

Town of Weston Development Review Board

DRAFT

Minutes of Meeting (Including Rotermund Hearing and Vermont Country Store Hearing) March 6, 2024

Board Members Present: Deborah Granquist (Chair), Anne Fujii, Laura Katz, Debra Lyneis, Susan Morris, Dan Hanenberg (Alternate)

Board Members Absent: Jeff Lennox, Tom Foster

Public: Will Goodwin, Zoning Administrator (ZA)
Ted Reeves, Engineer, Rotermund application (remote)
Geoffrey Brown, Vermont Country Store applicant
Alp Basdogan, Vermont Country Store restaurant proprietor (remote)
Jeff and Kim Seymour, owners, Colonial House Inn (remote)
Lane Knaack, prospective buyer, Colonial House Inn (remote)

Note: The meeting was held at the Weston Town Office with all DRB members, the ZA and Mr. Brown present. The remaining members of the public attended by ZOOM. Two hearings were held: the Rotermund hearing and the Vermont Country Store hearing. The meeting was recorded.

Deborah Granquist, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:06 PM.

1. **Hearing: Sean and Holly Rotermund Application to replace a culvert with a bridge on their Serene Lane driveway.**
 - a) Ms. Granquist called the hearing to order at 5:06 PM and waived the reading of public notice. She noted that the application would be reviewed under the Weston Zoning Regulations, Flood Hazard Area Regulations, 404-405. All DRB members listed above were present. The following documents were received from Mr. Reeves for review:
 1. Application from Mr. Rotermund
 2. A letter from Mr. Reeves dated 2/25/2024.
 3. Four detailed engineering drawings
 4. Stream alteration permit from VT ANR
 - b) For both the Rotermund and Vermont Country Store hearings, the meeting was conducted under the DRB Rules of Procedure. There were no disclosures of conflicts of interest or *ex parte* communications. Only those participating in the hearings will have the right to appeal the decision. Ms. Granquist administered the oath of evidence to Mr. Reeves, Mr. Brown, Mr. Basdogan, Mr. Seymour, Mrs. Seymour and Mr. Knaack.
 - c) Mr. Reeves explained the proposed Rotermund project at 18 Serene Lane: to replace an existing culvert with a new bridge and to relocate the existing driveway. The culvert was damaged in the July flood; a new bridge would alleviate that risk. The VT ANR Flood Plain Management officer directed the DRB to hold a hearing on the matter. Mr. Reeves obtained a Stream Alteration Permit from the VT ANR Watershed Management Division.
 - d) The application is being reviewed under Article IV (Flood Hazard Regulations) of the Weston Zoning Regulations.
 - e) Mr. Reeves answered questions about the bridge construction and grading. There were no concerns expressed by the notified abutters. Conditional use requirements are not relevant to this case.
 - f) Ms. Granquist closed the hearing at 5:28 PM. The board has 45 days to issue a decision in writing.
2. **Hearing: Vermont Country Store Application to convert the upper floor of the Bryant House into a single-family residence and install a wood-fired pizza oven in the restaurant downstairs.**

- a) Ms. Granquist called the hearing to order at 5:30 PM. She waived the reading of public notice and the warnings already stated above, (1.b), including the oath of evidence for Mr. Brown.
- b) The application will be considered under Weston Zoning Regulation 225, Village District, conditional use, mixed use. The following documents were received for review:
 1. A letter from Mr. Brown dated 2/22/2024.
 2. An application from Mr. Brown, 2/5/2024
 3. Site plans of the Vermont Country Store property including parking areas.
 4. Architectural drawings of proposed Bryant House renovations.
- c) Mr. Brown and Mr. Basdogan explained the proposed project. Mr. Basdogan, who owns the Depot 62 Café in Manchester, would like to operate a restaurant with a wood-fired pizza oven at the Bryant House, which is owned by the Vermont Country Store next door. He would offer a full “simple menu” including several gourmet pizza choices, appetizers, a bar menu and a full bar, to be open daily when the store is open, 11:00 AM until 9:00 PM depending on seasonal traffic. The three-bedroom apartment upstairs would house employees of the restaurant with additional housing at the neighboring Chatfield house, also owned by the VCS. The new apartment will provide mixed use housing in the village. The hope is to open the new restaurant in July.
- d) Mr. Brown addressed zoning and permit concerns. The VCS has had a restaurant at the Bryant House since 1960 with no changes to the footprint of the structure or code requirements. The architect has a construction permit letter from the VT Fire Marshall in Springfield. Otter Creek Engineering is reviewing the septic system; adjustment to the restaurant seating capacity will be made if necessary. There is ample parking on the VCS property under the current restaurant permit, with additional resident parking provided behind Chatfield House. All of the proposed changes are in compliance with Weston Zoning Regulations, Conditional Use Section 706, as explained in Mr. Brown’s letter, 2/22/2024.
- e) Ms. Granquist closed the hearing at 6:04. The board has 45 days to render a decision in writing.

3. **Other Business**

- a) The Zoning Administrator introduced Kim and Jeff Seymour who have a question about their property known as the Colonial House Inn. They have an offer to purchase the Colonial House Inn at 257 VT Route 100. The buyer, Lane Knaack, would like to construct a garage for equipment storage and maintenance behind the current garage. Any questions about a possible non-conforming use are within the authority of the zoning administrator. Mr. Goodwin will follow-up.

4. Ms. Granquist adjourned the meeting at 6:15 PM. Board members then entered deliberative session.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra Lyneis
Development Review Board Secretary