

Chelsea, Vermont, Development Review Board
Draft Meeting Minutes July 17, 2019

Members Present: Anne Carroll (Chair), Laurence Allen, Johanna Welch

Others Present: Laurel LaFramboise, applicant, Timothy McCormick (AO, Clerk)

The Public Hearing on an application by Chris and Laurel LaFramboise (#ZP19-12, Parcel #015-014.000)

For a Conditional Use Permit to create a two-lot subdivision and to provide access within a flood plain to a temporary trailer and an existing barn structure under the Chelsea Flood Hazard Bylaw the property is located in the Rural Residential District at 117 Washington Turnpike Road.

Anne Carroll opened the meeting at 6:00 pm. The hearing began with a reading of the minutes as posted and published. No conflicts of interest or ex officio conversations were disclosed. There were no interested parties present other than the applicant. The applicant was sworn in.

Anne asked Laurel to explain the project. Laurel said that she and her husband applied for, and received a Wastewater system and Potable Water Supply Permit (State Permit) from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (VANR). The State permit allowed them to subdivide an existing 64 acre lot into two parcels. One lot to be a two- acre parcel with an existing residence, and the remaining 62 acres to be occupied by an existing barn which is to be converted into a 2 bedroom residence for applicant's own use. The approved subdivision plan included the use of the existing driveway to access the 62- acre lot. Part of the approved driveway is currently located on the proposed 2 -acre lot and would involve a Right of Way (ROW) easement across a portion of the 2- acre parcel in order to access the 62 acre lot.

In order to avoid the complications of a shared driveway, the applicants wanted to create a driveway access entirely on the 62 - acre lot. The best potential area for a driveway access is located in an area just west of Washington Turnpike Road in a location that was filled years ago and is currently being used for a bus-turn-around area by the Town. The applicants proposed to add fill material at this location to provide a gradual slope for a driveway. From that point, the proposed drive would cross an existing ford in the stream and continue west. Using the existing ford for access was suggested by Patrick Ross, State of Vermont Stream Alteration Engineer.

The proposed plan was in conflict with the local Flood Plain Regulations on two levels:

1. Because the proposed driveway access is within a Mapped Special Flood Hazard Area, a permit for adding fill material to this area is required by the Town. There are no Flood Plain elevations available in this area, and Laurel mentioned that she had difficulty trying to secure an elevation certificate and establishing a base flood elevation.

2. Using the existing ford as an access route to a proposed residence (i.e. habitable structure) raised some concern regarding emergency vehicle access during the winter time and flood events. John Upham was contacted and said that he wanted to look at the site. Section 4(b)4 of the Chelsea Flood Hazard Regulations states that “any access road to habitable structures or critical facilities shall be at or above base flood elevations and be able to withstand a 100- year event without failure or overtopping”.

The applicants are proposing to deal with these two issues in the following manner:

1. The applicants are proposing to cut into the existing fill to lesson the slope from Washington Turnpike Road. This would still not create the desired gentle pitch of the initial proposal, but it would eliminate the need for binging in fill material from off-site to be placed in the flood plain.
2. To deal with the need for safe emergency access, the applicants are proposing to use the land on the west side of the stream in the summer months and would like to place a travel trailer on the lot instead of a permanent habitable structure.

Ned Swanberg, the Central Vermont Floodplain Manager, was provided with an application, but was unable to visit the site or to provide comments due to a family emergency. The Development Review Board (DRB) decided to recess the meeting in order to give Ned time to visit the site and provide comments. The DRB voted to recess the hearing until August 7, 2019 and to reconvene at the Town Hall Library at 6:00pm

The hearing was recessed at 6:50pm

Organizational Meeting

After the hearing on application ZP19-12, the Development Review Board (DRB) discussed the Board membership and asked Tim if had had heard anything from the Select Board regarding potential members. Tim said that he had not heard.

Jonathan Vermette resigned and The Board acknowledged that since there are only three members left on the DRB, everyone must attend in order to have a quorum.

The DRB Meeting was closed at 7:05

Submitted by,
Timothy McCormick, Administrative Officer and DRB Clerk

