

**APPROVED**  
**Minutes**  
**Planning Commission**  
**August 6, 2018**

**Present:** Bruce Riddle, Peter Merrill, Robin Adair Logan, Toby Dayman, John Reid, Jacques Harlow, Dave Sherman, Kim Souza, Selectboard Liaison, and Jo-Ann Ells, Zoning Administrator

**Absent:** None

**Administrative Matters**

1. Minutes of July 2, 2018

Jacques Harlow moved to approve the minutes with several corrections. Peter Merrill seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Projects receiving Administrative Approval

Bruce Riddle stated that Wicked Awesome BBQ had been issued Administrative permit Approval for four picnic tables.

3. Availability for the next Public Hearing

All Commissioners anticipated being available for the September 17<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing.

4. Public Comment

None.

**Public Hearing**

Bruce Riddle opened the Public Hearing, introduced the Commissioners and Zoning Administrator, asked that anyone who intended to speak to sign the attendance sheet, explained the interested party rule, and administered the oath.

1. Application #18-09 by Youngsun Lawrence (owner/applicant) for approval of a one-step subdivision for a lot line adjustment between lots 31-0033-000 and 31-0034-000, 106 and 108 Hillridge Road, White River Junction, in R-3 and VR-1 zoning districts.

Youngsun Lawrence and Larry Swanson were present.

Jo-Ann Ells reviewed the draft Findings of Fact.

John Reid noted a typographical error on page two.

2. 08-06-18

It was noted that after working with the DPW, it was determined that little is known about the location of the on-site municipal utilities.

Peter Merrill asked about the house that crosses the property line. Larry Swanson stated that this occurred when additions to the house were constructed.

It was noted that there are separate curb cuts for the lots and the driveways connect. Larry Swanson stated that the shared access would cease if either lot is sold, but there would be no change to the curb cuts.

There was no public comment.

Peter Merrill moved to close the Public Hearing. John Reid seconded and the Public Hearing was closed.

Peter Merrill moved to approve the application with the correction as noted. John Reid seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Application #18-10 by Vermont Institute of Natural Science (owner applicant) for Site Development Plan Approval and approval of an amendment to the development's Master Plan under sections 260-45 and 260-47 of the Hartford Zoning Regulations for a Canopy Walk, lot 12-0132-000, 149 Natures Way, Quechee, in an approved Planned Development.

Charlie Rattigan was present.

Jo-Ann Ells reviewed the draft Findings of Fact and Charlie Rattigan reviewed several plans, special features and interpretation nodes.

Charlie Rattigan stated that approximately 99% of the project would not be visible when foliage is on the trees. With no foliage, he anticipated that some of the poles might be visible from Deweys Pond and the "Tree House" might be visible from higher elevations.

Charlie Rattigan stated that VINS is aware of the need to protect and maintain the environment and the project will have a low impact on the environment.

Peter Merrill noted he had recently visited a similar project where netting was installed above the walkway to protect pedestrians from falling branches. Charlie Rattigan stated that VINS is doing an inventory of the tree canopy to avoid things falling on the walkway. He added that the Fire Marshall is assisting the applicant with safety measures.

John Reid asked if the project would result in erosion. Charlie Rattigan explained that the poles would be immediately backfilled after placement so no erosion would occur. He added that some poles will be brought in by helicopter.

3. 08-06-18

John Reid asked about the adequacy of parking. Charlie Rattigan reviewed several places that could be used if parking needed to be increased.

There was a brief discussion about the design/construction team.

Toby Dayman asked about a staging area. Charlie Rattigan explained that a large open area by the utility shed would be used as a staging area.

Robin Adair Logan expressed her support for the project and noted that she was glad a structural engineer was on the team.

Jacques Harlow stated that he felt that the project took away from a natural area and made it unnatural and therefore he was not in favor of the project.

Dave Sherman asked if the canopy walk would be open in the winter. Charlie Rattigan stated that he was not sure this would be possible.

Peter Merrill stated that he hoped the applicant was able to build the tree house feature above the canopy and noted he was happy that the project would be accessible for everyone. John Reid added that he was impressed with the potential educational opportunity and economic benefit to the region.

There was no public comment.

John Reid moved to close the Public Hearing. Peter Merrill seconded and the Public Hearing was closed.

Peter Merrill moved to approve the application. Robin Adair Logan seconded and the motion passed. (Jacques Harlow abstained.)

3. Application #18-07 by New England Central Railroad, Inc. (owner) and Execusuite, LLC (applicant) for Site Development Plan Approval under section 260-45 of the Hartford Zoning Regulations for a Parking Facility, lot 46-0047-000, Gates Street, White River Junction, in CB and Design Review zoning districts. (Continued from July 2, 2018)

Tim Sidore and Nik Fiore were present.

Jo-Ann Ells explained that the Zoning Board of Adjustment heard the application the week prior and reviewed their action.

Tim Sidore shared information about the project's three lights that he learned from meeting with Green Mountain Power. The wattage on one light can be increased by the simple push of a button. One fixture can be replaced with a brighter fixture and a second fixture can be added to one of the poles. Tim Sidore stated that with these changes, lighting should be adequate.

Jacques Harlow asked about the purpose of the parking lot. Tim Sidore stated that the applicant owns several properties in the immediate area so the parking would support these properties.

Bill Neucomm of Cover Home Repair (Cover) stated that Cover does not want additional traffic using their site and they are talking to the applicant about signage to mitigate this concern. He added that Cover does not want to lose the ability to load/unload at the door on the back of their building and they do not want to lose their parking along the back fence.

Peter Merrill stated that his main concern was safety and lighting. Dave Sherman concurred and stated that he wished that there was a way to define a pedestrian walkway.

John Reid agreed that lighting was a concern.

Toby Dayman stated that he wanted to see a photometric plan.

Toby Dayman requested additional grass along the south west side of the parking lot.

Bruce Riddle moved to close the Public Hearing. Peter Merrill seconded and the Public Hearing was closed.

The majority of the Commission agreed that the following condition should be placed on any approval, "The applicant works with Green Mountain Power to increase the lighting such that adequate lighting is provided at a level sufficient for safe vehicular and pedestrian travel. Once installed, the lighting must be reviewed and approved by the Chair of the Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator." Toby Dayman stated that he still wanted to see a photometric plan.

Jacques Harlow moved to approve the application with the additional two conditions as discussed. John Reid seconded and the motion passed 6-1 with Toby Dayman opposed. Toby Dayman stated that he did not support the application because of the lack of a photometric plan.

### **Adjournment**

At 8:20 PM Peter Merrill moved to close the Hearing. John Reid seconded, and the Hearing was adjourned.

Respectively Submitted,

---

Peter Merrill, Clerk