

Town of Waitsfield
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
Meeting Minutes
January 9, 2024

1. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm, and was held in person at the Waitsfield Town Offices and online via Zoom.

DRB Members Present: Duncan Brines, John Donaldson (Chair), Gib Geiger, Steve McKenzie (Vice-Chair), Jonathan Ursprung

Staff: Zoning Administrator JB Weir

Others: Kevin Anderson, Eric Koepele

2. REVISIONS TO AGENDA, IF ANY

No changes were made to the agenda.

3. PUBLIC FORUM

Nobody requested time to address the Board.

4. Application #4163-CU by Eric Koepele off 547 Airport Road, Waitsfield VT. Applicant requests a front setback waiver down to 52.5 feet for a building envelope off Airport Road and Bertha Springs Road. The parcel is identified as #06006.000 in the Agricultural-Residential District.

Mr. Koepele explained that the wetlands on this parcel have been reclassified as Class II, leading to his request for designation of a building envelope within the property line setbacks in order to keep development of a house outside of the wetland buffer. His intention is to sell the parcel, and he would like to ensure that a home can be developed.

Mr. Koepele did not provide the exact size of the footprint requested, but indicated that the planned house footprint is approximately 700-800 square feet. He explained that there are stormwater retention areas for the adjacent subdivision noted on the site plan for this parcel.

Mr. Donaldson explained that Mr. Weir outlined reasons in his staff report that the change in setbacks requested would need to be approved as a Variance, and that is how the Board will approach the matter.

Mr. Koepele indicated that the access to the parcel is from Bertha Springs Road, about 200 feet from the intersection with Airport Road.

Several items were requested by Board members to be included on the final plat for the parcel, including:

- The access from Bertha Springs Road
- The proposed septic system area
- The proposed water supply location

Mr. Anderson, adjoining landowner, asked whether a Wetland Permit had been looked into, as the ability to encroach on the wetland buffer would allow for a larger setback from the road(s). Mr. Koepele indicated he had not reached out to DEC regarding this, as he was advised by Mr.

McCain that a setback reduction was the more prudent approach. He later indicated that he had contacted DEC in the spring of 2023; Mr. Weir, through texting George McCain during the hearing, reported that Mr. McCain had indicated that the Wetlands program would request that potential relief from the Town be sought before a Wetlands Permit would be considered.

Mr. Anderson remarked that a definitive answer from the Wetlands Program would be pertinent information to be included in any conclusion that all conditions for the granting of a Variance have been met. He also noted that a building envelope is not a structure that needs to meet setbacks, and asked that the specific location of any structure be used in determining whether a Variance is necessary. Additionally, he indicated that the lot was purchased for the purpose of road construction and stormwater retention for the adjacent subdivision, and that not having the ability to develop the parcel as a residential site does not render it worthless.

Mr. Weir asked if any Board member would like further information to be gathered before the hearing is closed. Mr. Brines indicated that the specific house site location would be helpful.

Mr. Anderson requested Interested Party status for the hearing, which was granted.

MOTION: *Mr. Geiger moved to close the hearing for Application #4163-CU. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brines. All voted in favor.*

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of November 28, 2023 were approved.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

The upcoming schedule was reviewed.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 7:28 pm to move into deliberations.

8. DELIBERATIONS

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary