

Town of Northfield, Vermont Development Review Board Minutes of December 5, 2019

ROLL CALL: Development Review Board Chair William Smith, Board members Colin Bright, Steve Davis, and Timothy Donahue III. Board member Paul Brown was absent. Also present were DRB Clerk Mitch Osiecki and several members of the public: Robert Tucker, Thomas Goodrich, Robert Townsend. Richard Wobby, Jonathan Spencer, Jeremy Whalen and Dan Sivori.

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES. Motion by Board member Bright, seconded by Board member Donahue to approve minutes of October 24, 2019 DRB Meeting. **Motion passed 4-0** (Brown absent).

Chair Smith recused himself from the hearings of two applicants on the agenda, Thomas Goodrich and Robert Tucker and turned the remainder of the meeting over to Board member Donahue.

APPLICATION: Clerk/Zoning Administrator Osiecki reviewed the history of the Goodrich parcel that is being considered for a subdivision. In summary: this lot, despite appearances due to its parcel ID number, is adjacent to, but not part of the lands for which Thomas Goodrich was approved for another subdivision in October 2018. The parcel under current consideration are lands remaining after a lot was sold to Marcel and Kathy Ruel in 1991. Motion by Board member Bright, seconded by Board member Donahue, to approve the subdivision. **Motion passed 3-0 (Smith abstained).**

APPLICATION: Clerk/Zoning Administrator Osiecki reviewed the status of the Tucker parcel. An attorney advised Clerk Osiecki that the DRB should proceed as though the parcel is still a single lot and apply current subdivision standards.

Residents in the neighborhood wished to voice some concerns.

Richard Wobby: supports owner's right to develop property but has a few concerns

- Notes that there are currently issues with stormwater runoff and erosion, which could be worsened by further development.
- There currently exists a 25' buffer around property that he hopes can be maintained.
- Also hopes that future development will maintain the character of the neighborhood.

Bright responds that only a subdivision is being considered at this point and the DRB must apply standards proscribed for approving/denying a subdivision.

Jeremy Whalen:

- Recalls that some residents asked that a site visit be considered at previous hearing.
- Is also concerned about the potential impact of development on severe slopes.

Jonathan Spencer:

- Also suggests that a site visit could be helpful.

Richard Wobby asked how permitting and development review process works in general.

Zoning Administrator Osiecki gave a brief summary of the permitting process, including which development the ZA has authority to approve and what projects must be referred to the DRB for a public hearing.

Jeremy Whalen asks when might be the appropriate time to request a buffer between his property and the Tucker parcel.

Board member Donahue suggests that this concern should be taken up directly with the property owner.

Motion by Board member Donahue, seconded by Board member Bright, to approve the subdivision. **Motion passed 3-0 (Smith abstained).**

OTHER BUSINESS

Dan Sivori explains to the DRB that he and his wife own property on Winch Hill Road. The property has been in agricultural use, but they are exploring the idea of offering their lands for seasonal events such as weddings or graduation parties.

They'd like to initially erect a temporary structure (a large tent) initially to evaluate the feasibility of the project before committing to constructing a permanent structure.

Longer term, they'd like to develop this into a year-around facility. They would like some feedback from the DRB about the feasibility of this type of use before committing significant resources to the project.

Members of the DRB express broad general support for the concept, but of course can't commit until they are presented with specific proposal.

Clerk/ZA Osiecki presents a quick summary of items in the pipeline. A rundown:

- A project is in the works to remove a failing dam on Bull Run Road. Several state permits are needed, but this will come before the DRB as well.
- South Village Mobil anticipates replacing underground storage tanks in 2020. They are considering reconfiguring the islands at the same time. It will be considered an expansion of the existing use, which will trigger a DRB Conditional Use hearing.
- DRB had granted a 2-lot subdivision to landowners on West Hill Road earlier in 2019. Despite a couple of reminders, a survey plat was not filed within 180 days of subdivision approval. That subdivision is now void and will have to be reapplied for.
- ZA Osiecki noticed an inconsistency in the current regulations. Section II.03.C specifies that the Zoning Administrator may approve sign permits; Section IV.14 specifies that the Planning Commission approves sign permits (but was meant to grant that authority to the DRB. ZA will continue to refer sign permits to the DRB for review.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Board member Bright, seconded by Board member Davis to adjourn. **Motion passed 4-0.**

The Board adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitch Osiecki

Mitch Osiecki, DRB Clerk

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Zoning Administrator's Office. These minutes are subject to approval at the next regular DRB meeting.