

**TOWN OF THETFORD  
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES  
05/24/16 SITE VISIT**

Members Present:

Bill Bridge	Jesse Anderson	Don Longwell	Sean Mullen (Chair)	Tim Taylor (Vice-Chair)	Mary Ellen Parkman (ZA)
<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>

Attendees: Marc Chabot, Cynthia Perry (arrived at 6:40), Li Shen

The DRB and Attendees met onsite at 6:30 at 1046 Poor Farm Road.

Marc Chabot explained that his wife was held up at work and would be arriving late. He explained to the group that he and his wife owned both 1046 and 1056 Poor Farm Road. The plan is to use the basement of the house at 1046 (where they reside) as a base for drop off and pick up for the school. The land use for the outdoor school curriculum would be a combination of land associated with the parcel at 1056 Poor Farm Road (rental property) and 1046 Poor Farm Road with some use of trails off site.

There would be a foot path from behind the house at 1046 approximately 500 ft north to an area where a heated platform tent and vault toilet would be located (site located on property at 1056).

Ms. Perry arrived and explained that she is working with Carl Fuller and Todd Hill to finalize the details concerning the vault toilet. The toilet would likely have a holding tank that would need to be pumped. The site is also accessible from a logging road near the residence at 1056 Poor Farm Road.

Li Shen explained that Poor Farm Road is a narrow road and only 1.5 cars wide in some locations. The proposals adds up to 64 cars per day and she is not in favor of widening the road.

Ms. Perry explained that carpooling would be encouraged and the school could pick students up in teacher's vehicles or even cancel school if the road is in poor shape during mud season.

The Vice-Chair adjourned the site visit at 6:50PM to be continued to a hearing immediately following at the Town Offices.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Ellen Parkman

Approved on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tim Taylor, Vice Chair

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Members Present:

Bill Bridge	Jesse Anderson	Don Longwell	Sean Mullen (Chair)	Tim Taylor (Vice-Chair)	Mary Ellen Parkman (ZA)
<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>

Attendees: Marc Chabot, Cynthia Perry, Dave Wurtz, Casey Huling, Chuck and Joan Solger, Danielle Basta, Sam Casella, Amanda Wurtz

Mr. Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and moved directly to Agenda item #1:

1. Continuation of Warned Hearing on Application (#ZP16-07) for Conditional Use w/Site Plan Review by Marc Chabot and Cynthia Perry to use an existing basement at 1046 Poor Farm Road for a meeting place; and the land at 1056 Poor Farm Road for an outdoor school. These properties are located at 1046 and 1056 Poor Farm Road, Thetford Center, VT.

Mr. Taylor began by entering on record his observations from the site visit: We drove about 1 mile up Poor Farm Road and turned up a really steep drive that is approximately 400 ft long. Marc Chabot and Cindy Perry own the driveway and both properties (1046/1056 Poor Farm Road). They live at 1046 and maintain 1056 as a rental property. The group walked into the entrance to where the foot trail will be and discussed the fact that 500ft to the north would be the tent platform and vault privy. A logging road provides access to this location above. The school will use the basement at 1046 as a drop off/pick up location. The basement is a walk out with an entrance on the exterior of the building.

Mr. Taylor asked Ms. Perry if she has received a project review sheet from Peter Kopsco, the state permit specialist. She indicated that she had not; she had been working with Carl Fuller. Mr. Taylor asked that she contact Mr. Kopsco and have him prepare on to submit to the ZA.

Mr. Taylor read from page 34 of the zoning bylaw (D) General Standards, 3. Traffic on roads and highways in the vicinity to explain to the group that the DRB can require a traffic study and there are provisions to deny an application based on the condition of Poor Farm Road or to require the applicant to improve it.

Li Shen, an abutter in attendance stated that she liked the rural nature of the road and the character of the neighborhood and she did not want to see the roadway widened.

Parking spaces and school traffic patterns were discussed. The rental properties has three indoor spots to be used for occupants (2 inside garage, 1 carport), the residence at 1046 has a two car garage for storage of the owner's vehicles. It is anticipated that most parents will drop kids off at the bottom of the driveway via a Vermont turn around. Parents may elect to drive up the drive and turn around at 1056 and then drop off as well. Any school contracts would involve a bus which would also turn around at the driveway entrance.

Mr. Taylor stated that the road seems to be severely impacted by mud season in Vermont and he has some concern over the number of trips per day which would be 60 total for the 15 kids plus staff. Ms. Perry stated that if the mud is terrible she could close for the day. She will encourage carpooling and in some cases she may have to have the 3 staff drive to the bottom of Poor Farm Road to pick up students.

Mr. Longwell asked how many houses are on the road. Mr. Mullen (not participating as a DRB member but an abutter) stated that there is about a dozen with a 4 lot subdivision eagerly marketing four additional lots.

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The DRB reviewed the site plan criteria and information provided by the applicant. The DRB reviewed this in detail at the last meeting.

The DRB then discussed several findings:

1. The staff will park at 1046 Poor Farm Road.
2. Parents will typically drop off at the bottom of the driveway. Some may drive up.
3. Students will be ages 5-14 with different ages attending on different days.

Mr. Taylor made the motion to approve the proposal with the following conditions:

1. The maximum number of students will be 15 with 3 staff members.
2. The owner agrees to close the school when the road is unsafe due to muddy or other conditions or at the request of the Town of Thetford Road Foreman.
3. A project review sheet is obtained for this project and submitted to the Zoning Administrator for the file.
4. The school will serve students ages 5 to 14.

The vote passed as follows:

Bill Bridge	Jesse Anderson	Don Longwell	Sean Mullen (Chair)	Tim Taylor (Vice-Chair)
<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>X</b>

Mr. Taylor then moved to Agenda item #2 and Sean Mullen rejoined the DRB after abstaining from participating in the Chabot/Perry hearing.

2. Continuation of Warned Hearing on Application (Permit #4123) for Conditional Use w/Site Plan Review by David & Amanda Wurtz to operate a small Engine Repair Shop (which was previously approved as a Home Business). This property is located at 682 VT Route 244, Post Mills, VT

Mr. Mullen discussed DRB participation and the fact that different members had missed different hearings and asked that we review all criteria again at this hearing and allow for participation by all DRB members. Interested parties in attendance and the applicant all agreed to full participation by all DRB members.

Amanda and Dave Wurtz joined the DRB at the table and discussed a new, revised proposal (exhibit 10). The new proposal and site plan (exhibit 9) included the following:

- 4 business parking spaces associated with the business
- Space for outdoor storage of goods should equipment be dropped off when nobody is working
- A plan to push snow to the center of the property as shown on the site plan
- Discontinued use of the second curb cut near the Solger property so that all access to the property is via the curb cut on the west side of the property.
- Proposed pick up and drop off times of 7:30 am to 7:30 pm Monday-Friday with Saturdays by appointment, and none on Sundays
- No restrictions on use of garage interior as long as work is performed with the overhead door near the facing the Solger property is closed
- No screening or fencing is proposed

Mr. Taylor responded that he expected to see screening and a fence as this is what had been discussed. Amanda Wurtz indicated that she did not propose either because it seemed like the neighbors were in disagreement on whether or not there should be a fence and she didn't think one was needed. Pictures taken early in the day (Exhibit 8) show that you can't even see the building from the Solger's deck and the busy season is pretty much over and people were just starting to use their decks. She explained that the busiest month for the business is from the third week in April to the third week in May.

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There was a group discussion regarding screening and the fence. Daniella Basta asked about the fence location and it was described to start 39' from the property line. She was happy with the set back. Chuck Solger indicated that he wanted an 8' high, 80' long fence to span between the split rail fence and the apple tree, or 7' at a minimum with a 6' panel elevated 1' off the ground. Amanda Wurtz indicated that the biggest she wanted to go was 60' long to span between two existing pine trees and not more than 6' high. The DRB discussed the height and a 6' high fence is allowed up to the property line without a permit. All agreed to the 6' high, 60 ft long fence.

Mr. Taylor requested that the view from Route 244 be broken up by requiring plantings on the strip of grass between route 244 and the driveway. Lilacs or similar were suggested. All agreed to planting 75' of appropriately space lilacs or similar plants in this median.

Mr. Taylor revisited the noise standard. Amanda Wurtz indicated that she downloaded a decibel reader on her smart phone and took some readings near the Solger Property line at the make shift fence. Readings were as follows with building doors and windows closed:

Air compressor & Power tools	56 dBa
Power tools (air wrench)	45 dBa
Air compressor	52 dBa
10 year old lawnmower running	55 dBa

The mower running outside of the building registered 76 dBa as a comparison.

Stormwater was discussed. Dave Wurtz added stone to act as storage for rainwater to help clean things up. Water flows to the grassy area in front of the garage.

The dumpster was discussed again. Amanda Wurtz indicated that the dumpster goes when they move their residence and at that time and business waste would be inside the garage.

Mr. Taylor then brought up the fact that the Wurtz business currently has a permit to operate the business as long as they live there so how will all of this work? When would conditions be applied? Ms. Parkman indicated that while the Wurtz family lived at the location their home business permit was still valid. The conditional use permit would be required to be active until they moved. All agreed that a date should be picked by which permit conditions would become effective regardless.

Tim Taylor asked about waste fluids. Dave Wurtz indicated that they are stored in 50 gallon drums and are disposed of in accordance with state law.

Tim asked if anyone was concerned with existing signage? Did it look too commercial? Nobody was concerned.

There are no new proposed utilities.

Hours of Operation were discussed; the DRB did not feel as though unrestricted use of the building was appropriate. Hours of operation would be 7:30 am to 7:30 pm, 7 days per week, April 1<sup>st</sup> to June 1<sup>st</sup>, with hours the rest of the year to be 7:30 am to 6:30 pm on Monday – Saturday, closed Sunday. Drop offs would be 7:30 am to 7:30 pm, Monday – Sunday year-round.

Mr. Mullen made the motion to approve the proposal with the following conditions:

1. Screening in the form of a 6' stockade fence (to weather naturally, good side out) shall be erected for a distance of approximately 60 ft between the pine trees shown in the photos of Exhibit 5 before July 1, 2017.
2. 75' of appropriately spaced lilacs or similar be planted in the green space adjacent to Route 244 between curb cuts before July 1, 2017.
3. The hours of operation will be 7:30 am to 6:30 pm, Monday – Sunday from April 1<sup>st</sup> to June 1<sup>st</sup>.
4. The hours of operation will be 7:30 am to 6:30 pm, Monday – Saturday, closed Sunday for the remainder of the year.
5. Year-round equipment drop off times will be 7:30 am to 7:30 pm, Monday – Sunday.

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The vote passed unanimously.

Bill Bridge	Jesse Anderson	Don Longwell	Sean Mullen (Chair)	Tim Taylor (Vice Chair)
<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>

Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 9:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Ellen Parkman

Approved on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016.

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Sean Mullen, Chair