

PLANNING BOARD

**Town of Kirkwood
70 Crescent Drive
Kirkwood, NY 13795**

PUBLIC HEARING

September 10, 2025

SITE PLAN REVIEW FOR A DOG TRAINING FACILITY IN A PORTION OF THE EXISTING BUILDING AT PROPERTY LOCATED AT 63 BARLOW ROAD IN THE TOWN OF KIRKWOOD, KNOWN AS TAX MAP NO. 162.05-1-22, AND LOCATED IN A BUSINESS TWO DISTRICT ON THE APPLICATION OF TGM DOG TRAINING AND EVENT CENTER, LLC

Chairman Woolbaugh read the notice of public hearing and commented we have the affidavit of posting by the Town Clerk, notice to property owners within five hundred feet of the project, affidavit of publication in the Press & Sun Bulletin. We have the Broome County Planning Department 239-m recommendations, and a Short EAF has been filed.

Chairman Woolbaugh opened the public hearing to public participation at 7:03 p.m.

Tom Milligan, owner of 63 Barlow Road explained they have been trying to rent out the upper floor for many years after the last tenant, Norfolk Southern left. To try to attract a new tenant they put in a solar system for the building, to offer a discount on their electricity. When that did not work they listed with Howard Hanna Commercial and they searched for three years. TGM Dog Training is interested in renting out the upper floor of the building. They had been in a building in Endwell for years but were forced to leave.

Mr. Milligan explained his building was built into the hill, built for manufacturing on the bottom floor and office use on the upper floor.

Ms. Sharon Witte, owner of TGM Dog Training and Event Center, explained she opened up this business because many of her friends participated in the Susque-Nango Kennel Club and Nordic Myst Dog Training Center and would have been without training. They had to travel for hours to get to training. After speaking to a friend that was a realtor, they found this building on Barlow Road. All of the events they do are sanctioned by the American Kennel Club. They have used one of the parks in the Town of Kirkwood for the past two years. This will allow them to bring different trainers together in one place. Some have been training at the PAL camp. The building has been improved, which they have done some themselves. Their mission is to promote responsible pet ownership. They have different types of classes. The dogs never mix in the rings; they are on a leash and are handled one by one. They are always with their handler, and their handler is their owner. No dogs will be at that building in a crate staying overnight. It is not a boarding facility. It is not dog fighting. It has plenty of parking. Sometimes the trainers come together to compete against one another. It also helps the economy, people buy food, gas, and sometimes stay in local hotels.

Ms. Mary Cummings and her dog Wilber showed the board some of what they do with the dogs, the training that is involved. Her dog has been in several movies.

Mr. McKertich asked if there were any exterior renovations to the building and Mr. Milligan explained lights that shine into the parking lot, which were there but had been down for years. The lights are

motion sensor, and all are on the backside of the building facing the solar panel area.

Mr. McKertich asked if there was going to be signage and Ms. Witte explained that signage is about six months out so in the meantime there will be three decals for the door, one for each entity that will be using the building. They will have something on the existing sign in front of the building. She will get a sign permit from the Code Department.

Mr. McKertich asked if there are any dog training activities that take place outside of the building on the property and Ms. Witte explained yes, there could be. They do scent work, which is both indoors and outdoors. That is where the trainer places tiny packets of different scents in various places. They were told they could use the grass area next to the solar farm. It is tree-lined and there are no houses. The dogs are always on a leash, one dog at a time. The dogs will never be together.

Ms. Cummings explained what scent work is. They use different essential oils hidden in metal vessels, both interior, exterior, and sometimes in vehicles.

Mr. McKertich commented if there is just one dog at a time and they are on a leash, which should not have much impact. If there was a situation with a lot of dogs, outside barking, that could impact the neighborhood, that is not getting approved with this application. You would need to come back. Ms. Witte commented they are not looking for that, the dogs are on a 15-foot lead. If someone is out doing scent work with a dog you have to wait in your car until the other dog is back in its crate and in the car before the next dog is released.

Hearing no other comments Chairman Woolbaugh closed the public hearing at 7:29 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Kay Sullivan
Secretary, Kirkwood Planning Board