

Dear Members of the Board of Adjustment & Appeals,

I am writing you as a neighborhood homeowner who is concerned that a large scale multi-purpose commercial endeavor is asking to get Special Exception to change their residential lot to a commercial lot. This plan is not for a discrete” in the home” business – in fact their home isn’t scheduled to be built until the kitchen, fire pond, farm pond, and event area landscaping are completed. Their future plan of a 290 seat banquet hall is the rough equivalent bringing the entire year around population of Chebeague on/off the Island for numerous weddings. This plan will irrevocably alter the neighborhood. I urge you to deny Chip and Jen Corson’s Shady Grove’s (SG) proposal for the following reasons:

Section 203.2C

Exception #1 SG has failed to show that increased traffic flow from the 35 space parking lot, the “mass transportation vehicle”, and the numerous trucks involved in their party supply rental business, and the service trucks for the portable toilets will not create a hazard to the pedestrian traffic. This foot traffic is markedly increased in the summer with people walking to/from the Rec Center, the school & ball field or just on a walkabout.

#2 Do not have enough data to determine if water pollution and/or contamination to any water supply is an issue.

#3 Do not have enough data to determine if smoke, dust, or airborne contaminants may be created by their business. Specifically, commercial livestock, especially chickens, can die en masse due to infection, heat intolerance etc. The most common way to dispose of their bodies is by incineration. No means of animal disposal has been given. No means of disposing of animal waste is given. (See also 110.7). No information has been given regarding campfires, outdoor cooking for their events that might create smoke, airborne contaminates.

#4 The proposed 290 seat banquet hall & 35 space parking lots are not compatible with the residential neighborhood in physical size, intensity of use or visual impact.

#5 SG fails to show that the hours of operation (6am to midnight 7 days/week), odors from potentially large amounts (no numbers for chickens, ducks, turkeys, geese, goats, guinea hogs have been given) from their commercial livestock, exhaust & fumes from a large commercial kitchen, the fumes from possible outdoor cooking, campfires, noise from not only music but also from their commercial livestock, and up to 290 people, light pollution from floodlights, odors from large amounts of garbage & portapotties will not create nuisances to the residential area.

#6 Not sufficient data given by SG to determine if it will create and/or aggravate any environmental issues.

#7 This application shows that it clearly has unusual characteristics ATYPICAL of the neighborhood. This area has always been a quiet, safe, residential area, where people can peacefully enjoy their homes & yards, can enjoy a walk, go to the beach and, in general “recharge their batteries”. SG is proposing to forever change the very characteristics that brought

people to the Island in the first place. Furthermore, by destroying those characteristics it will adversely affect the economic value of the surrounding neighborhood.

I respectfully request that the Members of the Board of Adjustments & Appeals strictly apply the standards for approval of a Special Exceptions and deny the request of Chip & Jen Corson.

I welcome Chip & Jen to rethink their current plan and submit a low impact plan that will be within their dreams and the desires of the neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Gin Ballard
17 Ballard Road

Additional Comments/Concern regarding Shady Grove (SG):

- SG states that “the demand for service & products on the Island has not been met”
Who/how was that determined?
- SG stated that “outside producers are beginning to fill the gaps left by absence of Island businesses.” Again who/how was that gap determined? There are Islanders & non-Islanders who actually prefer to deal with mainland businesses.
- Current facilities to hold events: the Rec Center, the School & its ball field, the Hall, the Library, the Hotel, the Parish House, upstairs at the Niblic, and the Slow Bell Café. What warrants another venue?
- The kitchen plans discuss offering ready to eat meals/baked goods. What plans are in place to pick up the trash that customers create as they throw their wrappers away as they walk home?
- What are their proposed hours of operations if they “extend your calendar of operations”? SG states that they anticipate that the weekends will be their busiest times. The weekends are also a time when year around & summer residents want to enjoy the peace & quiet of their homes and yards.
- Towns typically state bothersome noise is allowed from 7am until 10pm. Why should SG be allowed to start earlier & end later?
- Besides the proposed 40x80 high peak tent pole, what are the “other facilities” that might be “set up to meet the needs of whatever type of event we are hosting”? i.e. large amplifiers for band? Staging for fireworks?
- If SG adds the proposed barn what does “with facilities” mean?
- Where is the proposed banquet hall going? Is the Hall the same as the Barn?

- Will the “new techniques” in small scale farming include machinery? If so, what is the anticipated decibel level of that equipment? Will it be used at night? i.e. irrigation system with loud pumps.
- As a commercial enterprise having hundreds of party goers, how will SG control underage drinking? How will they control rowdy guests? Does SG expect the Town to provide policing? Many towns require that even “private parties” hire, at their expense, off duty Police officers to oversee the party. Is SG prepared to do this?
- To be assured that the event area is “located over 500 feet through densely forested land any existed residences” is actually not reassuring. Noise can travel in any & all directions. For example, the residence at 17 Ballard Rd on Chebeague can hear the pounding of rocks on Hope Island.
- Will SG obtain a bond for all infrastructures that are planned?
- SG will be growing food/breeding animals that are going to feed people. Will the appropriate Dept. of Agriculture licenses be obtained?
- SG water will be considered “public drinking water” Has SG made provisions for the periodic testing that will need to be done?
- Has testing been done and/or will it be done to determine high arsenic levels in the soil that can result from apple orchards?
- Will the solid waste from potentially 290 guests be able to be stored in residential garbage cans or will a dumpster(s) be needed? How will the dumpster(s) be managed? Will SG be using disposable items i.e. paper plates/cups etc. for their parties that will increase the amount of trash taken to the transfer station? Will the town be expected to pay for more barging of that trash?
- Will SG’s desire to use “organic & holistic growing techniques” include food composting? If so, composting can create obnoxious odors attract raccoons, foxes and other wildlife not only to their commercial endeavor but also to their residential neighbors. What provisions will be made to keep the animals from the compost area?
- If SG does consistently bring in 290 guests at what point does the Town need to consider getting more Rescue personnel? i.e. if the Hotel has a wedding of several hundred, a private family has a party of 100 and SG has their wedding just by these numbers the probabilities go up that a 911 call(s) will happen. The last time I was involved with two calls at the same time (both were chest pain in older adults) the Hospice nurse, myself, and FireFighters initially responded to the scene. The patient ended up being transported in someone’s SUV to the boat. The second patient was transported via ambulance with all its accompanying equipment. Does the Town need to invest in a second ambulance too?

Please consider addressing these additional concerns before granting a Special Exception to Chip & Jen Corson.