

Town of Princeton  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS/PLANNING BOARD  
**Joint Public Hearing -- April 28, 2021**

**Petition submitted to ZBA to determine if operations at 184 Worcester Road conform to uses allowed in Business Zoning District. This public hearing incorporated site plan review for the Planning Board.**

**Minutes and Decision**

The Princeton Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board held a joint public hearing at the Town Hall Annex, 4 Town Hall Drive on Wednesday, April 28 at 7:00 p.m. on the petition of David Cronin for his business operations located at 184 Worcester Road, Assessors Map #15, Lot 33-10 in a Business zoning district.

ZBA members present were Chair Jesse Weeks, William Lawton, and alternate Edith Morgan. Member Larry Greene, Jr., was absent. Planning Board members included Chair John Mirick, Ann Neuburg (remote access), Ian Catlow, Rud Mason and Tom Sullivan. Also in attendance were Building Inspector Fred Lonardo, Fire Inspector Tim Kelly, Bruce Jacobson, and by remote access, David Utter and Linda Nash.

**At 7:00 PM** Chairman Weeks opened the hearing and explained the procedure and read the public hearing notice. He explained that the purpose of the public hearing was to determine if the operations at 184 Worcester Road conformed to the definition of "light manufacturing." Chairman Mirick for the Planning Board announced that as a new business and "change of use" at the property, it requires site plan approval.

The petitioner gave an overview of the operations and outlined his three businesses within the property at 184 Worcester Road, which he purchased Dec. 30, 2020. The 2.42-acre site consists of a post & beam "house" built in 1988 for a former construction w/sawmill operation. It is connected in the rear to a long commercial/industrial building dating from the 1950s which has housed various business tenants over the years.

Mr. Cronin described Henry Schwab Company as a printing operation supplying funeral homes with products such as embossed cards and (die-cut) hanging tags. Two Heidelberg presses are used for the printing operation. A second company is Metal Tubing USA which bends tubing and makes components for racks and related products for the funeral industry. A third company called Premium Mortuary Products is part of the Henry Schwab Co. and involves call-in order fulfillment.

Some welding is involved in crafting the tubing products, and Mr. Cronin described it as a minor part of the operation, used for up to 20 items in a single order during a typical week. He said deliveries were limited to box trucks entering once or twice per week. Employees currently number about eight for all companies, so parking is more than adequate and traffic is minimal.

He pointed out that the post & beam building housed office and computer operations, and the rear building contained manufacturing/distribution and warehousing. Since taking ownership he has invested in a new electrical system, lighting, new flooring, propane heating and insulation and fire-proof paint. The exterior has been cleared of machinery remnants from the previous tenant.

**At 7:20 PM**, the chair opened up questions and comments and Mr. Lonardo asked that a building permit be issued and subsequent certificate of occupancy approved. He had submitted a letter to Mr. Cronin outlining his concerns, which the ZBA previously received. Mr. Kelly had also sent Mr. Cronin a similar letter stating that welding activities were to cease and desist. He pointed out that fire safety codes need to be addressed. A sprinkler system may be required depending on square footage and types of uses. Welding operations and hazardous material handling may also be subject to certain fire permits. He added that the structure doesn't meet current building/fire codes and it lacks appropriate alarm systems. ZBA members had no further questions.

For the Planning Board, Mr. Mirick then went over the list of items addressed in a site plan review, and most were long-established such as traffic flow and egress as well as parking, which is more than adequate for the buildings' occupancy. Exterior lighting is limited to a streetlight by the southeast corner of the lot although there is a motion sensor light at the doorway of the newer building. Hours of operation are currently, at maximum, weekdays 7:30 AM to 6:30 PM. Noise from machine operations is contained indoors and is minimal enough to not require ear protection. There is minimal discharge into the private septic system and no change to stormwater runoff within the site.

Speaking as citizens, not as Planning Board members, Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Mirick stated that the operations as described appear to meet the definition of light manufacturing as allowed in the Business Zone, especially since it is a small operation with nothing noxious being generated. Mr. Jacobson agreed, noting that he has never noticed any noise or anything offensive emitted from the site.

There were no further questions from the general public although Ms. Nash, attending online, stated that she heard little of the applicant's testimony, as participants in the room were spaced out to meet Covid-19 restrictions.

**At 7:40 PM** the chair closed the comment period and asked the ZBA members to deliberate. With no further comments, Mr. Weeks asked for a vote and he along with Mr. Lawton and Ms. Morgan voted in agreement that the three businesses presented by Mr. Cronin conformed to uses described in the Business District under Section IV of the Zoning Bylaws, with the following conditions:

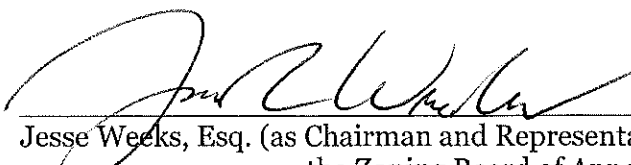
- Compliance with all other applicable local, state and/or federal laws and regulations remains the responsibility of the applicant.
- The applicant will comply with requirements set forth by Fire Department staff and the building commissioner regarding any permitting and code upgrades which are relevant to operations conducted at 184 Worcester Road.
- Any changes to the uses approved in this decision may require further permitting/approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals and/or the Planning Board.

Appeals, if any, should be made pursuant to Section 17, of the Massachusetts Zoning Act, Chapter 40A and shall be filed within twenty (20) days after the date of the filing of this decision with the Town Clerk.

Princeton Zoning Board of Appeals

Dated:

*May 5, 2021*

  
Jesse Weeks, Esq. (as Chairman and Representative of  
the Zoning Board of Appeals)

A copy of this decision was filed with the Office of the Town Clerk on May 5, 2021 (date)

  
Town Clerk

The Town Clerk hereby certifies that twenty (20) days have elapsed after the decision was filed with the Office of the Town Clerk and no appeal has been filed as provided by Section 17 of the Massachusetts Zoning Act, Chapter 40A.

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Town Clerk