

Development Review Board  
November 16 2022

1. Call to order

The meeting came to order at 6:06 p.m. at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom. Present were board members Mike Day (chairman), Lon McClintock, and Tedd Habberfield. Guests attending were James (Denny) Browe, Sarah Costin, and Eamon Mulligan. Also present was zoning administrator ZAShelly Stiles.

2. Conflict of interest statement

Mr. Habberfield explained that he is friends with the owners of the property described in a sketch plan to be presented that evening. Other board members saw no conflict of interest in the friendship.

3. Sign in sheet

The sheets were passed around.

4. Approval of minutes

Mr. Habberfield moved to approve the September 21 minutes. Mr. Day seconded the motion. Mr. McClintock suggested some clarifying changes. The amended minutes were approved 3-0-0.

5. Sketch plan review [At this point, the internet connection was lost. Mr. Day presided over the remainder of the meeting by phone.]

Mr. Mulligan presented a sketch plan for a subdivision on lands on Trumbull Hill Road owned by the Sarvis Family Trust. The subdivision would complete an action to separate off a 2.56 acre lot begun in 2007 but never executed. In the interim, a single family residence was built on the 2.56 acres and permitted wastewater and potable water system were installed. The lot would be transferred from the Trust to Robert and Barbara Sarvis.

The subdivision was deemed by the Board to be a minor subdivision.

The board went through Subdivision section 6.4 (preliminary plat requirements) item by item. Changes requested were as follows:

- The legend lacks definitions for symbols signifying streams and wetlands.
- A solid line inside the wetland area, a topographic line, isn't labelled as such and is confusing.
- Narrower topographic lines should be used and elevations should be shown to make drainage ways more apparent.
- Show any ditch, the culvert, and its diameter at the existing driveway's junction with Trumbull Hill Road.
- Correct references to R zone (rather than RR zone).
- Increase the vicinity map scale to 1:1500.

The next steps will be preliminary and final subdivision approval.

6. Prospective new members on the DRB

James (Denny) Browe and Sarah Costin introduced themselves. (Zoe Kearl also submitted a resume and letter to express an interest in serving on the board.)

Mr. Day described the role of the DRB as defined in statute. He noted that the zoning administrator can approve many applications but others and appeals of the ZA's decisions require review by the DRB. He described the hearing process – the formal steps by which testimony is taken from interested parties and a decision is rendered. He noted the DRB has 45 days from the closing of a hearing to make a decision or the application is automatically approved.

He said the DRB periodically reviews the bylaws. It may make suggestions as to changes to the Planning Commission, or may consider requests from the Planning Commission to make changes.

Mr. McClintock said the DRB works only if citizens trust that the board members are acting fairly and in the best interests of the town. He noted that all testimony need not be considered relevant even while it should be accepted. He said board members should be respectful, patient, and must listen.

He said the board is collegial, with each member trying to help the others arrive at a decision all are comfortable with. He noted that some items come before the DRB simply because the ZA believes she cannot rule on them for any of a variety of reasons.

Mr. Habberfield said he sees the DRB's job as helping the applicant get to "yes." He believes it should be a very transparent process.

7. Rules of procedure

Mr. Habberfield will get his final out by the end of the week.

8. Other business

Ms. Stiles will send hard and digital copies of the bylaws and the DRB Rules of Procedure to the new board members. She will ask the town administrator to create town email addresses for them.

Ms. Stiles asked whether the DRB had any thoughts for the PC as it embarks on rewriting the subdivision regulations. Mr. McClintock suggested asking for clarification re dog breeding businesses and thought making distinctions between major and minor subdivisions might not be needed (since both must meet the same requirements).

Mr. McClintock, whose last meeting this was, thanked all for what he said had been a very enjoyable experience.

The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 7:40 p.m.

Notes by ZA Stiles