

David Kauck and Rebecca Butterfield  
2212 Hillview Rd.  
Richmond, VT 05477

October 3, 2023

To: Richmond Development Board  
David Sunshine, Chair  
Matthew Dyer  
Padraic Monks  
Roger Pedersen  
David Schnakenberg

Cc:  
Keith Osborne, Richmond Director of Planning and Zoning  
Tyler Machia, Richmond Zoning Administrative Officer

Dear Members of the Richmond Development Board,

This letter contains our written comments regarding the Final Subdivision application 2023-13 from Hillview Heights LLC, which will be before the Development Review Board on October 11, 2023.

Our property is located directly across the street from the proposed development. Our concerns are as follows.

#### **Failure to Comply with Richmond Subdivision Regulation Section 610.1**

Richmond Subdivision Regulations Section 610.1 states: "For any portion of the parcel or LOT not proposed for LAND DEVELOPMENT in the SUBDIVISION as of the application date, a master development plan is required. The master development plan shall conceptually show future roads, future stormwater infrastructure, future building areas, future open areas, and future uses on such remaining land, including those that the SUBDIVIDER expects to offer to the Town of Richmond."

The applicant has not submitted a master development plan. The application therefore does not comply with Section 610.1 and should not be approved.

#### **Sight Distance, Traffic and Road Safety**

Hillview Road is popular with recreational walkers, pet owners and cyclists. The road is narrow and winding in places, and lacks sidewalks and shoulders throughout. In conjunction with Cemetery Road, it connects the Hinesburg and Huntington roads and is used as a shortcut by many motorists from outside the neighborhood. Traffic is sometimes heavy. The posted speed limit is 35 mph, but is not enforced. Residents of our neighborhood frequently express concerns about speeding motorists and pedestrian/cyclist safety.

The section of road between the proposed shared driveway to Lots 1 and 2 and the proposed driveway to Lot 3 passes over a hill and around a curve. These geographic features impede visibility. In addition, the land on the south side of the road drops off immediately and sharply in some places. There is no guard rail to safeguard speeding motorists and no shoulder to help pedestrians evade oncoming traffic.

Attachment N of the Final Subdivision Applicant depicts the sight distance from the proposed entrance to Lots 1-2 in the direction of the hill, curve and drop-offs mentioned above. The application states that the maximum sight distance is 250 feet following. This is exactly the minimum stopping sight distance allowed by VTrans for residential driveways entering roads posted for 35mph. (See VTrans Standard B-71A) It is far less than the allowable minimum intersection sight distance of 390 feet allowed by VTrans. (Same source)

We submit that this section of Hillview Road is already somewhat hazardous. Increased traffic flow from this development and a proposed road cut with limited sight lines will increase traffic hazards.

### **Wetlands**

The Town standard per Richmond Zoning Regulations 6.2.1 b) for a residential driveway is a 12 foot minimum width. The existing driveway to Lot 3 has previously been depicted by the applicant as 10-11 feet wide and may in fact be less than that in places.

The existing driveway to Lot 3 passes through a wetland. The DRB should be reminded that when the applicants applied for an Individual Wetland Permit, they asserted that the existing driveway will be reused without any upgrades.

Any consideration of upgrading the driveway or burying utilities should be guided by Point D of the Hillview Heights LLC Individual Wetland Permit #2021-22:

“Prohibitions: No additional activities are allowed in the wetlands and associated buffer zones without the approval of the Secretary unless such activities are allowed uses under VWR § 6. No draining, dredging, filling, grading, or alterations of the water flow is allowed. No cutting, clearing, or removal of vegetation within the wetlands and buffer zones is allowed with the exception of the proposed project area as approved by this permit.”

We appreciate the Board's attention to our concerns.

Sincerely,

David Kauck

Rebecca Butterfield