



**Town of Stowe
Development Review Board
Meeting Minutes – April 15, 2025**

A meeting of the Development Review Board was held on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, starting at approximately 5:00 pm. The meeting was held at the Stowe Town Office with remote participation using the “Zoom” application.

Members Present: Drew Clymer, Mary Black, Andrew Volansky, David Kelly, Peter Roberts, Tom Hand, and Patricia Gabel

Staff Present: Sarah McShane-Director of Planning and Zoning, Ryan Morrison- Deputy Zoning Administrator, and Kayla Hedberg-Planning and Zoning Assistant

Others Present in Person: [See sign-in attendance sheet]

Meeting Chair Clymer called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00pm.

Project #: 7526 (cont. 3/4)

Owner: Thomas C Michelson

Tax Parcel #: 03-103.000

Location: 3285 Waterbury Rd

Project: Proposed 4-lot Subdivision

Zoning: RR2/RR5/RHOD

D. Clymer re-opened the continued hearing for project 7526. T. Mumley, A. Chmura, and T. Michelson were present for the applicant and sworn in by D. Clymer.

Robert (Bob) Zaino, Natural Community Ecologist with the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department (Agency of Natural Resources), provided expert testimony, and was sworn in by D. Clymer.

T. Mumley explained that the site plan has been updated to include existing utilities, culverts, actual stream locations, 50-foot buffers along the stream, and wells on neighboring properties. He noted that the proposed clearing limits on Lot 3 had been removed, acknowledging that future development on that lot would be subject to DRB review under the RHOD regulations. Clearing limits within the RHOD on Lot 2 were also removed and the clearing limits on Lot 1 were revised to be more restrictive, keeping them up against the building zone.

T. Mumley indicated that a second 25-foot right of way is being proposed to access Lot 4 from the cul-de-sac. Currently, there is a 50-foot right-of-way providing access to Lot 4 via the existing driveway. The addition of the proposed right-of-way would provide alternate access to lot 4 and allow for the placement of an easement on the subdivision plat, granting access across Lot 3 to Lot 4.

T. Mumley expressed concerns regarding the density and lot area analysis. He stated his interpretation is that the density analysis in Section 9.4(3)(c)(1) should be applied, which allows for 25% credit for steep slopes. T. Mumley indicated that he disagrees with the Zoning Office's interpretation of Standard 12, which would require multiplying steep slope acreage by four,

48 resulting in much larger minimum lot sizes.

49
50 T. Michelson expressed concerns regarding the accuracy of the formula provided in the zoning
51 regulations.

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53 On a motion by D. Kelly, seconded by M. Black, the board entered deliberative session at
54 approximately 5:25pm. The motion passed unanimously.

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56 On a motion by D. Kelly, seconded by M. Black, the board exited deliberative session at
57 approximately 5:30pm. The motion passed unanimously.

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59 D. Clymer asked T. Mumley if he had anything to add regarding the density and lot area
60 calculations. T. Mumley asserted that this interpretation of standard 12 is overly punitive and
61 inconsistent with past approvals.

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63 T. Hand asked T. Mumley if he had discussed his concerns with the Zoning Office regarding the
64 density and lot area calculations prior to submitting the application, T. Mumley responded he had
65 not.

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67 D. Clymer transitioned to the General Planning Standards, clarifying that Lots 1-4 are currently
68 undeveloped and that no development is proposed as part of this subdivision application.
69 However, he noted it is anticipated that future development may include single-family or two-
70 family dwellings, each with on-site wastewater and wells. T. Mumley confirmed that it was correct,
71 stating that the lots would not be able to connect to municipal water or wastewater services and
72 would require on-site systems.

73
74 D. Clymer then addressed scenic and natural features, questioning the mapping of the blue lined
75 stream. T. Mumley explained that the blue lined stream had been added to the site plans based on
76 the existing topography and they included the 50-foot buffer.

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78 D. Clymer asked R. Zaino to introduce himself.

79
80 R. Zaino explained that he is the natural community ecologist with the Vermont Fish and Wildlife
81 Department and his expertise is an on the ground identification, assessment and conservation and
82 management of natural communities and the larger scale landscape planning efforts that have
83 been done primarily through Vermont conservation design, which he co-authored.

84
85 D. Clymer asked if he was familiar with and agreed with the wildlife habitat analysis provided by
86 Arrow Wood Environmental. R. Zaino explained that it was his understanding that the analysis
87 speaks to species and natural communities, and that he has no information that would suggest
88 that that analysis provided by the applicant is incorrect.

89
90 D. Clymer asked if the proposed subdivision would create adverse impacts that would require
91 mitigation, noting that the project site appears to be the last undeveloped passageway through the
92 Shutesville Hill Wildlife Corridor.

93
94 R. Zaino clarified that the area connects the forest block to the west with the Worcester Range

Forest block to the east, and the North Hill block, sit in between. He indicated that the project location is situated where the North Hill block is immediately across the road and adjacent to a forested portion of the Mansfield block, explaining that the proximity provides structural connectivity between the forested areas.

D. Clymer asked whether the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the forest blocks and connectivity.

R. Zaino explained that there is substantial scientific research showing that development, including single family homes, can impact forests, with effects radiating as far as 200 meters from the development. R. Zaino mentioned that forest fragmentation and the creation of new development will displace some wildlife. R. Zaino further explained that the corridor helps maintain the ability for species to move between forest blocks, which is important for daily life needs and long-term genetic exchange. He described this corridor as especially important because it lies within a regional pinch point connecting the Adirondacks to Maine and the Gaspé Peninsula.

R. Zaino explained that the southern portion of the property is a critical part of the remaining forest connection and that the norther portion, due to nearby development and lack of suitable habitat on the west side, is less sensitive. Therefore, conservation efforts should focus on the southern portion of the property.

D. Clymer noted that the parcel falls within a deer wintering area and is designated as a level five out of ten priority habitat block.

R. Zaino explained that the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department mapped habitat blocks, the first statewide mapping effort being in 2011, ranking blocks from one to ten based on various ecological factors, with size being the most significant. He explained that further work, through the Vermont Conservation Design, they realized that protecting only the large blocks was insufficient and that pattern of habitat blocks, including smaller blocks in between is crucial for connectivity. R. Zaino noted that the North Hill block is identified as a highest priority connectivity block in the Vermont Conservation Design.

T. Hand asked R. Zaino whether the state has mapping that identifies the corridor in question.

R. Zaino explained that the maps are available on the BioFinder website.

T. Hand asked if the Shutesville Corridor is broad and inclusive of developed areas or focused on remaining undeveloped sections. R. Zaino explained that while the corridor is broad, there are clearly identifiable locations where wildlife movement is stronger. He likened it to water flowing, it spreads out in undeveloped areas and narrows significantly where development has constricted the landscape.

R. Zaino confirmed that from a connectivity standpoint the North Hill block is ranked as a highest priority block.

A. Chmura asked whether the connectivity blocks change over time due to development.

R. Zaino explained that the blocks were originally mapped in 2006, and the department recently

remapped them using 2016 data, acknowledging that the landscape has changed overtime creating pinch points where past development has created narrow connections between habitat blocks. He further explained that these areas of narrow connections carry a higher risk of connectivity loss due to the limited space.

A. Chmura questioned whether any additional development should be allowed in the corridor given its current constraints on connectivity.

D. Clymer moved onto screening and landscaping. He asked R. Zaino if it is possible to add vegetation, screening and landscaping in a development to lessen the impact of the development. R. Zaino responded that maintaining forested pathways, the wider the better, could help, but having individual trees or non-native landscaping would probably have a minimal impact.

A. Chmura questioned whether previously cleared lots still contribute to habitat value and whether there is a difference between land that is cleared but remains undeveloped and land that is cleared and developed.

R. Zaino explained that they look at the natural process for revegetation and the stages of natural succession, clearings that grow back hold value, and permanent losses hold less ecological value.

D. Clymer moved onto municipal facilities. T. Mumley reiterated they would have onsite water and wastewater. He also explained that he had not received feedback from the fire department regarding the existing driveway and believes that it meets the guidelines.

D. Clymer reviewed the proposed building areas on Lots 1-3. T. Mumley clarified that there is no development proposed on Lot 4 at this time. D. Clymer asked if each lot would have its own wastewater system or if it would be shared. T. Mumley indicated that each lot is expected to have its own system. D. Clymer inquired about a shared maintenance agreement for the road. T. Mumley confirmed that it would likely be through a homeowner's association.

D. Clymer asked for clarification regarding utilities, stormwater and erosion control. T. Mumley explained that there is an existing overhead powerline that runs into the property and transitions underground, future utilities will also be underground. He further explained that no stormwater management is currently proposed. T. Mumley explained that there is no proposed development, but any future projects disturbing over half an acre would require erosion control, and anything over one acre would require state permitting.

Amy Marshall-Carney sought interested person status and was sworn in by D. Clymer at approximately 6:25pm.

Amy Marshall-Carney
251 Russell Rd
Waterbury Ctr, VT 05677

A. Marshall-Carney expressed concerns regarding the implications of the proposed subdivision, suggesting it could lead to further development. She supported the findings presented by R. Zaino and expressed concerns regarding the evaluation by J. Parsons at the March meeting.

A motion to close the hearing was made by D. Kelly and seconded by M. Black. The motion passed unanimously.

Project #: 7544

Owner: AWH Stowe Resort Hotel LLC

Tax Parcel #: 11-138.000

Location: 199 Topnotch Dr

Project: Conditional Use for Seasonal Farmers Market

Zoning: UMR

D. Clymer opened the hearing for project 7544. The applicant J. Pacioni was present and swore in by D. Clymer at approximately 6:30pm.

J. Pacioni explained that the farmers market moved locations last year and received a one-year permit to evaluate the new location. He indicated they had a very successful season. He has met with the Fire Chief and Police Chief and they raised no concerns. He further explained that two issues from the previous year were addressed, including a VTrans permit, the work was done by Dale Percy Inc. The second issue was the placement of the portalets within the floodplain for which they have received approval from the State. J. Pacioni clarified that the farmers market would run from mid-May to mid-October, with a reduction in hours from 10:30am-3:00pm, last year, to 10:00am-2:00pm, this year.

T. Hand raised concern about the placement of the portalets discussed at last year's hearing. J. Pacioni clarified that the current proposed location aligns with the electric hookups and functions as a centralized home base. T. Hand recommended that the prior conditions related to the portalet location be updated to reflect the current plan.

A motion to close the hearing was made by P. Gabel and seconded by D. Kelly. The motion passed unanimously.

Project #: 7558

Owner: Bruce Trail Cabin LLC

Tax Parcel #: 12-055.000

Location: 5041 Mountain Rd

Project: Expand Existing Building Footprint within Riparian Setback

Zoning: RR5

D. Clymer opened the hearing for project 7558. J. Grenier and J. Kamuda were present for the applicant and sworn in by D. Clymer at approximately 6:38pm.

J. Grenier clarified that the existing structure currently encroaches the riparian setback. The proposed project does not increase this encroachment. Current regulations allow for the expansion as long as they run parallel to the stream and only expand half the square footage of the existing encroachment.

T. Hand asked if they considered the overhang. J. Grenier indicated they had.

M. Black questioned whether this was considered a historic building, it was confirmed that this is

not an historic building.

D. Clymer inquired as to why they needed the encroachment. J. Grenier explained that the house is on the east side and adjacent to the stream, that existing structures are being removed, including two gravel driveways to improve green space. He further explained that the proposed project will have no drainage impact across the road or into the stream and that the buffer is already dominated by the roadway and lacks vegetation. J. Grenier noted that they are reducing impervious surfaces and making improvements, and the proposed expansion is minimal and within regulation.

J. Kamuda clarified that the new design includes ADA accessibility, with a ramped pathway from the carport onto the first floor. The bedroom is proposed in the extended portion of the building within the riparian buffer to meet accessibility needs. He further explained that expansion is limited to 50 percent and designed to be minimal, while allowing accessible living space on the first floor.

J. Grenier explained that the garage will be removed and integrated into the expanded footprint, the existing foundation will remain, except where the expansion requires widening. J. Grenier noted that the additions on the north side of the building were administratively approved, as the fall outside the riparian buffer.

T. Hand inquired about landscaping. J. Kamuda explained that they would be planting native plants, seeding and adding screening along the road.

A motion to close the hearing was made by A. Volansky and seconded by M. Black. The motion passed unanimously.

Project #: 7541

Owner: Darrell J Porter & Krystyna Nicholls

Tax Parcel #: 02-190.000

Location: 990 Ayers Farm Rd

Project: Construct Attached Garage with ADU in RHOD

Zoning: RR3/RHOD

D. Clymer opened the hearing for project 7541. D. Porter, K. Nicholls (via Zoom), and K. Brown were present for the applicant and sworn in by D. Clymer.

D. Porter described the project as a new two car garage with living space above it. He clarified that the addition will be on the northeast side of the lot, not affecting the existing non-conforming side yard setback on the southwest side. D. Porter explained that the garage will connect to the existing cabin and include a mudroom entry area. He further explained that they are not proposing and changes to the lot width and the project complies with the district setbacks and building height requirements.

D. Clymer asked D. Porter to discuss the vantage points. D. Porter explained that the structure is minimally visible from public vantage points and the only identified view of the structure is from the Trapp Family Lodge parking lot. He clarified that it is not visible from major highways or roads.

D. Clymer inquired about clearing. D. Porter clarified that only five trees would be removed to facilitate driveway extension and garage access. He explained that the trees are located near the

existing driveway and red shed and that the rest of the trees, especially those forming a natural screen, will remain intact.

D. Clymer questioned stormwater management. D. Porter confirmed that peak stormwater runoff will not exceed pre-development levels for the 2- year, 24-hour storm.

K. Brown clarified that almost all of the trees will remain and that the trees coming out are referenced on the site plan. T. Hand asked if they could quantify and locate the trees that will be coming down and D. Clymer requested that they provide an updated site plan to reference the tree line and identify the trees coming out. K. Brown sought clarification about how far outside the building zone they should document. D. Clymer recommended 50 feet.

D. Clymer questioned the color pallet provided. D. Porter indicated that they intend to use some variation of the proposed color pallet.

K. Brown explained that when designing the proposed addition, they wanted the building to remain in scale with the cabin, while maintaining a good view and minimizing visual impacts, especially in the winter. K. Brown also clarified that this is not an ADU, but the primary bedroom suite.

D. Clymer pointed out that the outdoor lighting is not labeled as dark sky compliant and requested that they update the lighting to comply with town regulations.

A motion to close the hearing was made by D. Kelly and seconded by A. Volansky. The motion passed unanimously.

Project #: 7329

Owner: SSB LLC

Tax Parcel #: 03-053.020

Location: 2393 Waterbury Rd

Project: Subdivide 3.69 Acres from 16.4 Acre Parcel

Zoning: RR2/RR3

D. Clymer opened the hearing for project 7329. D. Salvas was present for the applicant and sworn in by D. Clymer.

D. Salvas explained that the subdivision was previously approved a year ago and due to a delay in State permitting they mylar was not filed in time, so the original permit expired.

D. Clymer asked if anything had changed since the previous approval.

D. Salvas explained that the lot size changed slightly, approximately .2 acres from one side, and no other changes had been made.

A motion was made by D. Kelly to close the hearing and seconded by A. Volansky. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

335 A motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 25, 2025, was made by M. Black and seconded
336 by D. Kelly. The motion passed unanimously.

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338 A motion to approve the meeting minutes of April 1, 2025, was made by D. Kelly and seconded by
339 M. Black. The motion passed 6-0-1. D. Clymer, D, Kelly, T. Hand, P. Roberts, M. Black, A. Volansky
340 voting in the affirmative and P. Gabel abstaining.

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342 **Other Business:**

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344 On a motion by D. Kelly, seconded by M. Black, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30 pm.
345 The motion passed unanimously.

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348 Respectfully Submitted,

349 Kayla Hedberg

350 Planning and Zoning Assistant