

Planning Commission
Town of Ferrisburgh, Vt.

FINAL – Minutes for meeting of February 20, 2019; approved August 21, 2019.

Members present: Gail Blasius, Arabella Holzapfel, Mike Quinn, Walter Reed, Bessie Sessions.

Absent: Bob Beach (chair), Al Chamberlain, Anne Cohn, Keith Wagner.

Town official present: Bonnie Barnes, zoning administrator.

Visitors present: Cheryl DeVos, John DeVos III.

Application No. 18-123 by Cheryl and John DeVos III for approval of a two-lot subdivision at 525 Ashley Road. The 15.5-acre parcel is mostly in the Rural Agricultural District (RA-5) and partially in the Conservation District (CON-25) and is identified in Town of Ferrisburgh tax maps as parcel 04/01/15.11.

Walter Reed opened the meeting, and the discussion of Application No. 18-123, at 7 p.m. Cheryl DeVos and John DeVos III were present to speak for the application. Their application involves creating a new 15.5-acre lot by subdividing an existing 331-acre parcel, resulting in a two-lot subdivision. Much of the larger property has been conserved, as the Heath Farm, with the help of the Vermont Land Trust. The 15.5-acre parcel is not part of that conservation project.

The DeVoses' current application is for a two-lot subdivision. Bonnie Barnes said it is within her purview as zoning administrator to approve two-lot subdivisions, but she is not able to require a final plat for a parcel, or to place conditions on a permit. So she wanted to bring this application to the attention of the Planning Commission.

In December, Barnes shared the application with Craig Heindel, chair of the Conservation Commission, who submitted a memo describing the portion of the lot in the Conservation District. He said this section, which he estimated at three acres, is almost completely forested, beginning about 400 feet from the bank of Lewis Creek and sloping southward toward a wetland before reaching the creek. He said the land seemed undevelopable, and described it as having high ecological value as wildlife corridor and habitat, wetlands, and forested floodplain.

The DeVoses told commission members they are considering further subdividing the 15.5-acre parcel, to create two or perhaps three separate building lots. There is one single family home and a mobile home already on the lot. Commission members said the three acres in the Conservation District, which requires a minimum lot size of 25 acres, did not appear to be developable, leaving just over 12 acres in the Rural Agricultural District, which has a minimum lot size of five acres. Members felt it might be possible to create two lots from the remaining 12 acres.

Commission members suggested a survey would likely be necessary before further subdivision of the lot could take place, along with a map of the property detailing the proposed new lots. The commission would also want a letter from the Vermont Land Trust confirming the status of the lot within the larger Heath Farm project. Commission members told the DeVoses they would discuss the application and that Bonnie Barnes would be in touch.

Approval of minutes from November 28, 2019. A quorum of those who attended the November 28 meeting was not in attendance on February 20, so commission members could not vote on the minutes from that meeting.

Adjournment: Arabella Holzapfel made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m. Mike Quinn seconded. All voted in favor. **Motion approved.**

— Respectfully submitted,

Tim Etchells