

# TOWN OF HIGHGATE

## Development Review Board

December 11, 2014 @ 6pm

### Approved Minutes

**NOTE: All actions taken are unanimous unless otherwise stated.**

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by chairman, Rick Trombley at 6:03pm.

##### Present at this meeting:

- **DRB members:** Rick Trombley, Chairman; Woody Rouse; Julie Rice; (missing were Tim Reynolds & Pauline Decarreau)
- **Staff:** Heidi Britch-Valenta, Planning & Zoning Administrator; Wendi Dusablon- Planning & Zoning Clerk
- **Applicants:** Donna Fitzgerald
- **Public:** Greg Monteith – Property Manager for Richmond Group, Debbie Spears and Charles Christolini

#### II. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- **Donna Fitzgerald**  
Conditional Use Appeal Application  
to operate a child care center at a facility owned by  
Richmond Group Partnership c/o Frank von Turkovich  
located @ 62 Airport Road, Highgate VT  
Industrial / Commercial District

Donna Fitzgerald (applicant) and Greg Monteith (property manager) were present. Rick invited them to the table and swore them both in. Heidi noted that copies of all the documents that Ms. Fitzgerald has submitted to date were supplied to the board in advance in their packet. This will be a quite large day care facility in the former border patrol building on Airport Road. Ms. Fitzgerald is off to a good start. This is the ideal district for this purpose and also runs on the Highgate bus route. There are still things yet to be done, for which Ms. Fitzgerald is here tonight to answer any questions. There was no one from the public present for this hearing.

Ms. Fitzgerald is still working with the state on permits. They will be visiting the facility on Monday @ 10am. The facility will have 5 head teachers, 4 assistants and Ms. Fitzgerald will be on site as a floater, helping where needed daily. The hours of operation will be 6:30am – 6:00pm Monday – Friday. There will also be plenty of parking on site. Ms. Fitzgerald presented a draft diagram of how the playground area will be laid out. It will be completely fenced in by late March. Julie asked about her background in the child care industry. Ms. Fitzgerald is in her 28<sup>th</sup> year in child care. She has lately been working part time at the local high school, but her roots and her passion is with the younger age group. Her center will serve ages 6 weeks – 12 years. Ms. Fitzgerald indicated in the town plan it noted a need for more quality child care. She knows of many families who take their children into St. Albans or even Chittenden County daily. She has not begun advertising yet and already has interest. She will be licensed for up to 56 children.

Heidi did note that this facility would be addressing the need for more child care services in our community. Rick asked about signage for the facility. There is currently a frame on site that is in the ground with concrete. She would like to reuse what is already there, and the size is 52" x 52". Ms. Fitzgerald will need to apply for a permit separately for the signage. Rick asked if the facility will be year round. Yes, it will, and Ms. Fitzgerald noted that many centers close for 2-4 weeks per year and she won't be doing that. She will only be closed on major holidays. She does not want to put added stress on parents and guardians with extended closures. Woody is comfortable with what was presented tonight, and he knows the state will also be putting her through a rigorous permit process prior to opening. Her target date to open is January 12, 2015.

Greg Monteith was present to represent Mr. von Turkovich. Mr. Monteith is the property manager and is very excited about the reuse of the building that has been empty for a few years now. He feels this is an ideal use of the space, due to it being all on one level with lots of parking and good visibility from the main roadway, Route 78. It is also a very accessible location to the interstate.

Ms. Fitzgerald has photos with regard to parking and the eventual playground space. She had a slight bump in the road this week. The fuel tank is inside the building and needs to go outside. There is a tree that needs to be cut down because roots are growing into the foundation. She also recently found out that VT gas will be going through by June 2015, so she will be converting to gas for efficiency.

Construction has begun inside the facility. Concrete had to be cut because bathrooms need to be added. There needs to be 1 toilet available for every 15 children. The metal door has been taken off the former holding cell and the bars are off the window and the benches have been unbolted from the floor. This will eventually be an eating area for the children. The steel toilet still needs to be removed. The main structure of this area has to remain, due to the way it was built. The classrooms will all have carpeting. The main entrance will have a sink, which is mandated, and there will also be a history of the building on the wall of the main entrance area.

Ms. Fitzgerald plans to host an open house and invite the press once everything is ready. There are many people interested and excited about this project.

The board has 45 days to make a decision, but it will not take 45 days. A letter will arrive in the mail regarding the boards decision. It can be appealed to environmental court and Heidi can assist Ms. Fitzgerald with how to proceed, if necessary, with that process. Rick also reminded Ms. Fitzgerald that if the project moves forward with board approval, she will need to see Heidi for town permits.

Motion by Rick Trombley to close the hearing. Motion was seconded by Woody Rouse – **APPROVED.**

### **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Rick had two typos to address as well as a suggestion for rewording a motion at the November 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. Motion by Rick to approve the minutes from November 13, 2014 as amended. Motion was seconded by Julie Rice – **APPROVED.**

**IV. OTHER BUSINESS**

- **Notice of Application for Individual Wetland Permit #2014-115**  
Debbie Spears and Charles Christolini were present. They thought there was going to be discussion on the Brosseau wetland permit with people from the state. This was not warned as a public hearing. It was noted under "other business" on the agenda because the state had sent the permit notice to Wendi and asked her to share it with the board. A copy of the notice was included in the boards packet prior to this meeting and should have been sent to adjoining land owners as well by the state. Heidi noted that any questions or concerns regarding this should be directed to the state. The DRB cannot confirm or deny a state issued permit. Mrs. Spears asked if she could stay and listen without any comment, which she can as these meetings are always open to the public with the exception of deliberative session.
- **Decision letter-Donna Stevens-waiver of setback on Morey Rd.**  
This will be discussed in deliberative session.
- **DRAFT meeting schedule for 2015**  
The members of the DRB that were present saw no issues with the proposed 2015 meeting schedule for the Development Review Board.
- **Town of Sheldon bylaw revision public hearing on December 9<sup>th</sup>**  
Rick was unable to attend the December 9<sup>th</sup> hearing in Sheldon but did review the material that was sent to us.
- **City of St. Albans Appeal of Insignificant Waste Management Event (IMWE) Decision**  
This is a legal matter, which can be discussed in deliberative session.
- **Misc.**  
Rick asked if the NOTCH clinic is going to be moving from the MVU campus. Julie confirmed, yes, they are moving due to some water issues. The NOTCH dental clinic and business office will be relocating to the former Aubuchon Hardware location on Canada Street in Swanton. Julie also noted that in order to secure a grant, they will be combining both the dental and medical NOTCH facilities on Canada Street.

**V. UPCOMING EVENTS**

Dec. 15	5pm	<b>Property Taxes are due</b>
Dec. 16	6pm	PC Mtg & cell tower public info session
Dec. 18	7pm	Selectboard Mtg.
Dec. 25 & 26		<b>TOWN OFFICES CLOSED</b>
Jan. 1		<b>TOWN OFFICES CLOSED</b>

**VI. DELIBERATIVE SESSION**

Motion by Woody Rouse to enter deliberative session @ 6:39pm to discuss the Donna Stevens decision letter, the City of St. Albans issue, violation updates and to deliberate on the Donna Fitzgerald application. Motion was seconded by Julie Rice – **APPROVED**.  
Motion by Rick Trombley to exit deliberative session @ 7:05pm. Motion was seconded by Julie Rice – **APPROVED**.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Rick Trombley to adjourn the meeting @ 7:06pm. Motion was seconded by Woody Rouse – **APPROVED**.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

\_\_\_\_\_, Planning & Zoning Clerk \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Wendi Dusablon

Minutes approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_, DRB, Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Trombley