



**FESTIVAL
PLAYERS**
OF PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY

TEMPORARY USE PERMIT APPLICATION
Supporting Documents & Planning Justification
15786 Loyalist Parkway, Prince Edward County

James Griffin and Michael Micaud
The County of Prince Edward
Shire Hall, 332 Picton Main St,
Picton, ON K0K 2T0

June 6, 2022

Re: Temporary Use Authorization for 15786 Loyalist Parkway to Permit Festival Players to utilize an existing structure for theatre performances for the 2022 and 2023 Season.

Dear James

In the pages that follow, please find attached our temporary use application for the existing structure located at 15786 Loyalist Parkway, on the north side of the pond, and south side of the Millennium Trail to continue to be used as an outdoor theatre for Festival Players of Prince Edward County.

To give context to the application, and the duration requested, Festival Players has commented on the impact the company has on the area and the arts in the final pages of this brief. Festival Players is currently undertaking an extensive process to identify a location for a new permanent home for the company. While this process is underway, and because of Covid restrictions in the summer of 2021, we offered to Festival Players to re-purpose an existing structure on the property. A temporary timber stage and back drop were added, and specifically designed to limit the noise transfer to neighboring properties. The outdoor pavilion successfully operated in the summer of 2021, without complaints from neighbors or the municipality.

Originating from conversations between the creative Director Graham Abbey, and the applicants, we realized that because of Covid restrictions there was an immediate threat to the companies ability to put on shows in the summer of 2021. Festival Players previous theatre was no longer viable because of Covid restrictions limiting capacity to an untenable level, such that the building was sold, and the Festival Players Board initiated a process to find a new permanent, long-term home for the company somewhere in the County. In the interim, and particularly because of the favorable social distancing environment which the pavilion provides during Covid times, we have offered, and hope to be able to honour that offering, that Festival Players may use this area for performances until their new home is secured and constructed.

To ensure the successful operation of this temporary venue, we have put considerable thought and care to create a programming schedule on the property which ensures that each use and event is scheduled to ensure people and traffic management will be effectively managed. To ensure this, we have designated parking areas for the different events that take place on the property, without impacting any of the agricultural land. Diagrams of the available parking can be seen on page 7. All event arrivals and departures are spaced out to ensure there is no traffic cross over.

Although the site specific TC zoning afforded to the property does permit these uses, the location of the Pavilion is outside the boundaries of the permitted zoning, as such, we are requesting this Temporary Use Authorization to allow theatre performances to occur on these lands zoned as RU1, however otherwise consistent with the uses permitted by zoning By Law 2436-2009 and Ontario Municipal Board Decision of January 26th, 2010.

Thank you for consideration of our request and we are available should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Michael von Teichman & Alexander Portman



TEMPORARY USE PERMIT APPLICATION 15786 LOYALIST PARKWAY

CURRENT LAND USE

Below is an aerial view of the subject lands showing the areas which are not useable for agriculture. The shaded green areas are either developed forests or new evergreen plantings. The area shaded in grey is soft ground, subject to moisture retention and not suitable for farming. The remaining irregularly shaped area is not ideal for planting or farming and is further disrupted for the purpose of farming by a gravel road running from the driveway to the subject site. As a result of a large area being forested, gravel road or wetland, this area is not farmed as other portions of the property provide better agricultural potential.



Although the subject lands are not ideal for farming, the remaining area on the property designated Agricultural is being farmed more actively than it has in many years. In addition to 600 apple trees, we are also growing a market garden of approximately 10 acres, shown below.

These market gardens are planted to provide farm fresh produce to patrons of the market, theatre, special events, and the Inn. To create a better connection between the social/tourism events and farming operation, we intend to install informational signs explaining the farming operation, crop cycles and other information we believe strengthens the connection between tourism and the key asset of farming in the County.

properties or, more specifically, the agricultural uses neighboring the subject lands. The Tourist Commercial zoning south of the property is compatible with this use.



The lands north of the Millennium Trail are rented out and farmed as cash crop. Within the 22 acres south of the Millennium Trail, approximately 10 acres are farmed and 12 acres are used to support the Tourist Commercial zoning (parking, gardens etc) We have approximately 600 apple trees and 6 acres of market garden which are all farmed on the property in addition to the 50 acres north of the trail for a total of more than 75% of the property being used for farming, a greater proportion than has been farmed at the property since the zoning was changed in 2011.

AGRI TOURISM

It is our believe that this use provides an excellent opportunity for Agri Tourism. Enjoy professional actors in an outdoor setting, against the backdrop of a heritage barn, while enjoying locally produced or farm grown concessions, offers visitors a connection to the farming landscape that is so important to the history and character of the area. . Although we understand there has been a complaint about the use of this pavilion on the property, we hope the attached pages will provide sufficient explanation for the person or persons who have complained search the temporary use application will be permitted so Festival Players may continue the important work of fostering the arts in this community.



PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

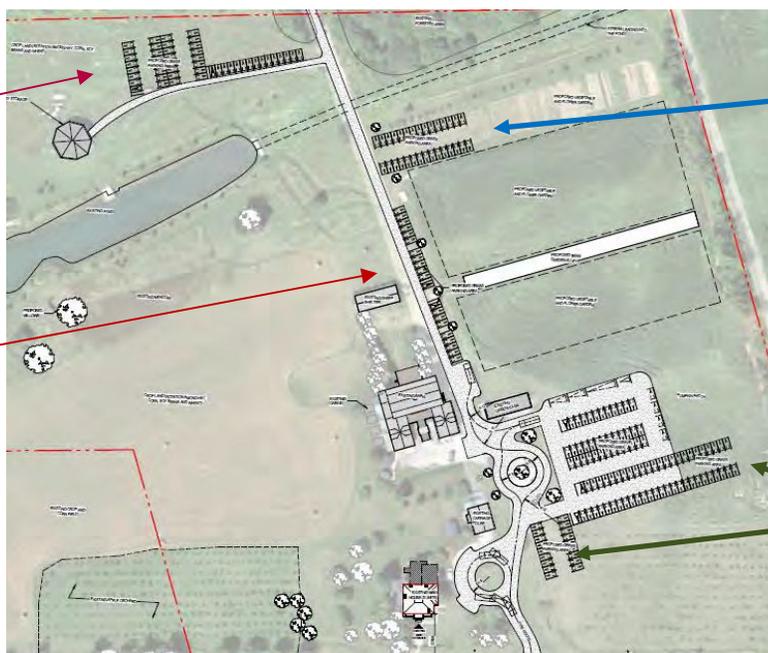
ONSITE PARKING PROVIDED

As shown in the image below, we have sufficient parking for this use on the property. We have created 4 distinct parking areas, on lands that are not used for agriculture, to allow us sufficient parking for each of the uses which take place on the property.

We have shown in the diagram that follows, the ability to provide 217 Parking spaces, including 11 accessible spaces on site without impacting any agricultural uses. . To ensure the maintenance of the grassed parking areas, we have shown excess parking to be provided so certain areas may be closed for maintenance as required. By having excess parking for the various needs of the property, we are able to section areas off for seeding, sodding and maintenance to ensure the parking surfaces are in good condition and maintained to avoid bare mud spots and parking issues.

47 Spaces for festival players staff and attendees.

21 overflow spaces on hard packed soil.

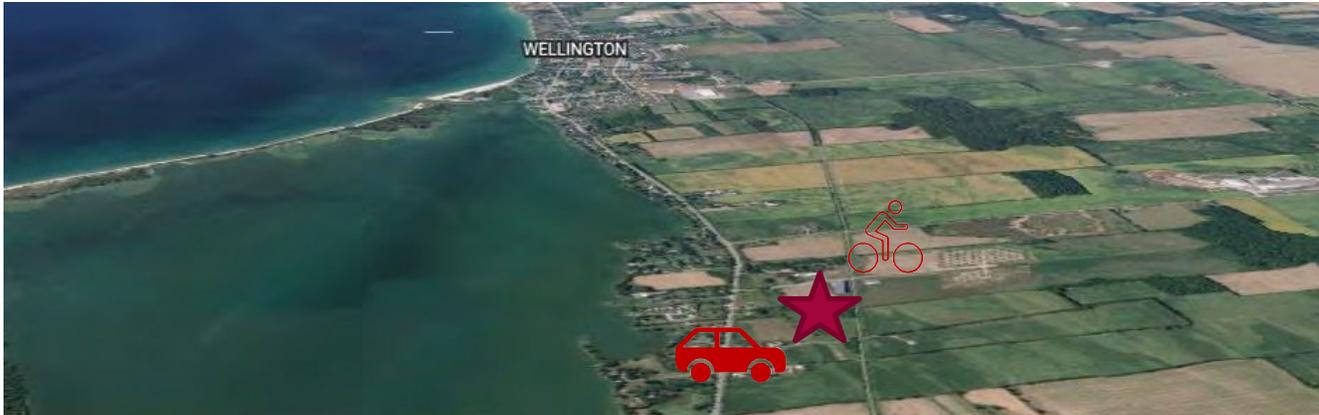


30 attendee spaces for Festival Players and overflow.

36 Overflow Spaces

PARKING MANAGEMENT PROVIDED

Festival Players has a volunteer network who assist our staff in directing traffic as required. The Eddie engages a parking attendant for any ticketed events where more than 125 people are expected. Festival Players provides volunteers for all shows to assist arriving cars to ensure smooth exiting of guests at the end of the performance. To our knowledge, there have been no complaints to date regarding access and traffic to the property from the Festival Players previous season and, in conversations with the neighbors closest to the pavilion, the use has been well received.



MILLENNIUM TRAIL & LOYALIST PARKWAY ACCESS

The property benefits from having access to key transit corridors. From Loyalist Parkway, the subject property is easily accessible from both sides of the County allowing Festival Players to draw a wider audience and sell the number of tickets required for the quality of production provided.

The property also has direct access to the Millennium Trail and would provide covered bike storage, if permitted, to facilitate increased bike traffic and use of the Trail. By providing parking for all terrain vehicles, e-bikes and self propelled bikes, we hope to increase use of the trail for attending events at The Eddie.

We had made an application to have a bike repair station located on the trail available to the public, to further foster self propelled transit in the region, but we were not permitted due to the zoning in place. We have provided dedicated bike parking and encourage guests to use the trail where possible to access events at the property.



EVENT MANAGEMENT

NOISE MANAGEMENT

The Pavilion will be used exclusively for Festival Players performances during the tourist season. We typically operate the Pavilion roughly two weeks per month, 6 days per week during performance weeks. Shows typically start at 7pm for evening shows and 2pm for matinees, and run for approximately 90 minutes, with guests leaving the property between 8:30 and 9pm when traffic on Loyalist Parkway is lower. All noise ceases from the Pavilion contractually at 9pm.

EVENT SCHEDULING

Although we have many events at the property, we take great care in scheduling each event so the traffic generated is manageable and parking is sufficiently provided for each event.

We leave 2 hours between the arrival and departure of all events, so the number of cars entering the property is controlled. We also invite guests to come before the show to enjoy the property in order to manage the arrival intervals of guests such that they do not create congestion at the regional roadway.

All evening shows are scheduled for 7pm start, and run for approximately 1.5 hours. Matinee's start at 2pm, 1 day per week for each show run.

2022 Schedule

August 1st to August 14th- 6 Days per week.
August 23rd to September 4th- 6 Days per week.
September 26th to September 30th- 1 show per day.

2023 Schedule

June- 14 days max per month
July- 14 days max per month
August- 21 days max per month
September- 14 days max per month

IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURS

We have spoken to the majority of our neighbors who have expressed their support of the theatre. By controlling the times of performances, and constructing the stage and backdrop to send any sound away from neighbors, we hope this use will have no material impact on adjacent property owners.



WASHROOMS AND WATER

The Pavilion does not currently have water or septic. The area is serviced by Porto potties, with one stall per 50 patrons provided, and additional washrooms in the main barn. Potable water is provided from the barn for each performance and a sanitary station is available outside the portlets.



IMPACT OF FESTIVAL PLAYERS

HISTORY OF FESTIVAL PLAYERS AT THE EDDIE

Festival Players is the only professional performing arts company in Prince Edward County. For 15 years, we have been one of the County's signature cultural events. We are the County's leading generator of engaging, vital and entertaining arts – creating stories that are relevant, imaginative and innovative for our local community and our broader audience seeking escape, rejuvenation and renewal in The County. Toronto Star has credited Festival Players for building a cultural infrastructure possibly rivalling the Stratford and Shaw Festivals as a “prestige arts-related tourist destination”.

Festival Players presents live performing arts at the outdoor Pavilion and Red Barn Theatre at The Eddie Hotel & Farm offering ticketed theatre, dance and comedy events, as well as free events for family and youth.

Festival Players has a long history at this location, we performed some of our first shows here when it was Fields on West Lake when the company first began. In 2018 we built a studio theatre in Wellington, our first indoor performance venue. In 2020, we were unable to maintain the venue due to the pandemic and lost our space and offices. Last season we were thrilled to partner with The Eddie and open an outdoor pavilion stage to ensure the safety of our company, artists and visitors. **This outdoor pavilion at The Eddie is the reason we have survived the pandemic.**

Outdoor events will feel safer for patrons for years to come, given the constant threat of new variants worldwide and the demographic of our audience. The Eddie hosts our outdoor stage and gives us in-kind support with reduced rental fees which makes our season possible.

Unfortunately, the bills of the property and the expenses of the farming operation do not afford the Red Barn to be turned over to theatre on summer weekends. Without weddings, conferences and events, the property is not financially viable, so preference must be given to those events to ensure the business can survive. The property allows for multiple events to take place on a given day, provided they are spaced out for arrivals and departures and adequate facilities are provided for parking, washrooms and crowd management.

Since the beginning of Festival Players when they were at Fields on West Lake, this property has contributed to the vibrancy of theatre in the region. As COVID has driven us all outside, an opportunity has emerged to provide a unique Agri tourism experience on a heritage farm, as intended when the zoning was granted to the property following the approval of OP Amendment 41.

Festival Players is offering a safe way for people to discover the beauty and diversity of The County. Last season, we attracted patrons from all over Ontario, eager to connect and explore, with 65% of our audience attending from more than 40km away. Patrons book tickets months in advance as part of their vacation plans to our region.

We recognize that many County businesses rely on tourism, and we want to continue to be a strong tourist attraction while serving the needs of our local community with outreach programs and outstanding performing arts in the off-season.

In the 2021 County Visitor Survey, visitors indicated they wanted more activities to do in the evenings; Festival Players helps fill that need with our expanding programming.

Our long-term strategic vision supports the County's Corporate Strategic Plan: "Cultural amenities are an effective tool in the attraction of new residents, visitors and business investment when leveraged effectively." Festival Players is a vibrant and expanding cultural amenity, building on existing local assets, resources and innovation, which strengthens cultural tourism. Our visitors share interest in authentic local experiences, and they enjoy taking in all The County has to offer.

Very glad to see you persevered through COVID. Programming this summer was brave. Bravo! – 2021 Patron

We offer a free outdoor week-long theatre camp for local youth led by Cultivate Ontario, highly respected drama leaders, at the pavilion.

Your program was exactly what my son needed to grow in confidence and to learn the joy of performing and creating. He came home from camp every day looking happier than I've seen him since COVID began. So I wanted to thank you for the great experience and let you know, you really are making a difference in kids' lives. – 2021 Camp Parent

JOBS CREATED

Jobs created (temporary and permanent) through the Festival Players summer season:

2021: 12 Staff, 41 Artists

2022: 20 Staff, 83 Artists

We focus on working with local tourism stakeholders to create a unique experience that connects with Ontario travellers and aligning with regional tourism organizations to increase our profile among County attractions.

www.TheEddie.ca & www.FestivalPlayers.ca

The pandemic has enhanced the desire to connect in meaningful ways with places visited and to encourage local economies and Festival Players will capitalize on this trend to attract permanent loyal patrons. We are in collaboration with The Regent Theatre, The PEC Arts Trail, The PEC Arts Council, Huff Estates Winery, Merrill House, Royal Hotel and The Eddie to create authentic, safe County experiences that will secure Ontario visitors. Over the years we have consistently received encouraging testimony from stakeholders, engaged more than 40 businesses as sponsors and 30 volunteers participating in our events. Last season, support and gratitude for our return was overwhelming.

Please visit [Our Supporter](#) page to see how many local businesses and patrons have stepped up to make our work possible.

Please visit our [Impact](#) page to read our 2021 impact report.



IMPACT OF TEMPORARY APPROVAL NOT BEING GRANTED OR APPEALED

Should we not receive temporary approval, Festival Players will be forced to cancel our Flight Festival of Contemporary Dance which relies on outdoor performance for its events.

FLIGHT Dance Festival programs diverse and Indigenous dance with a focus on the BIPOC and LGBTQ+ community. This year we are also partnering with our neighbours, Tsi Tyónnheht Onkwawén:na, the language and cultural centre for Kenhtè:ke (Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory) to support the creation and development of new theatre by Indigenous artists.

Losing this programming from the region is contrary to the recommendations of arts councils, the County's own guidelines and the RTO's interest in amplifying underserved voices in our communities.

The Flight Festival was outstanding. There were so many high points in the dancing, and the venue was a delight, changing from afternoon sun to nightfall with a sturgeon moon. After months of isolation, it seemed like a fantasy to be there. – 2021 Patron

Without our ability to programme outdoors at the Pavilion we lose important revenue from weekend events, we lose capacity, and we will need to cancel events outright that have already been programmed and with tickets sold. We have worked hard to survive the pandemic, which was an existential threat to our industry. This year we expanded our

programming to respond to the demand from patrons for more outdoor events. We have hired new staff, contracted our artists, secured grants and sponsorships and entered into partnerships with local business.

To have our venue closed down now will mean the end of our season as planned, and a possible end to the company. Tickets are already on sale, grants and funding have been used to hire performers, designers, directors, playwrights and staff. This would be an impossible situation for us and would lead to us cancelling all most of our planned events. This would incur a massive deficit for us and make it incredibly difficult to rebuild for future seasons.

Festival Players is made possible through funding from all three levels of government, including operating funding from the Ontario Arts Council, The Canada Council for the Arts, The County Foundation, lead corporate donors BMO and Huff Estates, a volunteer crew of thirty residents, loyal donors and partnerships with over 20 local businesses.

In 2021 we cultivated a new partnership with The Eddie Hotel & Farm. Outdoor events will feel safer for patrons for years to come, given the constant threat of new variants worldwide and the demographic of our audience. **Because The Eddie hosts our outdoor stage and gives us in-kind support with reduced rental fees which makes our season possible.**