

Town of Barre
Planning Commission
July 20, 2022

The Town of Barre Planning Commission held a meeting and public hearing on Wednesday, July 20, 2022, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building at 149 Websterville Road, Websterville, VT.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

In person: Byron Atwood, Cedric Sanborn, George Clain, Terry Reil, Chris Violette, Mike Gilbar and Craig Chase

STAFF PRESENT:

In person: Chris Violette
Remote (video) Cindy Spaulding

OTHERS PRESENT

In person: Jim Fecteau and Stephen Caldwell
Remote (video): Jeff Olesky (Catamount)

1) CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Mr. Sanborn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked whether there were any changes to the agenda. Mr. Clain asked to add Town Centers under follow up.

2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

June 15, 2022

On motion by Mr. Reil, seconded by Mr. Gilbar, the Planning Commission approved the minutes of June 15, 2022 as amended. Vote 6-0-0

3) NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT (if necessary limited at chair's discretion)

Mr. Sanborn asked whether there were any non-agenda comments – there was none.

4) PUBLIC HEARING - MULTIPLE CURB CUT

A. APPLICANT – JDJ Development – Multi curb-cut

Request by JDJ Development (land owned by JDJ Development and Fecteau Residential) for multi curb-cut (driveways) request in accordance with the Town of Barre Subdivision Ordinance to add what could become five (5) driveways on one parcel (after parcel merger, 4 exist in current configuration) as part of the multi-unit residential development on property located off Rudd Farm Drive. Parcel ID: 039/003.00 zoned: very high density residential, AU-22000002.

STAFF REPORT BY CHRIS VIOLETTE, PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR

This is a warned public hearing for the purpose of a multiple curb-cut request. The applicant is requesting multiple curb-cuts (driveway) to accommodate a significant housing development currently underway off Rudd Farm Drive.

All parcels, except in unique situations, are entitled to one access to a Town road approved by the Town Engineer. Access is generally referred to as a curb-cut. There are some instances where a property owner may desire two and sometimes more curb-cuts. While the Town Engineer would still have to permit additional curb-cuts, approval is required from the Planning Commission under the authority of Article 4, section 402 E. (2) of the Barre Town Subdivision Ordinance.

When reviewing multiple curb-cut request the Planning Commission relies heavily on input from the Town Engineer regarding these types of requests. The Town Engineer has been designated by the Selectboard to review and control access to Town roads. The Town Engineer shall consider such things as; the functional class of the road; site distances; safety; width of the curb-cut; drainage; topography; and any other pertinent factors that may apply.

The situation with this request is quite unique and not one you are likely to see very often. The applicant explains it well in his narrative, but I'll provide a brief overview, it is a bit confusing.

The applicants own a parcel of land identified as 039/003.08 which currently has five 4-unit multi-family dwellings on its 1.51 acres. The applicants are principle in the adjacent 039/003.00 (5.27 acres) and 039/003.10 (.4 acres) parcels but the actual owner of those is Fecteau Residential, Inc.

The applicants have a conditional use permit (CUP-22000001) and site plan approval (SP-22000002) to add 8 new 4-unit multi-family dwellings on 039/003.00 and 039/003.10. Those permits were issued by the Development Review Board earlier this year.

Ultimately to make their plan work, the three lots mentioned will be merged into one parcel at a later date. As a result, being one parcel, there will be a total of five (5) curb-cuts to one parcel of land.

It should be noted that none of the driveways are new, they all exist in some form or another. The applicant submitted a map showing the different locations of the driveways. It should be noted that they included a sixth driveway which is a town right-of-way for the purpose of a town road (Blake Drive). I did not include that in the request because it is a town road, not a driveway.

Two of the driveways as shown on the map are current access points to 38 Rudd Farm Drive which is a 4-unit multi-family dwelling. Another driveway is a private road known as Olivia Drive which serves as access to four 4-unit dwellings. The next one is the primary access to 22 Rudd Farm Drive which sits behind the road frontage lot of 28 Rudd Farm. The final access point lies between 10 & 14 Rudd Farm Drive and provides access to 12 Rudd Farm Drive. This access point is not intended to be used but may be used in the future.

Getting approval from the Planning Commission for the multiple driveways was a condition of approval contained within the site plan permit issued by the DRB.

Josh Martineau, the Town Engineer has reviewed the request and stated in an email to me dated July 6, 2022, that the location and layout of the driveways on one lot look acceptable. Again, no new driveways are being proposed.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

This housing development has received approval from the Barre Town Development Review Board. It is creating needed housing in a location targeted for growth. No new driveways are being created, it is really a formality, required by the subdivision ordinance. The Town Engineer has signed off on the proposal seeing no safety concerns. I recommend approval of this request to allow five (5) curb-cuts on one parcel.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Mr. Violette provided an overview of his staff report as stated above. Mr. Fecteau provided an overview:

- Driveway 1 & 2 will remain the same not servicing additional units
- Driveway 3 will service Units 16- 20
- Driveway 4 currently services a single-family dwelling, but will also service 28 new units
- Driveway 5 is a private driveway. There are no plans to loop it around. It could be used for emergency access.
- New buildings will consist of 4 units with two bedroom/two bath and owned by JDJ Development and leases to individuals such as traveling nurses, professionals, and retirees.

Q&A

Mr. Clain asked if Driveway 3 would be servicing the additional units?

Mr. Fecteau stated that Driveway 3 (Olivia Drive Pvt) will have one additional 4-unit building. The remaining 7 buildings (28 units) will be serviced by Driveway 4.

Mr. Chase asked if he should recuse himself as he has worked on projects with JDJ Development. Mr. Sanborn stated he didn't think it was necessary as it does not pertain to this project.

Mr. Caldwell asked if there would be signage regarding no thru traffic on Driveway 5. Mr. Fecteau answered, there would be signage such as "No thru traffic" and it will not be a connector road.

MOTION:

On motion by Mr. Atwood, seconded by Mr. Gilbar, the Planning Commission closed the public hearing. Vote 7-0-0.

DELIBERATION

On motion by Mr. Atwood, seconded by Mr. Gilbar, the Planning Commission approved a request by JDJ Development (land owned by JDJ Development and Fecteau Residential) for

multi curb-cut (driveways) request in accordance with the Town of Barre Subdivision Ordinance to add what could become five (5) driveways on one parcel (after parcel merger, 4 exist in current configuration) as part of the multi-unit residential development on property

located off Rudd Farm Drive. Parcel ID: 039/003.00 zoned: very high density residential, AU-2200002. Vote 7-0-0.

5) **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Discuss the merit of forming an Energy Committee and possible charge to recommend to the Selectboard.

Staff Comment

During round table discussion at last month’s meeting, George brought up a suggestion that the Planning Commission recommend to the Selectboard that a Barre Town Energy Committee be formed. He comes to this conclusion first, because the Town Plan contemplates it, but also because there is a need to collect data on efficacies and usage. Both he and Mike have seen the potential benefit for an Energy Committee based on their regional experience.

While there wasn’t any real opposition from members in creating the committee, there was thought that the Planning Commission should look into it a bit more and create a suggested charge for the new committee before sending the recommendation up.

Mike has spent a fair amount of time researching Energy Committees and charges for them that other towns have. While I have included some of that work, I haven’t included all of what he found but can certainly email it to you. We can discuss at the meeting, I’m not aware of an immediate hurry so if we need time to work on this, I believe we can.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Violette provided examples of Energy Committees in Williston, Middlesex, and Randolph. Discussion ensued with highlights:

- Advisory committee to match the Town’s energy plan and Regional plan
- Pros and cons of marketing of green energy (renewable energy vs fossil fuels)
- types of energy to market and offer the community
- future requirements from the Public Utilities and EPA

The consensus amongst members to table further discussion to August meeting.

6) **OLD BUSINESS - NONE**

7) **FOLLOW UP - NONE**

8) **ROUND TABLE**

Mr. Clain asked to explore pros and cons for having a village/town designation. A request was made to have a member of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission to come and talk at a meeting to discuss the pros and cons.

9) **ADJOURN!**

On motion by Mr. Gilbar, seconded by Mr. Clain, the Planning Commission adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m. Vote 6-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Spaulding, Clerk

Cedric Sanborn, Chair

Mike Gilbar

George Clain

Byron Atwood

Chris Violette

Craig Chase

Terry Reil