

**Town of Richmond DRB:**

David Sunshine, Esq., Chair

Keith Osborne, Richmond Director of Planning and Zoning

Tyler Machia, Richmond Zoning Administrative Officer

10/6/2023

In response to Final Subdivision 2023-13—Hillview Heights LLC

My husband and I have lived on Hillview Road for 16 years. We are writing to express our concerns about the development application submitted by the Hillview Heights LLC . We know that development is inevitable, and we support responsible development, but as this application stands we have a number of concerns.

As we have stated before, we believe that Vermont landscape is one of our defining features. It is a limited resource which needs care when considering development. As we allow development to accommodate the need for housing, it is essential that we do it in a responsible way. Throughout this application process this developer has shown themselves to be less than transparent and unwilling to discuss, let alone consider, thoughts or concerns of the neighborhood despite being given multiple opportunities to do so.

In light of the current application, we ask the DRB the following:

1. We ask that you require the applicant to submit a complete plan for the development of the entire property. They have given us plenty of cause to believe that they are not being forthright about future plans as evidenced by information provided on town applications, previously completed (and un-permitted) construction, previous applications to the Select Board, and indeed with this current site plan.
2. We request that you consider impacts to the view sheds that are the hallmark of Vermont. Placing house sites on top of hills that are visible from all directions is a clear detriment to the appeal and nature of this area.
3. We request that you investigate the current improvements being done on the original property's farmhouse. The applicant told the DRB this building would remain abandoned; however it is clearly being renovated. If this building is to be utilized, will it not require another curb cut that is not addressed by the current application?
4. We request that you scrutinize the details of the applicant's proposal to widen the existing access drive to lot 3.

In conclusion, we believe that the applicants are using a piecemeal approach to developing a large parcel of agricultural land. They are manipulating town and state regulations in their favor, and have told the state and town regulators different things in order to get what they want. In fact, they have told the select board different stories than the DRB in their application for the road that is now to serve lots 4-7, as well as the drive to Lot 3.

You, as the development review board have the ability to request more information from developers. It is your obligation to demand applicants before you are transparent in their

plans, and presenting in good faith, before giving them final approval. And we sincerely hope that you will do that.

Thank you,

Sarah Volinsky  
Nathaniel Merrill

1813 Hillview Rd  
Richmond, Vermont, 05477