

Town of Starksboro
Development Review Board
Minutes (DRAFT)
May 22, 2025

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

Applicants Present: Alan Norris, Scott Baker (Zoom) and Jason Barnard for Barnard & Gervais, LLC

Visitors: Sprague Huntington, Leo Huntington, Charlotte Sullivan (Zoom), Jenny Austgen (Zoom), Carrie Austgen (Zoom), Lexi Thompson (Zoom), Jennifer Lovett (Zoom), Charles Lovett (Zoom), Chris Boyle (Zoom), Adam Aguire (Zoom)

Meeting called to order by Chair Ben Campbell at 7:01pm

Public Comment: None

Hearing #25DRB-05-SD:

- B. Campbell read the public warning and relevant statutes. Checked for conflicts and ex parte communications. There were none. Stated right to appeal and swore in all attendees making statements.
- B. Campbell spoke about zoning bylaws and the stage of the hearing that we are currently in and talked about how the hearing cannot be closed tonight. J. Barnard countered that the application was submitted as a sketch plan preliminary review and all actual engineering drawings still need to be created, so this is still a preliminary review, not a hearing. After much debate of language and terminology regarding different levels of the review process, all parties agreed that this is a preliminary review and the board – at this time – would not be making any deliberations or decisions and only offering informal feedback.
- J. Barnard gave another brief overview of the proposed subdivision.

Motion: R. Liotard moves to accept this application as a major subdivision. A. Paquette seconds.

Vote: All in favor

Motion: R. Warren moves to acknowledge this meeting as an informal application review and hold the meeting open to a date certain. E. Boardman seconds.

Vote: All in favor

5-minute recess

Hearing #25DRB-04-SD:

- B. Campbell read the public warning and relevant statutes. Checked for conflicts and ex parte communications. There were none. Stated right to appeal and swore in all attendees making statements.
- J. Barnard stated the subdivision is now a 9-lot division as opposed to the originally proposed 8 lot subdivision. Instead of all remaining lands being contained in one large lot the remaining lands will be split into two lots. One primarily containing the beaver pond, and the other primarily being the remaining woods land.
- J. Barnard read the development criteria for consideration:
 - o Siting and Suitability – Access to Route 17 to be improved to VTrans standards. Well drained soils and level topography.
 - o Natural Features – The subdivision attempts to tuck houses to edges of the field and conserve as much open land as possible. The houses on Lots 3 and 6 will be against the tree line to blend the structures into the woods. There is a large wetland complex on site and a wetlands specialists will be marking out boundaries. All proposed homes are well outside of the wetland buffer.
 - o Character of Area – The proposed density is relatively minimal given the well-draining soils and size of lots compared to what is allowed in the zoning district.
 - o Energy Conservation – Houses will be built according to most recent energy standards
 - o Access – A private road will utilize an existing curb cut onto Route 17 and a new shared gravel road will be created. Only one entry onto Route 17.
 - o Infrastructure – The development will not adversely impact traffic on Route 17. Electricity to houses will be underground. The new road will be approximately 1,000 feet and will have a driveway agreement between residents.
 - o Lighting – Will be typical of a residence and will be in accordance with zoning regulations.
 - o Recreation – There will be the common land on lot 7 (middle of the horseshoe shaped driveway) as well as 60% set-aside lands at a location on the property yet to be determined. The property will likely require a state stormwater permit.

Motion: T. Perry moves to close the informal hearing. R. Warren seconds.

Vote: All in favor

Review and approve any outstanding minutes:

- Minutes of the May 8 DRB meeting were reviewed, and edits were suggested.

Motion: E. Boardman moves to accept the minutes with the suggested changes. A. Paquette seconds.

Vote: All in favor

Motion: E. Boardman moves to adjourn the meeting. R. Liotard seconds.

Vote: All in favor

Meeting adjourned at 8:45