

Town of Bristol
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD MEETING
HYBRID Public Meeting
Tuesday, November 14, 2023
Meeting Minutes

DRAFT

DRB Members Present: Kevin Brown, Ted Desmond, John Moyers, Tom Wells, Brenda Tillberg
Staff Present: Kris Perlee, Zoning Administrator; Brett LaRose, Fire Chief; Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary
Applicants Present: Jason Barnard (Barnard and Gervais), Diane Heffernan, Steve Heffernan
Visitors: Leah Orvis, Gil Poke, Jim Quaglino, Chris Schaner

1. Call to Order: Chair Kevin Brown called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

2. Review agenda for additions, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 V.S.A. 18 §312(d)(3)(A).
No adjustments were made to the agenda.

3. Old Business

Continuation: Permit #23-501: Bristol Fire Department at 79 West Street (Parcel #225036) for a Site Plan Review for a Fire Training Facility per Bristol Unified Development Regulations Article III, Section 390.

This is a continuation of a hearing which was recessed due to the need for a landscaping plan to be submitted.

Mr. Perlee presented a site landscaping plan, and pointed out which trees are currently in place and the locations of proposed trees, which are planned to be pin oaks. He explained that in developing the plans with Brett LaRose and Melanie Acker, landscape architect, it was agreed that a pin oak is a taller tree with a large branch formation, which will provide a visual impact to draw attention away from the training yard. These trees will be planted between the training yard and the apartment buildings located across the road, and will be at eye level once mature, as the roadway is above the ground floor of the structures at the Fire Department site. Several of those present indicated a preference for some type of evergreen plantings to be included in the plans; Mr. Perlee explained that the intent is to create a visual distraction from the building, rather than to attempt to hide the structure. He also noted that evergreens would not be compatible with the look and feel already created at the site. He made note of the line of cedars included on alongside the other building on the property, away from the area included in this landscape plan. Additionally, Mr. Perlee noted that cars parked along the road will partially obstruct the view of the training structure. Mr. LaRose reinforced what Mr. Perlee had explained, indicating that the trees included in the plan will fit well within the feel of the area.

Mr. Moyers had some further questions regarding the use of the new training building. He asked about the smoke trainings to be held at the site, and Mr. LaRose explained that the smoke is created through burning wood and straw in a boiler, which vents through a chimney structure. He indicated that the Bristol Department would be holding four to six such trainings annually, each lasting for a couple of hours, and also expressed his understanding should the DRB decide to limit the smoke trainings to the Bristol Department members only at the outset. Mr. LaRose outlined that other training types will include ladder work, search and rescue, and ventilation saw training. He noted that the area around the

station is already used for nighttime training, with trucks and pumps running and lights in use. These are usually scheduled for 7 – 9 pm a couple of nights each month.

Mr. Brown reminded the group that this project is under Site Plan, not Conditional Use, Review, and that an emergency services facility is a permitted use in the Village Mixed Use District.

MOTION: Mr. Wells made a motion to approve the site plan as amended, adding the additional landscaping that was presented by the applicant. The motion was seconded by Mr. Desmond.

Mr. Moyers proposed that the motion be amended to include a condition that some cedars be included in the landscaping plan. Mr. Brown tabled the motion made by Mr. Wells while this amended motion was considered.

MOTION: Mr. Moyers made a motion to amend the approval of the site plan to include a requirement that cedars be included in the landscaping plan. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tillberg. There was discussion indicating that if a change in tree types/locations is desired by the Board, the site plan should go back to the applicant for them to amend. The motion was voted on, and failed, with Ms. Tillberg and Mr. Moyers in favor, and Mr. Wells, Mr. Desmond, and Mr. Brown opposed.

Mr. Wells then renewed his original motion, which passed with Mr. Moyers opposed and the rest of the members in favor.

4. New Business

Permit 23-402: Francis & Diane Heffernan at Plank Road (Parcel #060124-1) for a Sketch Plan Review for a 7-lot subdivision per Bristol Unified Development Regulations Article IX, Section 920.

Diane Heffernan provided an overview of the subdivision plan for seven new lots in a four-acre area along Jay Drive, most of which is in the Village Residential District, with a small portion in the Village High Density District. The minimum lot size for each District is 10,000 square feet.

Ms. Heffernan indicated that access to the lots will be from Jay Drive, which is a private road off of Plank Road; town water is definitely available at the lots closer to Plank Road, but wells may be needed on the back lots; on-site septic will be developed, and it is not anticipated that there will be any shared systems.

Mr. Perlee pointed out that this is by definition a major subdivision, which will require a preliminary and final hearing. It was confirmed that a site plan indicating the location of building envelopes, septic, and water supply will be needed for the preliminary hearing. Ms. Heffernan will follow up with Mr. Perlee regarding timing and possibly scheduling a hearing for the December 12, 2023 DRB meeting.

Permit #23-400: DMV Properties, Inc. located at North 116 Rd (Parcel #030111) is requesting Preliminary Plat Approval for a 5-lot subdivision per Bristol Unified Development Regulations Article IX, Section 930.

Jason Barnard (Barnard and Gervais) provided an overview of the proposed subdivision, outlining the changes incorporated following feedback received at the sketch plan review held earlier in the year. He indicated that Lot 5 had been removed, that the size of Lot 4 had been increased in order to have the project conform with the density allowed in the District, and that a ROW along the northern boundary of the building area for Lot 4 will be established to allow for access to the larger portion for walking trails for residents of Lots 1, 2, and 3. Mr. Barnard noted that much of that section is regularly saturated, as it contains a Class II wetland, but that elevated walkways could make it navigable. Lot 4 is proposed to be 16.11 acres, and Lots 1 – 3 will be between 1 and 1.5 acres each.

Mr. Barnard explained that a VTrans access permit has been applied for, and that the shared drive will extend westerly from Route 116 to provide access to the lots as well as access to the ROW across Lot 4.

Mr. Wells pointed out that something more than an open easement needs to be in place for the access across Lot 4; indicating that a trail should likely be established, and that allowed/prohibited uses be documented.

Mr. Moyers asked if the PUD is still being sought to allow for smaller lot sizes. Mr. Brown confirmed this, and it was discussed that the wetlands existing on Lot 4 likely precludes any further development of structures on the site.

Chris Schaner provided comments on behalf of Leah Orvis, who was also present at the hearing. He voiced concerns regarding the path and that it might lead to future development on the back portion of the lot, as well as the impacts of having a wastewater system close to Ms. Orvis' property line. It was explained that the path, which will likely be 4-6 feet wide, does not need to satisfy the setback requirements, and that there is no other development proposed on the rear acreage of Lot 4. The logistics of locating septic fields, and that these permits are issued by the State rather than the Town, were explained. Mr. Barnard confirmed that the disposal field is to be located entirely on the applicant's property.

Mr. Schaner then raised questions regarding notifications for this project, indicating that nothing had been received regarding this project, including no notification of the Wastewater permit having been issued. He and Ms. Orvis were directed to reach out to VT DEC for any wastewater questions, and Ms. Orvis' address was confirmed so that notification of further hearings related to this proposal can be sent. Mr. Perlee also noted that he will inform Ms. Orvis when the next hearing is coming up.

Other details provided by Mr. Barnard included that a stormwater plan is being developed, that all the septic capacity is located on Lot 1, and that there are two shared wells in the project (one for Lots 1 and 4, and one for Lots 2 and 3).

The timing of continuation of the Preliminary and Final approvals was discussed, and it was decided to schedule the continuation for December 12, 2023 and a Final Plan approval hearing for January 9, 2024.

5. Administrative Items

Mr. Moyers requested that meeting materials be provided by the Friday preceding a scheduled meeting, if possible. Mr. Perlee agreed to send out a link to materials in advance when he is able. Mr. Moyers also requested that a distinction be made between different versions of the same materials; Mr. Perlee will come up with a plan for this.

Mr. Moyers also pointed out that the Site Plan section of the UDRs provides for the DRB to condition Site Plan approval; others pointed out that changing the actual site plan must be asked of the applicant rather than imposed by the Board.

6. Adjournment

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 8:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

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