

Newport City Development Review Board
April 16, 2025 – 6:30PM

**Attendees: Agathe Coburn, Denis Chenette, Patrick Hurley, Melissa Pettersen, Jay Walsh,
Laurie Grimm, Frank Cheney (Zoning Administrator)**

Absent: Andrew Touchette

1. Agathe called the meeting to Order at 6:32PM.
2. Other than the landowner's representative, no members of the public were present or signed up to give public comment.
3. Members reviewed the minutes from September 25, 2024 and February 19, 2025.
4. Patrick made the motion to approve the minutes for September 25, 2024 and February 19, 2025. Melissa seconded the motion. No further discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.
5. Agathe read the application #25009 regarding a request for a setback variance to construct a garage at 80 Freeman St. Agathe handed the floor over to the applicant's representative, Royce Lancaster.
6. Royce stated the anticipated value was \$50,000. No sewer hookup.
7. Patrick asked if the landowner was sure of property corners. Royce responded that a granite corner pin is visible above ground and in line with existing fences and parcel tax maps.
8. Denis asked if the landowner had considered attaching the garage to the existing house. Royce referred the Board to the applicant's letter and responded that the landowner wishes to maintain separation between the buildings to allow for access to the north side of the house and west side of garage.
9. The house appears to be in existence in 1962 historic aerial imagery, pre-dating the Zoning rules.
10. Agathe read aloud Section 705.01 to review conditional use criteria. The applicant meets all conditional use criteria.
11. Agathe entertained a motion. Laurie made a motion to approve application #25009. Patrick seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.
12. Frank clarified with Royce that a 15-day public comment period remains in effect and that any construction progress made is at the risk of the landowner if an appeal is lodged.
13. Agathe led the Board through an annual review of the DRB Rules and Procedures.
14. Jay W introduced a discussion related to a Policy on Reconsideration of DRB Decisions. This was based on a recommendation from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and focuses on a scenario of a reconsideration that may be requested after an established appeal period. Jay provided the Board with a copy of proposed policy language that could be adopted by a DRB. Group discussions focused on a desire to perform additional research before revisiting the matter and potentially adopting a policy.
15. Denis made a motion to approve the Rules of Procedure with the proviso that the Rules may be amended at subsequent meeting(s) to address the potential for a Policy on Reconsideration of DRB Decisions. Jay seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.
16. Denis volunteered to nominate Agathe to the role of Chair. Agathe agreed to serve 1 more year as Chair and asked for a vote. All voted in favor.
17. Denis nominated Jay to be the Vice Chair. Agathe asked for a vote. All voted in favor.
18. Denis nominated Patrick to be the Secretary. Agathe asked for a vote. All voted in favor.

19. Frank met with the Mayor to discuss the potential to maintain a 7 member of the Board. The Mayor asked for a letter from the Chair of the Board. All members of the Board agree to a 7 member limit. Agathe signed a letter to the Council formalizing this request.
20. The Board approved the Zoning Administrator to issue a public solicitation for open seats on the DRB.
21. Regarding New Business, Denis asked if there was any news related to the open lot on Willey St. Inquiries on AxisGIS discovered that tax map information is incorrect, and the information has been mixed up with an adjoining lot.
22. Regarding Old Business, Patrick reported on the site visit to the KingdomGo gravel pit dating back to November 2024 in which he, Laurie, and Denis met with John Gobeil. The Zoning Administrator has been directed to obtain more information related to the terms of the bond, Exhibit A35, the letter from DPW Director dated 2/4/08, and other relevant information.
23. Melissa motioned to adjourn, Jay seconded. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:58pm.

Approved by majority vote of DRB
9/3/25 