

TOWN OF WESTFORD
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD MINUTES
Minutes for Wednesday, September 26, 2016
Approved on October 10, 2016

Board Members Present: Wayne Brown, William Cleary, Sara DeVico, Jason Hoover and Matt Wamsganz (Chair)

Board Members Absent: Tony Kitsos and Lisa Fargo

Also Present: Sue Adams (Interim Planning Coordinator), Carroll Peters, Ronald Perry, Kevin Perry, Laurie Perry, Dave Adams

The meeting began at 7:19 p.m.

Sketch Review for a 2-Lot Subdivision – Ronald Perry Property

Carroll (surveyor) gave an overview of the proposed subdivision.

The DRB went through the staff report:

Carroll confirmed the barn out back does not qualify as a state defined agricultural structure and therefore he will enlarge the building envelope to include it. Carroll also noted there is a ledge wall behind this barn, toward the back boundary line of the proposed Lot 2. The DRB asked if expanding the building envelope to include the barn would encroach on the ledges. Carroll confirmed this would not be the case. There is enough flat space behind the barn (approximately 10 feet or so) to safely enlarge the building envelope.

Carroll asked whether can get a 'waiver' (or modification of standard) for showing contours everywhere on Lot 2. He would show the ledges and steep slopes behind the barn on the site plans. He added the house is pre-existing and there is no new development at this time so has not surveyed the property for contours. The DRB quickly researched the regulations, to no avail, for language that says contours must be on a site plan. Carroll also asked for a 'waiver' (or modification of the standards) regarding the lot shape of Lot 2. The back boundary is not parallel with the front boundary due to preservation of a meadow on Lot 1. Ron added that this meadow is part of his Current Use acreage and that he did not want to interfere with his Current Use plan, hence another reason for the odd lot shape. The Board asked Sue to consult with Melissa Manka (Planning Coordinator) on these modifications of standards.

Carroll alerted the board that #4 WRO of the staff report was incorrect. He confirmed that the WRO buffer does in fact encroach on the proposed Lot 2 by the southern boundary, however, it is clear of the parking lot.

The staff report points out a potential issue with access points between Lot 2's existing driveway and Lot 1's existing agricultural/silvicultural access. The distance between the two is less than the required 1000ft for Rt.128. The DRB chose not to place a condition in the decision that would require changing Lot 1's access in order to meet the spacing should Lot 1 ever be developed or subdivided. They site Section 321.C (5) (c) as giving them the authority to do this. Carroll pointed out that these current access points are state approved and permitted. In light of this, and the fact that these accesses are at the base of a big hill, the DRB acknowledged that the State would likely never approve a request to move Lot 1's access anyway.

The DRB discussed in length the building envelope's front boundary and the district setbacks. The R5 front set back is 50ft. The proposed building envelope's front boundary is set at 35ft. The DRB questioned whether the district setback would be met if the boundary line was flush with the mobile home. Carroll pointed out that conformance to the setbacks could not be met this way because the proposed building envelope captures stone steps that lead to the front patio and entrance to the house. These stone steps are set back exactly 35ft. Therefore, it appears the only way to meet the front setback is to make the mobile home a pre-existing, non-conforming structure outside of the building envelope.

The DRB explained to Ron the benefits of enlarging the proposed building envelope, particularly in providing ample opportunity for future development on Lot 2. For example, a larger envelope could accommodate an additional outbuilding or construction of a single family dwelling should the mobile home ever be replaced. Ron said he would take this into consideration when submitting his final application.

Discussion followed regarding what can be done outside of the building envelope. Ron has been mowing a large swath of Lot 2 for years and indicated the future owners would likely do the same. The DRB agreed that the typical, boiler plate language for minimizing clearing for non-agricultural and non-silvicultural usages outside of building envelopes is sufficient.

Lastly, the DRB also felt no new street trees are needed for Lot 2 and would not make this a condition of approval.

Minutes of the September 14 Meeting

Sara MOVED to approve the minutes as amended.

Matt SECONDED the motion

The motion PASSED: 5 – 0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Sue Adams, Interim Planning Coordinator