

CHARLOTTE PLANNING COMMISSION
Charlotte Town Office
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Charlotte, VT 05445
Phone: 802-425-3533

December 7, 2017

Gil Barlow & Molly McClaskey
4190 Mt. Philo Road
Charlotte, Vermont 05445

Re: Sketch Plan Review – Application Number PC-17-139-SK

Dear Mr. Barlow & Ms. McClaskey,

The purpose of this letter is to summarize the Sketch Plan Review for a proposed Subdivision of the ~10-acre property located at 4190 Mt. Philo Road. The development is proposed to occur within the Rural (RUR) zoning district.

A public meeting for the proposal was held by the Planning Commission on November 2, 2017. Although it is not required by 24 VSA Chapter 117 to warn for a public hearing for Sketch Plan Review applications, hardcopy notification of the public meeting was nevertheless mailed out to all of the adjoining property owners; posted at the Town offices, the Old Brick Store, and the Spear Street Store during the week of October 10, 2017; and published within “The Citizen” newspaper on October 12, 2017. Electronic notice was also posted on the Town of Charlotte website Meeting Calendar.

On Saturday October 28, 2017, the Planning Commission attended a site visit prior to the public meeting held on November 2. Planning Commissioners attending the meeting included Peter Joslin (Acting Chair), Charlie Pughe, Richard Eastman, Marty Illick, and Gerald Bouchard. Additional participants of the public meeting included; the Town Planner, the applicants Gill Barlow and Molly McClaskey, and neighbors Gary Pittman and Michael Russell (who represented the neighbor of the northern abutting parcel, Jill Wolcott).

The Planning Commission has classified your project as a “2-Lot Minor Subdivision / Planned Residential Development (PRD) and Boundary Adjustment” in accordance with Section 6.1(C)(2) of the Charlotte Land Use Regulations (hereafter referred to as “the Regulations”). As your subdivision application seeks to create a 6.5-acre lot (Lot 2A), and a less than minimum size 3.5-acre lot (Lot 2), it would therefore proceed as a PRD in accordance with Section 8.2(B)(3) of the Regulations, which will require a minimum of 50% of the parcel to be designated as Open Space. Furthermore, a Boundary Adjustment would convey a small area of land from proposed Lot 2 to the 13-acre property abutting to the south (Lot 1) located at 4190 Mt. Philo Road.

The Planning Commission is providing the following observations and recommendations for your Final Plan Review Application, which should be addressed in addition to the regular submission requirements within the Regulations;

1. The following Areas of High Public Value (AHPV) were identified on the property:
 - a. Land in active agricultural use – The property is not enrolled in active agricultural use.
 - b. Wildlife habitat – *Significant Forest Habitat* exists in the western wooded portion of both parcels, comprising about half of the southern parcel (Lot 1) and 2/3 of the northern parcel (Lot 2A). An area of about 0.9 acres of *Significant Linkage Habitat* exists along the western border of Lot 1 and the northern border of Lot 2.
 - c. Primary Agricultural Soils (Primary and Statewide) – The central portions of the parcels comprise Primary Agricultural soils (according to the USDA-NRCS data).
 - d. Steep slopes – The western half of both properties are within sloped areas of 15-25% and Greater than 25% slope.
 - e. Water supply source protection areas (SPAs) – The entirety of the parcel falls within the surface water source protection area for the Champlain Water District.
 - f. Scenic views and vistas – Mt. Philo Road is classified as a '*most scenic public road*' within the Charlotte Town Plan.
2. The Planning Commission feels that the 1.1-acre building envelope proposed for Lot 2A, and the 0.8-acre building envelope proposed for Lot 2 are reasonable to help protect the existing AHPV *Significant Forest Habitat* on the property.
3. The Planning Commission will require an Open Space Agreement (OSA) and forest management plan for both of the proposed lots, which will detail recommended cutting restrictions, provisions for the removal of hazard trees, invasive species, development of any trails, and preservation of the identified *Significant Forest Habitat* and *Significant Linkage Habitat*.
4. Your forthcoming Highway Access Permit application should be submitted prior to, or concurrent with the submittal of the Final Plan Application. The Planning Commission had expressed that the proposed curb-cut to Lot 2 (and Lot 2A) along the northern property line would be better shifted to the south, because that location would offer an improved line-of-sight for oncoming traffic. From this curb-cut location the driveway would traverse between the slope and septic mound and then turn northward, proceeding to Lot 2A. Installation of additional vegetative screening along the northern property line may be required to mitigate the headlights of vehicles turning northward upon the adjacent property.
5. Other issues may be considered during the review of your forthcoming Final Plan application. In accordance with Section 6.3(D) of the Regulations, this Sketch Plan Review is valid for six months.

To complete the project you will need to submit a Final Plan Application (including any waiver requests) within six months of the date of this letter and participate in one public hearing, in accordance with Section 6.5 of the Regulations. Upon receipt of your Final Plan Application, a Final Hearing will be scheduled.

Please let me know if I can answer any further questions.

Sincerely,

Daryl Benoit (Town Planner)
For the Charlotte Planning Commission