

**Town of Bristol**  
**DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD MEETING**  
**Public Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 9, 2025**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**APPROVED**

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**DRB Members Present:** Allen Bilson, Kevin Brown, Rebecca Cole, Ted Desmond, Dale Dingler, Ron Tatro, Brenda Tillberg

**Staff Present:** AZ Larsen, Zoning and Planning Administrator

**Others Present:** Jim Carroll, Eddie Duncan (Paxwood Acoustics), Thomas Fox, Josh Masterson, Greg McKenney, Chris Roy, Keith Schnell, Helen Young

**1. Call to Order:** Kevin Brown called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**2. Review agenda for additions, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 V.S.A. 18 §312(d)(3)(A).**

No changes were made to the agenda.

**3. New Business**

**Permit #25-300:** Masterson Development Properties, LLC of Lower Notch Road (Parcel #090227) is requesting Conditional Use approval for the expansion and addition of topsoil screening and storage to an existing business yard, subject to the Bristol Unified Development Regulations, Article III §353.

Mr. Brown provided some background information regarding previous CU approval for the business yard at the property, where screening and stockpiling at one location was denied, primarily due to noise impacts. He explained that the current proposal is for these activities to take place at another location on the property.

Mr. McKenney provided an overview of the plans and an explanation of the project's site plan. He explained that Conditional Use approval is being sought for topsoil screening and storage, all to take place on the lot owned by Mr. Masterson on which the related business operations are sited. Mr. McKenney outlined that material will be brought in from off-site locations, processed, and stored onsite until used at an off-site job location. The proposal is for processing 1000 cubic yards annually, which indicates 72 14-yard dump truck loads to be delivered, and another 72 truck loads to be hauled away. This equates to 288 one-way trips per year for these trucks. The application estimates that 300 hours of processing time will be required annually for this amount of screening, those hours will be scheduled between 7 am and 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Screening is expected to take several hours each day that the operation is active, with July and August being the most likely months for this work, as this is typically the driest time of year. Mr. McKenney explained that a permit allowing for 30 ten-hour days is being proposed, with most of the processing and stockpiling taking place over a couple of two-week periods. He noted that the trucking activity will be more variable, depending upon when material is available to be brought on site and when it is needed at an off-site job location; generally, the trucking will take place from May through October, depending upon weather conditions.

Some details of the site plan were reviewed, with Mr. McKenney indicating the area where the screening is proposed to take place, approximately 150 feet from the property line. Mr. Larsen reported that Eric Cota (Road Foreman) has approved the use of the current access for the truck traffic, noting that sight distances are adequate, now that the vegetation trimming required in the previous approval

has been completed. It was confirmed that all heavy truck traffic will enter from and exit to the south, this was also a condition of the previous approval.

It was noted that the wooded areas on the property will be left intact, in order to provide some noise buffering, and that there are no known residences which have a sight line directly to the proposed screening area.

Mr. Duncan then reviewed the noise assessment report, which indicates that decibel levels will not exceed 70 at any property line or 55 at any neighboring residence; the proposed top-soil screening and storage area is located approximately 1000 feet from Sherman Lane residences. He provided an overview of related local and state regulations, and explained that compatibility guidelines are based on ANSI standards, which include a level of 55 decibels as a guideline for suitable noise levels as well as other types of standards. The modelling used for the current report uses the same standards as those used in the previous application, and includes an outdoor sound propagation model. Seven scenarios are reviewed in the report, with charts depicting the results of the modelling for each of the nearby residential addresses for each of those scenarios. The sound of dump truck tailgates shutting is the highest decibel noise type modelled. Mr. Duncan indicated that the sound levels modelled in this study are about ten decibels lower than those reported for the residence experiencing the highest noise level modelled in the previous report; he explained that this is essentially a reduction by half of the noise levels generated by the proposed activity. The projected sound levels are then compared with average levels in the area. The modelled levels are comparable to area background noise; they also do not indicate any impact on day/night levels. It was noted that the intensity is anticipated to be fairly low, which will mitigate some of the impact. The proposed location, specifically the unloading designated to take place in a more centralized location of the parcel, is meant to reduce the noise impacts at neighboring residences.

Additionally, Mr. Duncan explained that distance reduces sound levels, as well as other attenuating factors such as forest cover, atmospheric conditions, and the storage piles as they increase in size over the season. Distance is the primary factor, reducing sound levels by six decibels for every doubling of distance. The modelling does not take into account the sound dampening created by the forest area to the south of the Masterson parcel, as that area is not part of the Masterson property. He also outlined that the addition of two sounds happening at the same time generally increases the sound produced by 3 decibels; explaining that the different modelled levels are not simply added together when determining the level of multiple sounds occurring at the same time.

Tom Fox spoke of Bristol's regulations being qualitative, and asked if any testing was conducted to verify the modelling. Mr. Duncan explained that the previous study measured the sound created by the relevant equipment, and that information was used in this recent modelling. Mr. Duncan also explained that ground reflections are taken into account in the models, and that the modelling presented is conservative, with all results considered to be downwind of the noise generation. He anticipates that the actual levels perceived will be equal to or less than those in the model.

Keith Schnell offered that he had no concerns with the sound study, but noted that this is an industrial operation in a residential area, with potential impacts on nearby future development. He also pointed out that the application was submitted as the result of an NOV.

Helen Young indicated that impactful noise was continuing to come from the Masterson property after the NOV was issued.

Mr. Fox then read portions of a statement he had prepared, referring to the NOV issued for the Masterson business on February 2, 2024. That statement was submitted to the DRB, and is attached to these Minutes.

Mr. Brown asked about monitoring the hours of screening operations, and there was some discussion of using days rather than hours to determine how much time might be allowed for this work. Mr. Larsen noted that there is an hourly reader on the screening equipment, and suggested that hours would be the more suitable measurement, and that this information could be required to be provided to the Zoning Administrator on a monthly basis.

Mr. Brown spoke of the various uses allowed conditionally in the RA5 District, and indicated that many factors need to be considered when reviewing this type of application. He also explained that the DRB's role does not include enforcement of the NOV.

Mr. Brown suggested scheduling a deliberative session in the near future, as there are several Board members who are not familiar with all the background information and may need some time to review and understand the noise and traffic information presented in the application materials.

**MOTION:** *A motion to close the hearing for Application #25-300 passed unanimously.*

It was agreed to schedule a deliberative session for Thursday, September 18 at 7 pm.

#### **4. Administrative Matters**

**Approval of Minutes:** Approval of minutes was postponed.

#### **5. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary