

**TOWN OF HOLDEN  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
HEARING**

**STEVEN & DEBORA FONTAINE**

**V 1103**

The Zoning Board of Appeals held a public hearing on March 17, 2011 at 7:15 p.m. in Memorial Hall, 1196 Main Street, Holden, MA on the Petition of Steven & Debora Fontaine for property located at 16 Heritage Lane for a Variance to allow the raising of poultry for personal use.

Members in attendance: R. Spakauskas, S. Annunziata, R. Fraser, F. Lonardo and R. Butler.

The Chairman called the meeting to order. Since there were no objections, the reading of the legal notice and list of abutters was waived. The Secretary read the application and Findings of Fact.

The applicant addressed the Board and explained his reasons for this variance request. Some of his children are allergic to eggs, but can eat organic ones. Mr. Fontaine would like to have six chickens; the chickens he would like to have are very docile and they are called Orpington. They produce one – three eggs per day and lay eggs for approximately two years. The coop and the run will be fully enclosed.

R. Butler asked why the coop was so close to the house. Mr. Fontaine said they didn't want to have to go too far and this way the children could reach it also.

R. Fraser asked him about his plan to dispose of the manure. The applicant said he was going to put it in the compost container.

S. Annunziata asked if they were going to have a rooster; it was answered no, they are only required for breeding.

An abutter from 122 Paugus Road mentioned that the lots in the neighborhood are very small and would be affected by this and asked that this variance not be granted.

Another abutter from 140 Paugus Road, who abuts the Fontaine property in the back said the lots are very narrow and they are also opposed to the granting of this variance.

Erich Mierzejewski, Chairman of the Agricultural Commission, commented that this is a growing trend around the nation.

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Nancy Austin, 149 Paugus Road, said the houses in the neighborhood are mostly ranch houses, but she has a cape and her bedroom windows on the second floor face the back of the Fontaine property. She has serious reservations about granting this variance. She has had experience on a farm and chickens produce a lot of waste, which concerns her if her basement is flooded, resulting in this waste in her basement. She also expressed concern with the neighborhood pets that like to roam.

Debra Lamir, 135 Paugus Road, also spoke in opposition of the variance being granted stating that chicken feed attract a lot of mice.

John Quarella, 134 Paugus Road, said he bought this property 35 years ago, hoping it would be a residential neighborhood, not a farming community. He then read a letter into the record from Gladys Chilleri, 97 Paugus Road, who was unable to attend the meeting but wished to express her opposition.

Joanne Petty, 339 Holden Street, spoke in opposition of this variance because of the fox and coyotes and wildlife in the area.

Ann Hassett, 287 Causeway Street, felt that if there were any manure run-off it would go onto her property.

S. Annunziata asked if anyone had any information regarding the odor that would result. Mrs. Fontaine said there are two products they would use to nullify the odor and she explained these to the Board.

S. Annunziata also asked about the size of the container that would be used for the compost; Mr. Fontaine said it would be approximately three feet high and 18 inches wide.

Since there were no further comments or questions, Mr. Fontaine made a summation and added that there would be an eight-foot high fence in the rear and both sides of his property.

The public hearing was closed at 8:10 p.m.

The Board discussed and agreed to extend their decision to May in order to give the petitioner and the Board ample time to research the granting of a variance for this type of request. They also asked that the petitioner attempt to supply additional information to the Board. The Board asked that Mr. Fontaine submit a letter to the Board requesting an extension for his case until May. They asked that the Board receive this letter no later than April 7, 2011.