

Letter to Planning & Zoning

September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023

From Barbara and Joe Ellis

150 and 158 Town Street

As long-time neighbors and friends of the Ridgways, and residents of Cornwall for over 50 years, we have divided feelings over the proposed apple orchard, farm store and cidery. On one hand, we hope for the Ridgways' success, and have always been supportive of the Ridgways and their farm (in fact, our family supplies a considerable portion of the sap for Ridgway maple syrup from our trees, and we've been happy to do so as a favor). On the other hand, one cannot avoid recognizing the harsh realities faced by all the neighbors of having an alcoholic cidery and farm market next door – most acutely by the nearest property, a mere **260 feet** from the proposed site. The owners of this house, and perhaps others, will most likely be faced, because of noise and disturbance by the stark proximity of a commercial business involving outdoor socializing and drinking alcohol, into selling their house of 45+ years, certainly at a considerable discount to its current value. No one in this room can deny the anxiety and hurt felt by the Ingersolls throughout this process.

We ourselves are nearby neighbors, and we have grave concerns over the building of the proposed alcoholic cidery, concerns relating directly to our family's quality of life .

First and foremost, the cidery and its buildings would be located in close proximity to 5 properties along Town Street: Ingersoll (1), Selendy (2), and Ellis (2). The Ridgway cidery would be far closer (anywhere from 30-70% closer) to the 6 closest dwellings and the Church than it would be to the Ridgway home itself. The proximity of the houses to the cidery would undoubtedly, through noise, possibly inebriated customers, and overflow road parking (to name a few examples of issues) affect our quality of life.

Hard cider has as high an alcohol content as beer, sometimes more. Serving hard cider, even in flights, can certainly result in inebriation (not to mention that people can buy cans in the farm store and walk out with them on to Town Street). As we've seen in countless articles about cideries around the country, even those that start out intending to be small, patrons can be loud, and we will undoubtedly hear them given the proximity of our properties to the proposed location. In fact, from 150 Town Street, we can sometimes hear trucks at the farm near the stand, and the Ridgways I believe can sometimes hear us from theirs, both of which are totally fine and a part of everyday life – but given that we already hear each other at the current distance, we can only imagine what kind of noise hours of people drinking and socializing outdoors from that same distance will create.

(8.10c) It should be noted that the Ridgways own a beautiful field about 700 (?) feet back from Town Street, a field that would make a beautiful venue for the cidery and its support buildings and is a pragmatic alternative.. Gordon Ridgway has said that it would be impossible to make a change in the zoning regulations to utilize this parcel, but this has not been requested or tested. We feel that given that this is a commercial, alcohol-serving business, it should be located much farther back on the property. The reasons the Ridgways have given for not doing this are *not* insurmountable. We strongly encourage that the cidery either not happen or that it be located much farther back on the Ridgway property.

However, if the commission does accept the application, we implore the P&Z to build in some vital restrictions to minimize disturbance to residents of Cornwall.

- (8.11c) Responsible hours of operation: 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
- No alcoholic cider be served on the premises, only sold in cans to go if need be.

- (8,11A) No amplified music outside the building; if amplified music is required inside, windows must be closed.
- (8.11f) Lighting be screened from beyond the site.
- No parking allowed on the street
- No smoking inside or outside
- If alcohol is included in the acceptance, a limit on number of alcoholic flights sold per person
- No seated areas other than the tasting room if there is one, and the designated outdoor table area, not in the field in which the parking lot is located . There is a lot of space where we fear people would sit with their carried-out cans of cider, picnics, etc, adding to the noise from outdoor customers, and also inebriation from cans of hard cider, etc.
- No food trucks allowed on this front part of property near the cidery, to limit noise and congestion

Thank you for your consideration.

Barbara and Joe Ellis

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