

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**CONGREGATE LIVING AND SOCIAL SERVICES LICENSING BOARD**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, February 28, 2023**

**6:00 PM**

**Council Chambers,  
City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Andrew Oram, Chair  
Medard Kopczynski, Vice Chair  
Alison Welsh  
Thomas Savastano

**Staff Present:**

John Rogers, Zoning Administrator/Building  
& Health Official  
Corinne Marcou, Board Clerk  
Don Farquhar, Fire Chief

**Members Not Present:**

Jennifer Seher

**I. Call to Order – Roll Call**

Chair Oram called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and roll call ensued.

**II. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – January 24, 2023**

A motion by Mr. Savastano to adopt the January 24, 2023 meeting minutes was duly seconded by Ms. Welsh and the motion carried unanimously.

**III. Unfinished Business**

Mr. Rogers reported that one item was missing from the agenda packet. His office received the neighborhood relations plan that the Board required from Hampshire House. Chair Oram said he reviewed the plan and stated that it felt thin but was probably adequate—something, not a lot—and he called it perfunctory. Because not all members of the Board had reviewed the plan, Chair Oram tabled the discussion until the next meeting, when Staff will ensure it is included in the agenda packet. Vice Chair Kopczynski agreed that he would like to dispose of the issue.

**IV. Applications**

- A) **LB 23-02: Applicant, Jay Hayston, Executive Director for Cedarcrest Center, is requesting a Congregate Living & Social Services License for a Residential Care Facility, located at 91 Maple Ave., and is in the Low Density District and as defined in Chapter 46, Article X of the Keene City Ordinances.**

Chair Oram opened the hearing and requested Staff comments. Mr. Rogers reported that this is an application for a residential care facility on Maple Avenue. While this property is in the Low Density District, Maple Avenue is on the institutional streets list, so this is an allowed conforming use. Mr. Rogers said all inspections were performed. Fire Chief Farquhar said that Cedarcrest Center was 100% Code compliant. Mr. Rogers said the Housing Inspector also found no issues.

Chair Oram said this was a seemingly adequate and rather complete application. He welcomed the applicant, Jay Hayston, Executive Director of Cedarcrest Center. Mr. Hayston said that Cedarcrest Center has had a long and fruitful relationship with this community and neighborhood since its humble beginnings in Westmoreland and relocation to Keene in 1990. He said the Center has some regulatory oversight from the Department of Education, the Office of Non-Public Schools, and the Department of Health and Human Services. The Center must report to those entities regularly, and parts of those reports were used for this application.

Vice Chair Kopczynski agreed that it was a complete application and said it was nice to read. He asked if Cedarcrest Center has any federal oversight. Mr. Hayston said yes, indirectly. He continued explaining that there is federal oversight because Cedarcrest serves people with developmental differences. So, special education IDEA regulations provide some oversight for special education services because Cedarcrest is a private school. Additionally, Mr. Hayston said that Medicaid is a primary payer for these residential services, so there is also oversight from the Department of Housing and Human Services.

Vice Chair Kopczynski explained that when this Ordinance was written, it was known that a lot of agencies regularly reported to other agencies. While it seemed duplicative, he said the City embraced it and added it to the Code. The Vice Chair asked whether the applicant had any difficulty completing this application. Mr. Hayston said that as the Executive Director it was easy for him to reply that it was an easy process because he did not do the collating, subject matter experts did. Still, he said it was not too onerous because a lot was already written for other agencies, but things did need reformatting and rephrasing for this application. Mr. Hayston said he was aware of other localities in New England that have deemed status or expedited processes for these sorts of licenses, and he welcomed a conversation about what that could look like in the future. He also imagined that if the application format remains standard year after year, it should be easy to reapply because everything is already written.

Ms. Welsh said that while it was not as lengthy as the evacuation plan and others, she appreciated the neighborhood relations plan. She said it seemed like Cedarcrest Center was very welcoming to the community, which she appreciated, and she mentioned their close relationship with the First Baptist Church. She said some applicants have struggled with this part. Mr. Hayston appreciated Ms. Welsh's comments and stated that Cedarcrest Center serves children and young adults outside of their homes. He said the Center has an important obligation to help these young people be members of the community; they go on field trips, attend community events, and they welcome the community into their space on Maple Avenue. Mr. Hayston said

the neighborhood relations plan was a fun opportunity to highlight what they have done with the neighborhood.

Mr. Savastano said this was a really great application. He said the staff training and procedures plan was short but given the level of oversight and nature of different types of staffing, he did not think it was necessary and was not concerned. Chair Oram agreed and added that a lot of those details were implied because the Center could not function as well as it does without a great deal of staff training.

Chair Oram asked Mr. Hayston if creating the neighborhood relations plan was worthwhile. Mr. Hayston said yes because it is an important element of the services that Cedarcrest Center provides. He said it was a useful and pleasant reflection for his team.

Vice Chair Kopczynski noted a theme of comments about the neighborhood relations plan. He said when looking at congregate living and social services, there is often a missing connection with their community and neighborhood; the agencies become “other” instead of a part of the community. The Vice Chair thought that point had been missing in conversations with previous applicants. He said the point is not to force these agencies to create a plan. Instead, it is an opportunity for them to articulate that for them and the neighborhood to be successful, they must work together. He said it was a pleasure when a plan achieves that focus and that in this case, it was a bit of a revelation.

Chair Oram opened the hearing to public comment. Hearing none, the Board proceeded reviewing the criteria for granting the license.

*The licensing board shall consider the following criteria when evaluating whether to approve, renew, or deny a congregate living and social services license application:*

Criteria 1: *The use is found to be in compliance with the submitted operations and management plan, including but not limited to compliance with all applicable building, fire, and life safety codes.*

Vice Chair Kopczynski said he heard ample testimony from Mr. Rogers and Chief Farquhar indicating that the applicant met this criteria. Vice Chair Kopczynski made the following motion, which Mr. Savastano seconded. On a vote of 4–0, the Board found application LB 23-02 in compliance with the first criteria.

Criteria 2: *The use is of a character that does not produce noise, odors, glare, and/or vibration that adversely affects the surrounding area.*

Vice Chair Kopczynski said there was no evidence from the current inspections or historically from the neighbors indicating that Cedarcrest Center had problems with noise, odors, glare, or vibration. Vice Chair Kopczynski made the following motion, which Ms. Welsh seconded. On a vote of 4–0, the Board found application LB 23-02 in compliance with the second criteria.

Criteria 3: *The use does not produce public safety or health concerns in connection with traffic, pedestrians, public infrastructure, and police or fire department actions.*

Vice Chair Kopczynski said that there was no evidence from the inspections, testimonies, or history of this use to indicate any concerns. Vice Chair Kopczynski made the following motion, which Ms. Welsh seconded. On a vote of 4–0, the Board found application LB 23-02 in compliance with the second criteria.

Mr. Savastano made the following motion, which Ms. Welsh seconded. On a vote of 4–0, the Congregate Living and Social Services Licensing Board approved application LB 23-02.

**V. New Business**

Mr. Savastano mentioned the Board’s discussion about the Serenity Center and Monadnock Peer Support from January 2023 that he read in the meeting minutes. Mr. Rogers said that was an initial conversation because within the Board’s rules, they have the ability to transfer a license. With the Serenity Center changing locations, it was the Board’s choice whether to have them come back for a new license. Because Serenity Center is changing locations, Mr. Rogers said they need a Conditional Use Permit from the Planning Board, and that process was underway. After they receive a permit from the Planning Board, they will appear again before this Board.

**VI. Non-Public Session (if required)**

**VII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Oram adjourned the meeting at 6:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Katryna Kibler, Minute Taker  
March 1, 2023

Reviewed and edited by,  
Corinne Marcou, Board Clerk