 young adults and gave them a head start on a clean and sober life.

In 2014 Shannon Brock brought Adirondack Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (AEAP) to the farm. She uses the horses as a tool in counseling people. Shortly after she started, my wife, and I realized that retired racehorses would sometimes make great horses for Shannon's program and founded the Inherit the Gold Foundation in 2018. This is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with two missions. We provide a sanctuary for retired racehorses and use those horses to assist people in need of therapy that may not have insurance or need some financial assistance.

Moving forward:

As my wife and I have reached our full retirement ages we realize that for this program to continue, we must generate some funds and restructure the farm. That is the reason we are asking to subdivide the property. If we are granted permission to do the cluster subdivision we will preserve approximately 20 acres of land, barns, etc. for use as the Inherit the Gold Foundation and AEAP. Thus, preserving about 20 acres of Moreau for horses.

There are several reasons I have divided the lots like I have. All of the lots will have access to our paddocks and I have left all of the major drainage issues on my lot. I have managed the ponds and drainage for 25 years and want to make sure the property drains properly and the ponds have maintenance done as required. I personally swim and fish in those ponds.

Chapter 124-32 Objectives:

- A. The development will preserve natural topography and geological features. There will be no trees removed. There will be no disruption of natural drainage patterns.
- B. There will be no streets and the utilities will be provided via existing power supplies.
- C. The development pattern is in harmony with the land use objectives of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. There are similar lots along the same road in both directions.

Chapter 124-33 Standards:

- A. The overall density of lots is permitted in the zoning district.
- B. There will be no change in the permissible use of the lands.
- C. The minimum acreage that this would be applicable is 5x the minimum lot area or 25 acres. This development covers 34 acres total and will consist of 5 units.
- D. There will be no lands for parks, recreation, or municipal purposes. The remaining lands of the subdivision (approximately 22 acres) will be preserved as a "forever" horse farm. An agricultural covenant could be assigned to the property restricting any further development however that should not be necessary because there will be no more frontage for future development to occur.
- E. The maximum buildable lots would be 6. There are 34 acres divided by 5.
 - a. There are no proposed streets
 - b. There is no area set aside for parkland
 - c. The power lines that cross the property are on less than ¼ acre. It is a very small section that is actually owned by the utility for there transmission lines.
- F. The lots are clustered on the far West side of the existing farm and will have fencing that borders the horse farm. The concept is that the smaller lots can still use the larger paddocks and this will be an equine friendly community.
- G. The Zoning Administrator recommended a waiver for this requirement based on the fact that services are not and will not be available in the near future.

Special Considerations:

In an effort to maximize pasture space and coordinate fencing to make this an "equine subdivision", we are asking to use a shared driveway for the two lots in back. IAW the Zoning Administrator's guidance, we have allowed for each lot to have 40 ft of road frontage. On this 80 ft, the homeowners will put a shared driveway for access to the two houses in the rear. There will be the required legal contracts for the shared driveway between these two lots which will be occupied by the Hooper's and Ms. Brock (owner of AEAP).

The maps that I have provided today are just rough sketches. If the overall plan appears to be something the Board will consider I will have perc tests done and locate wells, septics, etc. as dictated

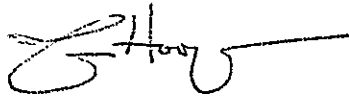
by the perc tests, setbacks, etc. After the surveys and associated engineering has been done, I will submit an updated plat plan.

I ask that the Board give this project special consideration for its merits. We are trying to preserve a 20-acre piece of Moreau for a horse sanctuary that also provides mental health counseling for 100's of our neighbors. Shannon's business, Adirondack Equine Assisted Psychotherapy has been recognized by the Post Star as the Outstanding Counseling Center in the area for 6 of the last 7 years. Our Inherit the Gold Foundation has rescued and provided homes for over a half dozen retired thoroughbreds.

Susanne and I want to thank you in advance for your time and consideration. We have put our last 25 years into this farm and would like to see it preserved as our legacy.

Respectfully,

James Hooper



Haven Oaks Farm, LLC - Inherit the Gold Foundation, Inc.