

TOWN OF NORWICH
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
DRAFT MINUTES
Thursday, February 17, 2022

This meeting was warned for on-line participation via Zoom using the link below:

Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89900487709
--

Members Present: Arline Rotman (Chair), Richard Stucker, Don McCabe, Matt Stuart, Linda Gray, Patrick Bradley, Sue Pitiger
Alternates Present: None
Staff: Rod Francis (Clerk)
Public: none

- 1) **Call to Order:** 7:08pm.
- 2) **Agenda:** Stucker moved and Pitiger seconded a motion to approve an amended agenda moving the approval of the January 20, 2022 minutes to the end of the meeting. Motion carried 6 – 0. For: Stucker, McCabe, Stuart, Gray, Pitiger, Bradley.
- 3) **Public Comments and Announcements:** none
- 4) **Training for DRB members on Development Review**
Stucker invited Francis to begin the training of DRB members.

Francis commenced with reviewing the purpose and scope of a site visit including interactions with the applicant and any members of the public present.

- Site visits are not hearings
- Testimony is not gathered at site visits
- Minutes are not taken at site visits
- No findings are made at site visits
- DRB members are not present to answer questions
- DRB members should not discuss the application during the site visit
- DRB members are able to ask clarifying questions of the applicant and/or their representatives to obtain information that informs the application under consideration
- Debate between DRB members and applicants or the public is not appropriate
- Observation and comments made at the site visit are noted by the Clerk which will then be added to the record during the hearing
- Questions for the applicant should be directed through the Chair where possible, although in practice this can prove difficult

McCabe raised a question about whether it is legal to have a party at the site visit video the proceedings. Generally, the Chair may point out that no record is being made and therefore video recordings are unnecessary.

Francis then moved on to discuss Site Plan Review.

- Site Plan Review is set at the scale of the parcel
- The Zoning Regulations contain standards of review for each element of site plan
- Site Plan Review is not as common or readily used in Vermont as other jurisdictions
- The existing Norwich regulations Site Plan Review standards (like most other Vermont land use regulations) are not as strong or clear as they could be
- In Vermont 1 or 2 family dwellings are exempt from Site Plan Review
- Consequently, it is rarely used in Norwich (which is overwhelmingly residential)
- Site Plan focuses on elements of the proposed development as it impacts the parcel (access, circulation, structures, landscaping, lighting, signs, outdoor display etc.)
- The focus of these standards is to ensure that the proposed development allows for safe movement to and from the site, has adequate provision for parking and circulation onsite and that any development impacts are accounted for and reflect the standards of the district

Board members discussed various aspects of the standards and how they apply

Francis introduced Conditional Use Review which is more concerned with the impact of certain types of use and the impacts that could be expected to occur in the immediate neighborhood, or the larger community (depending on the size of the project).

- Conditional Use is intended first to establish whether the proposed use is compatible with the broader district or the community as a whole (depending on the scale of the proposed development)
- The DRB can impose conditions on the applicant to ensure that any wider impacts are mitigated such as traffic impact, impact on community resources such as schools or the “character of the area”
- Conditional use allows the Board to review for any impacts on other regulations or bylaws

Board members discussed various aspects of the standards and how they apply

6) Approve Minutes – January 20, 2022

Stucker moved and Pitiger seconded a motion to approve the minutes as amended. The amendment adda that training on the land use regulations was to be conducted at this meeting and that training will be a regular annual item. Motion carried 6 -0. For: Rotman, Stucker, McCabe, Gray, Pitiger, Bradley.

7) Other Business: none

Meeting Adjourned: 8:30PM

Respectfully submitted,

Rod Francis

Future Meetings:

March 17, 2022

DRB Minutes available at:

<http://Norwich.vt.us/development-review-board-minutes/>

To receive copies of Town agendas and minutes, please send an email request to be added to the town email list to the Town Manager's Assistant at: managers-assistant@norwich.vt.us