

**Planning Commission**  
*Town of Ferrisburgh, VT*

DRAFT - Minutes for meeting of October 21, 2020

**Note: This meeting was conducted remotely. All participants joined the meeting through a Zoom online meeting.**

**Members present:** Bob Beach, Jr. (Chair), Gail Blasius, Anne Cohn, Kristin DeBellis, Arabella Holzapfel **Members absent:** Walter Reed, Al Chamberlain, Michael Quinn, Norm Smith, Bessie Sessions

**Town official present:** Robyn King, Minute-Taker

**Participants present:** Linda Field, Stanley Field, Jean Richardson, Brandon Hammond, Kelli Hammond, Jack Milback

**Approval of the minutes.** Bob Beach called the meeting to order at 7:05 and asked about the approval of the August and September meeting minutes. Bob Beach noted that at the last meeting, it looked like there were not enough members present to approve the minutes, and that the same circumstances were applicable to the September meeting minutes, and therefore the Commission would not be able to approve the minutes.

**Application #20-103 for final plat review of a 3-lot subdivision; intersection of Fuller Mountain Road and Old Ledge Lane; applicants Stanley and Linda Field; Rural Agricultural (RA-5) District; tax map id no. 11/01/31.**

Bob Beach introduced the application and asked the Fields if they could speak to the application's specifics. Stanley Field noted that this application was for the same subdivision as was proposed in 2007 and that they did not file the mylar which is why it was not processed, but all on the plan is in the same location including the driveways. Arabella Holzapfel noted that she as the host of the meeting could show any materials on screen if desired.

Gail Blasius clarified that the application included one lot turning into three lots, one with an existing home and the other two lots with building envelopes and Gail Blasius asked if the curb cuts had been approved by John Bull. Stanley noted that these had been approved in 2007 and that he hadn't reached back out. Gail Blasius asked about the septic and water systems, and Stanley Field noted that their application had been made to the state and Linda Field clarified that that had happened on the 14th and they were waiting for approval. Gail Blasius and Bob Beach noted that they anticipated that the approval would be a condition of the permit. Arabella Holzapfel asked about a secondary wastewater system on lot 1 that appeared to be missing and Gail Blasius noted that this is no longer required by the state.

Given that there were no comments from the public and no further questions from the Commission, **Arabella Holzapfel made a motion to close the hearing, which was seconded**

**by Anne Cohn and the motion passed unanimously. The hearing closed at 7:11 pm. Gail Blasius made a motion to approve the 3-lot subdivision as presented, with the condition that the wastewater system is approved by the State of Vermont which was seconded by Arabella Holzapfel and the motion passed unanimously.**

The Fields clarified with the Commission that they would leave the mylar with Bonnie Barnes and that the approval of the wastewater system is usually signed off on by the surveyor and the engineer who designed the system after approval from the State of Vermont.

**Application #20-130 for sketch plan review of a 3-lot subdivision: 428 Middlebrook Road; applicants Brandon and Kelli Hammond; Rural Agricultural (RA-5) District; tax mad id no. 23/20/20.01**

Bob Beach introduced the application and Brandon Hammond appearing on behalf of the application explained that he is interested in pursuing a three-lot subdivision as they would like to sell their current house and build a house that would fit their growing family. Brandon noted that the third lot of the subdivision would be for his father, and that two of the lots, the one for him and the one for his father, would have a shared driveway.

Bob Beach clarified that the intent is to sell the lot with the current home, and then have two new lots, which Brandon noted was correct. Gail Blasius asked about the lot sizes commenting that the plans show one lot that would be 7.4 acres, another would be 22.3 acres, and asked what the third lot would be. Brandon noted that lot three would be 6 acres, which Gail clarified would be 5.7 according to the plans. Bob Beach asked which lot was for Brandon's father which he noted it would be lot 3. Arabella Holzapfel showed the plans on-screen.

Gail Blasius clarified that the only new curb cut would be on proposed lots 2 and three as lot 1 already had a curb cut. Bob Beach asked about the irregular shape of lot 1 and the possibility of re-arranging the lot to make it more regular. Brandon noted that they were aiming to keep the shapes of lots 2 and three as regular as possible which is why lot 1 appeared to be irregular. Brandon also noted that the plans attempted to give room for privacy given the current proposed building envelope on lot 2 as the placement was in alignment with service lines. Bob Beach asked about the building placement on lot 3, and Brandon noted that it would be in the far corner.

Kristin DeBellis asked about the procedure to add more properties onto the water line and noted that this was for her own edification. Brandon noted that for the first house, they needed to contact the Vergennes/Panton water district and Jack Milback, who is working with the Hammonds on their application, clarified that they would need to obtain a letter from the state that the water distribution system has the capacity to serve the subdivision, and that the rest of the process would be sorted out during construction. Bob Beach and Jack Milback discussed that the construction should be fairly straightforward.

Gail Blasius noted that the zoning regulations require that an applicant have 400 feet of frontage, 400 feet of width, and 450 feet of depth and was not sure if lot 1 met these

requirements given the shape. Jack Milback noted that given the present house on lot 1, there was a challenge in keeping the lot a regular shape and that the applicants had met with Bonnie Barnes to sketch out possibilities. Jack Milback noted that they could adjust the lots if needed, but that lot 1 was a challenge to square up. Gail Blasius noted that lot 3 seemed like it had potential to be made more regular to meet with dimensional standards, and Jack Milback noted that they were trying to be consistent with the town plan and development regulations, but that there are some natural features such as wetlands on the site that make it fairly challenging to draw property lines through, although he was open to adjusting lot 3 if need-be. Gail Blasius noted that she had no issue with it, and Bob Beach clarified that lot 1 likely met the dimensional standards but it was hard to see with the irregularities. Gail Blasius noted that creating lines based on contours and other qualities of the site seemed to make sense and she was comfortable with the proposal as it had input from Bonnie.

There being no comments from neighbors or others, **Gail Blasius made a motion to close the hearing, approve the sketch as presented and classify the proposal as a minor subdivision. Arabella Holzapfel seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. The public hearing closed at 7:31 pm.**

Bob Beach noted that the sketch plan had been approved and recommended that the applicants discuss the sketch plan with Bonnie and ask if there are other needs for this proceeding as a minor subdivision. Bob Beach further explained that they could come back in front of the Board when they have all necessary information available - if they would like to come back prior to the water and wastewater approval the Commission could approve with a stipulation. Bob Beach asked Gail Blasius if she thought it was appropriate to have one or two hearings, and Gail noted one hearing. Arabella Holzapfel asked if the neighbors had been informed, and Jack Milback noted that Bonnie prepared the adjoining list and contacted the neighbors. Bob Beach asked the Commission if they were comfortable with an amendment to the motion to include that there would be one hearing on the application, which all were in agreement.

**With agreement from Gail Blasius, Arabella Holzapfel seconded the motion to amend the motion to include that there should be one hearing on the application, which passed unanimously.**

Bob Beach clarified that the applicants should check-in with Bonnie about next steps.

## **DISCUSSION**

Kristin DeBellis noted that she was not present at the last meeting, and asked Robyn King to amend the minutes. Bob Beach clarified that they would wait until there was quorum of people who were present at the meeting to approve meeting minutes.

## **Ferrisburgh Zoning Regulations and Map**

Arabella Holzapfel noted that they had gotten their first comment from the public, from Craig Heindel who was wondering about sections of the floodplain regulations. Jean Richardson

clarified that Craig's comments referred to flood hazard regulations, which had been up for discussion on different options including an overlay district. Jean explained that the regulations had been dense, and they had tried to make them more succinct, but that Craig was specifically interested in including language that made the Town of Ferrisburgh eligible for the flood insurance program. Jean Richardson noted that this was excellent feedback and she would be following up to get more guidance on what language exactly should be included. Jean Richardson also noted that others had called about the map and that there are differing opinions on zoning districts following property boundary lines.

Bob Beach asked what effect the zoning regulations had on people's ability to get flood insurance in the floodplains, and Jean noted she was unsure and thought that it referred to the entire Town's ability to get flood assistance similar to other towns during storm events. Jean Richardson noted that Craig pointed to very specific language that would need to be included that would then determine the Town's eligibility, which seemed worth pursuing and she was very glad that Craig brought their attention to this.

Arabella Holzapfel discussed the status of the grant and asked what the Planning Commission would like to do in terms of the timeline of collecting public feedback and moving the zoning regulations forward. Bob asked about the grant deadline, and Arabella noted that there's a possibility for extension, but it's not guaranteed. Jean Richardson explained some of the challenges in collecting feedback from a variety of viewpoints in the digital age and noted it may be worth continuing to collect informal feedback from the public and key stakeholders, such as Select Board members, without moving the more formal timeline forward. Bob Beach noted that they may want to start by getting a firm answer from the state on the timeline of the grants, but that they could try some different methods to get informal feedback in the meantime such as a Front Porch Forum posting, an ad in the Independent, calling people, or a physical mailer.

Jean Richardson noted that she thought this was a sound plan and noted that they could host Zoom meetings for different regions as well. Gail Blasius suggested that they call people who may be interested as direct outreach can be effective. Jean Richardson noted that she was open to dropping copies off if people were interested and gaining feedback from folks who went through the draft zoning regulations physically. There was general agreement, after discussion, that the feedback period could last until before Thanksgiving as that would give adequate time. The Commission Members agreed that it was important to include stakeholders for direct outreach with a variety of perspectives to get the most meaningful feedback, and Commission Members suggested a list of names to Jean Richardson which was inclusive of town residents living in different areas of Town in addition to business members and others active in the community. Jean Richardson noted she would drop off copies after she contacted folks if they said they were interested. Bob Beach noted that they would be having another meeting in a month's time where they could reassess the effort and decide what to do moving forward.

Arabella noted that there were a few items to discuss on the map including the Industrial Zone on Long Point Road and was considering reaching out to an affected landowner to collect thoughts as the current proposal would be to rezone an area away from industrial to RA5. Gail

Blasius noted that after some research, she believes that most of the land in the Industrial District is zoned as such but not used as Industrial and that she could ask the gentleman who farms there what his thoughts were. Jean Richardson noted that the land had been in use but conserved and there was discussion about repercussions for taking the land out of agricultural use. After discussion of historical uses in the area, it was agreed that the parcels being discussed may be being conserved in perpetuity as they were under a conservation easement. There was agreement also to reach out to the affected owners to clarify the use of the land and impacts.

Arabella Holzapfel pointed out that another point on the map that came up after review was there was a portion of the RR2 sections shaded in brown that needed to be moved and that they were planning on reaching out to Kevin from the Regional Planning Commission to discuss this edit as they would like to maintain those zones where they are. There was discussion over the boundaries of the brown shaded area as it pertained to Mike and Katie Quinn's parcels of land as they would like to maintain the zoning on their property.

Arabella Holzapfel asked if anyone noticed anything else missing, and Jean Richardson asked about the representation of Mount Philo on the map. Arabella Holzapfel and Jean Richardson agreed that it should likely be shaded yellow.

Anne Cohn asked about the zoning map as it related to Shellhouse Mountain, and there was clarification that there wasn't a full understanding of why the area around Shellhouse Mountain had become a conservation zone. Jean Richardson noted that the zone seemed to fit the topography and Bob Beach noted that Craig from the Conservation Commission could likely provide some background. Jean Richardson noted that she can ask Carl Cole and Craig about the conservation zone.

There being no other business, **Arabella Holzapfel moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 pm which was seconded by Anne Cohn and the motion passed unanimously.**