

TOWN OF NORWICH
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
Draft Minutes
Thursday, October 16th, 2025
Tracy Hall and Zoom

Members present: Patrick Bradley (Chair), Sue Pitiger, Linda Gray, Don McCabe, Emily Myers, Matthew Stuart,

Alternates present: Barry Rotman, Elissa Close

Members absent: Alec Orenstein (Vice-Chair)

Staff: Steven True, Zoning Administrator

Minute Taker: Steven True

Members of the Public: Chris Kennedy, Peg Allen, Jeff Goodrich, Greg Hynes, Paul Simon, Valerie Woodhouse, Leslie O'Hara, Dennis Marquis, Earl Simpson, Nica Mieloch-Blinn, Shawn P, Kelley, Robin Shield, Jess Phelps, Craig Layne, Kate Fisher, Cathy Sator, Watt Alexander, Jaan Laaspere, Todd Allen

1. **Call to Order:** by Chair Bradley at 6:33 pm; roll call of Board members.
2. **Approve Agenda:** Gray moved, Myers seconded to approve the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.
3. **Public Comment:** none
4. **PUBLIC HEARING:** Application #54DE25: Development Envelope Review on undeveloped land; Applicant(s): Gregory Hynes and Emilie Calvello Hynes; 00 Dutton Hill RD; Parcel ID: 20-060.000; Rural Residential (RR) District.

The Chair opened the hearing by swearing in the applicant Mr. Gregory Hynes and Misters Jeff Goodrich and Shawn Kelley, both representatives for the applicant.

The Chair asked for a motion to enter the exhibits into the record, Myers so moved, Don McCabe seconded, all in favor. Mr. Hynes was asked to speak to the application, explaining that the intent of the development envelope was to create a developable space to construct a single-family residential structure with accessory dwelling and garage space.

Mr. Goodrich speaks to the existing conditions and site plans (Exhibit 6 & 7 respectively) describing the area of development, and the slope conditions, and introduces Mr. Kelley, a geotechnical engineer. Mr. Kelley speaks to the two prior geotechnical reports brought into the record, (Exhibit 3 & 4), highlighting that he came to a similar conclusion in his own report, that the site as shown in Exhibit 7 is on bedrock, is stable and could be developed.

The board asked qualifying questions about the setbacks from the road frontage. McCabe asked about impacts to the Fire District reservoir and aquifer. Mr. Goodrich answered that the reservoir was constructed from concrete, and that there would be no impacts on

the aquifer from improvements on this site. Stuart asked about impacts on the health of Bragg Brook during construction. Mr. Goodrich answered that any impacts would be mitigated by employing erosion control measures during the construction phase.

Close asks about the slippage noted in all three of the geotechnical reports and asks whose responsibility it is to monitor these. Mr. Kelley says that it is the property owner's responsibility in general. Mr. Goodrich adds that the tops of these slips have been surveyed which will make monitoring them over time much simpler.

Myers asks Mr. Kelley if he could say with one hundred percent certainty that a seismic event or a large weather event would not create a slope failure posing a catastrophic risk to any improvements on the site. Mr. Kelley says there is no probability of the slope catastrophically failing.

The Chair asks if there are any questions from the members of the public in attendance: Kate Fisher, an adjoining neighbor, expresses her and her family's support for the application.

Hearing no further questions, the Chair asks for a motion to close the hearing; Matt Stuart so moves to close the hearing at 7:09 PM, Don McCabe seconds. **MOTION** passed unanimously.

5. **PUBLIC HEARING: APPLICATION #53SPR25: Site Plan and Conditional Use Review for an Open Air Market and a Multi-Use Building; Applicant(s): Upper Valley Agricultural Association (Norwich Farmers Market); Landowner: Rose Z Dyke Trust; 00 US Route 5 S; Parcel ID: 15-042.000; Rural Residential (RR) District.**

The Chair opens the hearing by swearing the applicant Ms. Peg Allen, and her representatives: Mr. Chris Kennedy, Mr. Paul Simon, Ms. Nica Mieloch-Blinn, Mr. Dennis Marquis, and Mr. Earl Simpson.

The Chair notes that the application is made with the consent of Judith Currier, the owner of the property (Exhibit 1 pg. 2)

The Chair asked for a motion to enter the exhibits into the record, Myers so moved, Pitiger seconded, True asks that a letter of support from an adjoining member be read into the record, all in favor. **MOTION** carries unanimously. The letter from the Siebert family is entered in as Exhibit 4.

The applicant speaks to the application; describing the Upper Valley Agricultural Associate (UVAA) as a 501(c)(3) created approximately a year ago with the intent to create a permanent home for the summer and winter Norwich Farmer's Market(NFM). Also, as the UVAA has an educational mandate under its incorporation as a 501(c)(3), the UVAA will have events and classes that celebrate agriculture in the Upper Valley.

Mr. Simon and Mr. Kennedy walk the board through the site plan (Exhibit B). The board asks clarifying questions about the plans. Ms. Allen describes the outdoor vendor area, the 7,500 square foot building, the parking and access road and overflow parking shown

on the plans. In response to questions from the board, the building will be used to supplement vendor space in the summertime, and house vendors space during the wintertime. When asked if the space would be rented for community activities, Ms. Allen answered affirmatively stating that the operational budget is not going to be covered by the lease NFM will pay, and the UVAA would like the opportunity to rent out the facility.

Bradley asks about the Lessor/Lessee relationship between the UVAA and the NFM, and if the NFM is a separate entity. Ms. Allen confirms it is a separate entity. Bradley asks about the tax status of the development, and if, as a 501(c)(3), the UVAA will pay property tax to the Town of Norwich. Ms. Allen says that it is likely but has not investigated the answer and is therefore unsure.

Members ask questions about the definition of Open Air Markets, to which True reads the definition and answers more clarifying questions about this addition to the bylaw.

Members ask questions about access from US Route 5, pedestrian access, transit stops and ask further questions about volume of traffic to and from the Market, both historically and in the future, and the amount of available parking on-site. The applicant and representatives discuss the letter from VTrans (Exhibit 2A), note approximately 270 parking spaces as shown on the plan, and show the sidewalk along the access road into the site.

Mr. Simon and Mr. Kennedy speak to the building plans (Exhibit 2C), describing that the plan complies with the Norwich Land Use Regulations in terms of parking, lighting fixtures, bike racks, and landscape screening. Gray asks about impervious surfaces, Mr. Simon and Mr. Kennedy describe the various proposed surfaces for the parking areas. Stuart raises his concern of visitors using up parking spaces at adjoining commercial properties. Mr. Simon and Mr. Kennedy describe this as unlikely and that the peak demand for parking happens only 1 day a week. Mr. Simon and Mr. Kennedy describe the interior of the facility.

Myers asks about potable water and septic service. Ms. Allen describes positive conversations with the Town of Hartford Public Works and Hartford Selectboard and expects to develop a private connection to both these Hartford utilities.

Members ask about funding. Ms. Allen responds that the funds will be raised from combination of private donors, grant funding naming the Northern Border Regional Catalyst grant, and other state agencies, who have worked to support the project so far. Ms. Allen goes onto describe some partner projects that the proposed site could support.

Members ask about the Wetlands, and the Stormwater management planning. Mr. Marquis talks to the Wetland delineation and the protections necessitated by State Wetland permit process. He speaks to the request for a Waiver of local review of their Stormwater Management Plan, considering the fact, this topic will require State approvals and permitting during the Act 250 process they are required to undertake.

The Chair asks if there are any members of the public that wish to speak to the application:

Craig Layne asks a question to the applicant regarding State Stormwater management requirements that involve Class II wetlands. Mr. Marquis believes they consider both.

Leslie O'Hara of Hogwash Farms speaks to the community support NFM provides to Hogwash Farms, and to the necessity of preserving this function for local farmers going forward.

Valerie Woodhouse of Honey Field Farm talks to the improved access the new location will bring and feels this project will encourage local entrepreneurs to invest in the long-term future, and to keep the investment in the community.

Bradley asks Jaan Laaspere, the chair of the Norwich Planning Commission to describe the process of how this regulation was adopted and asks why the planning commission chose to not change the underlying zoning district. Laaspere speaks to the intent of the Planning Commission to modernize the bylaws, and in that process took on a number of new regulations mandated by the State, including Accessory on Farm Businesses, which allow several non-conventional farm activities, including most activities the NFM market currently is currently proposing. True expands on the notion of Accessory On Farm Business noting that the Planning Commission felt these uses were already present in the town outside of designated farms, and that in general these uses were worthy of expanding within the town.

The Chair asks if there are any more questions or comments that anyone would like to make or have answered, and hearing none, asks for a motion to close the hearing. McCabe moves to close the meeting at 8:25 PM, Myers seconds. All in favor. **MOTION** passed unanimously.

6. Zoning Administrator Update and Upcoming Matters: None

7. Other Business: None

8. Meeting Adjournment: 8:30 Motion to adjourn. All in favor.

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