

SUBDIVISION & PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT SKETCH PLAN

Owner & Applicant: Joe Laster 1139 Lanier Boulevard Atlanta, GA 30306	Plans: Wagner-Hodgson Landscape Architects 7 Marble Avenue Burlington, VT 05401
Survey: Terry W. Wilson Vermont Mapping & Survey Co., LLC 8 Essex Way, Suite 200B Essex Jct., VT 05452	Property Location, Tax Map # & Area: East side of Mechanicsville Road between Hawk Land and the Town Cemetery, 17-22-62.100, 106.27 acres

BACKGROUND - The Applicant is requesting sketch plan approval for a 106.27 acre property located on the east side of Mechanicsville Road that is in both the Residential 1 Zoning District (R-1) and Rural Residential 1 Zoning District (RR1). The Applicant is proposing to create lots for 55 single family residences plus some community lots. The R-1 portion of the property is in the municipal sewer and water district. The RR1 area is outside of the municipal sewer and water district, but the Applicant is seeking to move the service area boundary to include the proposed residential lots in the RR1. The Applicant is not proposing at this time to phase the development, but would like that option if needed.

This property was once part of the Poly Quinn farm. There was once a Town well and a ski tow on this land, both of which have been abandoned. The survey provided shows a proposed transfer of 4.22 acres of land to the Town, which never occurred. The property is currently undeveloped, but permits were issued in June 2021 for a 3-bedroom residence and 2-bedroom accessory apartment. The Applicant worked with Staff and licensed professionals prior to these building permits being issued to ensure that the single family residential development would not interfere with the future development of the property.

Approximately 39 acres of this property is in the R-1. About 6.4 of these acres are in stream setbacks. With a base density of 2 units per acres, exclusive of stream buffer areas, the base density for the R-1 portion of the property per Section 3.9.3 of the Hinesburg Zoning Regulations (HZR) is 65 dwelling units. Since the proposed overall number of units is less than this base density, no density bonuses are required. 39 of the proposed 55 dwelling units are proposed to be located in the R-1. The purpose of the R-1 per Section 3.9 of the HZR is for medium to high density residential areas with access to water and sewer, which would be integrated with adjacent growth districts.

Approximately 67 acres of this property is in the RR-1, which has three acre zoning outside the water and sewer service area or one acre zoning inside the service area. Since the Applicant is proposing a PUD to concentrate the number of lots, waivers for minimum lot sizes, frontages and other lot dimensional standards found in Table 1 of Section 2.4 of the HZR are allowable per Section 4.5.1 of the HZR. Such waivers will be needed for this development as shown. Including the 25% bonus allowed in a PUD per Section 4.5.6(5) of the HZR, up to 27 units can be proposed in the RR-1 portion of this property. Sixteen of the proposed 55 dwelling units are proposed to be located in the RR-1.

Section 3.1 of the HZR encourages developers in the Village Growth Area to “maximize to the extent practical in order to better realize Hinesburg’s overall smart growth strategy.” The Applicant has provided plans that show how this property is limited by steep slopes, wetlands and wetland buffers. Other resources on this property include stream setbacks, core wildlife habitat,

and good agricultural soils. The proposed development avoids many of these areas, with the exception of significant impacts to the northerly portion of the core wildlife habitat. Most of the core wildlife habitat to the south and east will be left undeveloped, except for trail access, in a “forest conservation area”. The proposed development will be a full buildout of the property and constitute a master plan as required in Section 3.1.1 of the HZR.

Access will be from Mechanicsville Road. There is about 1,083 linear feet of frontage on this property. The proposed road network would create frontages on these properties. The proposed development is shown in three phases, each with a central green and circular roadway. Phase two has six or seven houses beyond the circular roadway, but there is a turnaround at the end of that dead end access. There is one proposed lone property that would access Hawk Lane. There is an elevation change of about 150 feet between Mechanicsville Road and part of phase 3.

Future community facilities shown on the Hinesburg Official Map are located on this property – i.e., facility #7 (crosswalk) and facility #36 (park) with an associated access road and sidewalk. Facility #36 is titled “Mechanicsville Neighborhood Park”. It is an approximately 7-acre community facility described as, “a developed park with open and wooded spaces, adjacent and connected to the Town Cemetery. Robust amenities to encourage neighborhood use and engagement of the larger Hinesburg community – e.g., benches, picnic tables, gazebo/shelter, playground facilities, shade trees, public art, hard surface courts (e.g., tennis and/or pickle-ball, basketball), bicycle pump track, etc. Connected to Town trails to the southeast (e.g. Sullivan trail, Lavigne Hill Road). Note - Also connected to Mechanicsville Road via future public roads and sidewalks – not shown on the map due to uncertain locations to be determined as part of any development plan for the portion of the property between the park and Mechanicsville Road.”

The Applicant’s plans show a park titled the ‘Mechanicsville Neighborhood Park’, which is about 2½-acres in size as part of phase 3. The graphic plan shows three tennis courts, a basketball court, a playground structure, and 45 parking spaces. There is a loop trail around the park that connects to trails to the cemetery, to the Sullivan trail on Lavigne Hill Road and to Mechanicsville Road. Such improvements appear to be consistent with the amenities noted on the Official Map; however, the overall size of the park is much smaller than 7-acre park the Official Map envisions, and the location is shifted substantially to the east. Beyond accommodation of the Official Map, the proposed park and improvements would satisfy the public open space standards of Section 5.22.5 of the HZR.

The Applicant has begun coordination with the Trails Committee, and the Affordable Housing Committee.

The sketch plan application was submitted and deemed complete on June 11, 2021. This application includes the required forms and a PDF with the following pages:

- Two aerial and two ground views of the property cover sheet with a date of 06.09.2021 by Wagner Hodgson.
- A site context aerial view by Wagner Hodgson
- A Neighborhood comparison by Wagner Hodgson
- A survey by Vermont Mapping & Survey Co., LLC with project #19697, drawing#M-697, and dated Jan. 27, 2020.
- A plan titled “Overall Existing Conditions Plan”, by Engineering Ventures, Inc., with a drawing number of C1.0 and dated of 01/05/2021.
- An existing site aerial view drawing by Wagner Hodgson.

- An existing streams with 75' setbacks drawing by Wagner Hodgson.
- An existing wetlands with 50' setbacks (for class II only) drawing by Wagner Hodgson.
- An existing steep slopes (>25%) drawing by Wagner Hodgson.
- An existing site constraints and connections drawing by Wagner Hodgson.
- A proposed lot layout drawing by Wagner Hodgson.
- A proposed lot layout with phasing drawing by Wagner Hodgson.

All these documents and additional correspondences are contained in the document file (17-22-62.100) in the Hinesburg Planning & Zoning office.

STAFF COMMENTS – a sketch plan review is for the conceptual design to see if there are any major flaws and to provide guidance for a preliminary plat review. At a preliminary plat hearing more detailed designs would be reviewed.

1. **Classification** – This application meets the definition of a major subdivision as defined in Article 9 of the Hinesburg Subdivision Regulations (HSR). The application will require preliminary plat and final plat subdivision reviews. The application will also need to be reviewed as a planned unit development (PUD).
2. **Water & Sewer Service Area Extension** – Part of the proposed development includes a concentrated development in the RR-1 portion of the property, which is outside the water and sewer service area. Extensions to this area are generally not permitted, but in this situation could be worth considering pending review and approval by the Selectboard. Once other facets of the sketch plan review are complete, a continuation is recommended to allow the Applicant time to engage with the Selectboard. Advancing the project beyond the sketch plan review stage without clarity on this issue could prove problematic, given that the development design would likely change dramatically should the Selectboard not agree to modify the service area.
3. **Water & Wastewater Capacity (Section 5.1.8 & 5.1.9, HSR)** – With 55 single-family homes proposed, the municipal water allocation needed for the project would be approximately 23,100 gallons per day (assuming three-bedroom homes, each requiring 420 gpd). The Town has 26,325 gpd of allocable water capacity, of which only 8,825 gpd is available for projects outside of the village core, including the R-1 district where this project is proposed. The Applicant will need to work with the Select Board to secure water and wastewater allocation prior to submitting a preliminary plat application. However, it is very possible that getting allocation for the entire project will not be possible until the Town brings the new well online that we are actively working on. This new well is in the State permitting process, and financing will likely require a positive bond vote by the community. As a result, it will be at least one to two years before this new well could be online. Given that, a phasing discussion will likely be necessary as part of any preliminary plat review.
4. **Level of Development** – The Applicant has adequately shown the existing wetlands and steep slopes that limit development to certain areas. Both Section 2.4 and Section 3.1 of the HZR encourage development to build to the base densities and beyond to the largest extent possible. In Section 3.1, the purpose section the village growth area (which includes the R-1 district) stipulates various end results, including, “Densities will be high relative to the rest of the town, and multi-story buildings are anticipated...Development densities should be maximized to the extent practical in order to better realize Hinesburg’s overall “smart growth” strategy.

Increased density opportunities should also serve as an incentive to promote the creation of affordable and moderately priced housing.” The number of units proposed in the R-1 is well below the base density. The proposed development is exclusively comprised of single-family homes on lots of about a quarter acre in size. Should there be more development on this property with a greater mix of housing types (e.g., duplex, multi-family buildings, etc)? Should there be a greater mix of property sizes? Overall, the project does a decent job of focusing development on the western side of the property, and leaving the more sensitive eastern side with intact forest and wildlife habitat largely undeveloped.

5. **Site Visit** – Considering the size of this project, a DRB site visit is recommended. Should this be done as part of sketch plan review or should the DRB wait for a more developed design? In a site visit, the Applicants would be asked to stake out the proposed road locations.
6. **Affordable Units** – Section 5.21.1 of the HZR requires that at least one affordable unit in the village growth area for every 10 new dwelling units for development with 10 or more new dwelling units. With 39 proposed units in the R-1, at least four of the new dwellings will need to be designated as an affordable unit. However, the Selectboard may require additional units to extend the water and sewer service areas. If all 55 units were considered, then a minimum of 6 affordable housing units would be required.
7. **Planned Unit Development (PUD)** – The proposed development will require approval for a PUD because waivers for frontage in the R-1 and RR-1, and for lot area and setbacks in the RR-1 would be required. What appears to have been proposed, such as the forest protection and trails, should satisfy the additional requirements of Section 4.5 of the Hinesburg Zoning Regulations (HZR).
8. **Official Map** – The project proposes a “Mechanicsville Neighborhood Park” that is substantially smaller and in a different location than what is shown on the Official Map (community facility #36). Modifying the development to enlarge the park is recommended. With that said, the proposed amenities shown in and around the park are largely consistent with those detailed on the Official Map (e.g., hard surface courts, playground, trail connections). Given that the project proposes a different size and location for the community facility, a revision to the Official Map would be needed in parallel with the review of this project. Pursuant to State statute (24 V.S.A. § 4421(2)), minor changes to the location of proposed public facilities on the Official Map may be made concurrently with review of a development, if recommended by a majority of the Planning Commission and approved by resolution of the Select Board. Given how integral this is to the conceptual plan, a sketch plan continuance is recommended to allow for consultation with the Planning Commission and the Selectboard. The Applicant is encouraged to describe their vision for this community facility, as well as the Phase 1 green and Phase 2 green shown on the plan.
9. **Traffic Study (Section 5.1.6 & 6.1, HSR)** - In order to assess the transportation review standards in the HSR, the DRB should require a professionally prepared traffic study with proposed improvements to the area infrastructure as part of the preliminary plat application.
10. **Access** – A new access on to Mechanicsville Road was recently built for the new residence on the property. The Applicant should address whether this was built to accommodate the overall development, or whether additional improvements be required. This would need to be discussed at the hearing. Plans will be required at preliminary plat.

11. **Road Grades** – The Applicant should provide approximate anticipated road grades at the sketch plan hearing. Per the Official Map, the principal access road leading to the park could become a Town Road. Understanding the approximate road grades would facilitate early input from the Town Highway Foreman and the Town’s consulting engineer. A complete design will be required at the preliminary plat hearing.
12. **Stormwater and Erosion Control (Section 3.1.2 & 6.6, HSR)** – The proposed development will create more than one acre of new impervious area. Both a State and Town review of stormwater and erosion control will be required. The Town review will occur at preliminary plat. The Applicant should describe how they plan to conceptually address stormwater treatment and erosion control at the hearing.
13. **Trails & Pedestrian Access (Section 5.1.6 & 6.2, HSR)** – The Applicant has shown good connection to the existing trails. The Applicant should continue the conversation with the Trails Committee to establish the best locations at preliminary plat. The Applicant should also address where sidewalks would be located, and thoughts on installation of a Mechanicsville Road mid-block crosswalk with a flashing beacon as noted on the Official Map (facility #7). The conceptual design and proposed connections should be discussed at the sketch plan hearing.
14. **Utility Access (Section 3.1.2, HSR)** – How utilities will be accessed (e.g., water, sewer, power) should conceptually be discussed at the sketch plan hearing. A plan will be required at preliminary plat.
15. **Solar Access (Section 5.1.12, HSR)** – To a large degree, the plan shows lots and house footprints that should provide excellent opportunities for passive and active solar gain. The opportunity for residences to have solar access should be conceptually discussed at sketch plan. More detail will be required at preliminary plat.
16. **On Street Parking (Section 3.1 & 5.5, HZR)** – The Applicant should conceptually discuss what would be proposed. More detail will be required at preliminary plat.
17. **Access & Continued Forest Management (Section 5.1.10, HSR)** – The Applicant should ensure access to the “Forest Conservation Area” for future forest management (e.g., logging equipment, etc.). For example, the Applicant could consider a larger gap between units 51 & 52 to allow for such a right of way and forest management access.
18. **Proposed Roadway Right-of-Ways** – These are required to have a 50-foot width.
19. **Building Envelopes** - Some building envelopes appear to be have unintentionally included areas in the wetland buffers and steep sloped areas, which would need to be adjusted at preliminary plat.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitchel Cypes, P.E.,
Development Review Coordinator

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