

Town of Starksboro
Development Review Board
Minutes (APPROVED)
October 9, 2025

Members Present: Ben Campbell, Evelyn Boardman, Rich Warren, Arnell Paquette, Rob Liotard, Luke McCarthy, Tom Perry.

Members Not Present:

Applicants Present: None

Visitors: Kevin Harper, Eugene Vansteamburg

Others Present: Stephen Rooney, Zoning Administrator

Meeting called to order by Chair Ben Campbell at 6:30 pm

Changes to Agenda: None

Public Comment: None

Pre-Application Meeting: per Section 426.B for a proposed combined review process per VSA 24 § 4462: Kevin Harper and Julie Herr proposed 2-Lot subdivision for Parcel 10340. Eugene VanSteamburg / John Dickason boundary line adjustment for Parcels 10051 / 10216. Subsequent merger of Parcel 10340 and Parcel 10051.

B. Campbell read the agenda, and noted this is an informal pre-application meeting.

K.Harper and S.Rooney described for the Board the proposed lot reconfigurations outlined in S.Rooney's email to K.Harper and E.VanSteamburg on 9/18/25 (included in the meeting packet).

It was noted that the intent of combining the lots provided road frontage for the final lot configuration once all steps are complete, and the lot size would allow E.VanSteamburg to apply for Current Use status for the combined parcel.

B.Campbell noted that there was a previous discussion with E.VanSteamburg under a previous Zoning Administrator, and there was a thought that making Lot B smaller by a boundary line adjustment might make it non-conforming based on the density requirements of the LDRC/FC districts. S.Rooney noted that he and the Town's zoning consultant Ron Rodjenski reviewed the lot and did not see that it was currently non-conforming, nor would reducing it by the 50ft easement width make it non-conforming.

S.Rooney discussed the importance of maintaining the current 20 acre conservation set-aside approved in K.Harper's previous 2009 subdivision through this new process and the Town's preference to do this through the correct legal language in conditions, plats and deeds.

S.Rooney noted that initially after the sub-division is complete, the lot would not have frontage, and this would only be alleviated by completing the remaining boundary line adjustment and lot merger, which is one of the reasons for combining the different steps into one application.

S.Rooney also noted that a waiver of the building envelope requirement for subdivided land might also be needed, as there is no proposal to further develop the property other than using it for forestry / sugarmaking.

L.McCarthy questioned whether the access strip across Lot B had enough width at Lot C, this was confirmed by K.Harper's survey to be 73.4ft.

S.Rooney then described the steps required to go from subdivision through boundary line adjustment and then lot merger, and combining these approvals with conditions that needed to be met for the ZA to be able to execute the BLA and merger after the application approval.

General discussion regarding how the DRB would view the final combined lot configuration and Section 351.E.(1) *Lots shall not be irregularly shaped (curves, jogs, flags, dog-legs, string, spaghetti, etc.) except as warranted by site features such as topography, shorelines, streams, hedgerows, field boundaries, fence lines, stone walls or existing roads.* S.Rooney noted that the Board could determine how to either enforce it or waive it upon request, and that an informal straw poll of the Board's opinion on this might help form the basis for the future application.

S.Rooney noted that the State requires a combined review process when possible and that this meeting was also intended to meet the requirement that the Town define how the review would be combined.

S.Rooney noted that K.Harper can still pursue further subdividing of the remaining portion of Lot C if desired in the future as the bylaw allows.

E.Boardman asked if the subdivision would require new septic permitting by the State, and noted that the boundary line adjustment might need their review for this as well. S.Rooney noted that the applicant should be consulting with the State regarding any state permitting requirements as the Town does not administer those regulations.

B.Campbell took an informal straw poll on the 351.E(1) issue and the lot configuration in general. T.Perry noted we should be clear about the 351.E(1) waiver to avoid a future appeal. The group was generally in favor of the proposal assuming the continued forestry/sugarmaking use of the property.

The pre-application meeting portion was then finished and the visitors were excused.

Discussion: DRB manual of Procedure / Conflict of Interest Policy.

S.Rooney noted that he was unable to locate the procedure and policy noted in Section 420.C. A.Paquette noted that there may have been one in the past, but R.Liotard and other members could not remember one.

S.Rooney noted that R.Warren had distributed by email an example written by the State.

E.Boardman noted she had read one by Hinesburg of about 8 pages, and she would forward a copy to the board.

S.Rooney explained some of the benefits of having a written procedure. This could be combined with some flow charts for the public and board to more clearly understand the different application processes.

L.McCarthy noted that the Town has a Conflict of Interest Policy, which should be reviewed alongside the example.

S.Rooney will forward a Word version of the example to the board, and members will review and make comments and send back to S.Rooney within a month. S.Rooney will compile a draft from these reviews and distribute for further review.

Minutes Review:

Minutes from 9-25-25 DRB Meeting were reviewed.

Motion: L.McCarthy moved to accept the minutes. A.Paquette seconded.

Vote: All in favor.

Future Agenda Planning:

S.Rooney gave a introduction to the following upcoming meetings.

10/23/25 Castonguay Subdivision

Discussion followed regarding waiving building envelopes for land sales with no future development proposed.

11/6/25 Caron Waiver

Discussion followed regarding addressing discontinuance guidance for independent mobile home sites.

Motion: R.Liotard moved to adjourn at 8:25pm. B.Campbell seconded.

Vote: All in favor.