Town of Richmond

 Planning & Zoning Office

203 Bridge Street, P.O. Box 285

Richmond, VT 05477

www.richmondvt.gov

**Town of Richmond**

**Development Review Board**

**Staff Notes 10/8/2025**

APPLICANT: Michael Sipe Jr.

RE: Subdivision (SUB) # 2025-07.

DATE: October 8, 2025.

LOCATION: 60 Wolf Lane.

PARCEL ID: WF0060.

EXISTING ZONING: Agricultural/Residential (A/R).

* *FLOOD HAZARD OVERLAY DISTRICT*: No.
* *SHORELINE PROTECTION OVERLAY DISTRICT*: No.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Applicant seeks DRB approval to subdivide 60 Wolf Lane, an existing 15-acre lot (lot 8), into two lots of 1.74 acres (lot 8) and 13.26 acres (lot 15). No development is proposed other than creating new parcel lines (which will restore the 1.74-acre parcel back to its original 2006 configuration, pre-2008 subdivision modification). As discussed in Applicant’s Narrative,

“This subdivision proposal has been before the DRB on several occasions in the last year. Sketch Plan review was conducted in November 2024 and identified a building envelope use restriction. Preliminary Subdivision review was conducted in June 2025, in which the DRB denied [Applicant’s] application because of the building envelope use restriction. In coordination with the Town, the [Applicant] then applied for a Subdivision Modification solely to remove the building envelope restriction, which the DRB approved in August 2025. At that time, the DRB also granted the [Applicant] permission to file a combined Preliminary and Final Subdivision Application to be heard in a single hearing.”

In consultation with the Town of Richmond Planning Staff, if the subdivision is approved, Applicant will further seek to change the use of the existing agricultural structure to add a residential use. If DRB approval is obtained, Applicant was advised that the change of use could be reviewed administratively by the Richmond Zoning and Planning Office.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY:

1. Subdivision Application 05-057, Approved 7/21/2006
2. Subdivision Amendment Application 08-074, Approved 9/10/2008
3. Conditional Use Application 15-100, Approved 11/11/2015
4. Zoning Permit 17-019, Approved 4/6/2017
5. Zoning Permit 17-058, Approved 6/7/2017
6. Zoning Permit 17-138, Approved 12/12/2017
7. Zoning Permit 2019-030, Approved 4/24/2019
8. Sketch Plan Review SK2024-04, 11/22/2024
9. Preliminary Subdivision Review 2024-04, Denied 05/14/2025
10. Sub-Division Amendment (Stowe Club Highlands Analysis), Greenlight 9/4/2025

AUTHORITIES:

The process for reviewing this Subdivision application under the Richmond Zoning Regulations (RZR) and Richmond Subdivision Regulations (RSR) is as follows:

* The division of one lot into two or more lots requires subdivision approval before the DRB.[[1]](#footnote-2)
  + Procedurally, the DRB must first approve the Preliminary Subdivision Application before it can approve the Final Subdivision Application.[[2]](#footnote-3)
    - The DRB may generally vote to waive or modify, subject to appropriate conditions, any application requirement **except** those for public roads or infrastructure.[[3]](#footnote-4)
    - The DRB may attach all reasonable conditions and safeguards necessary to implement the purposes of relevant regulations, bylaws, or standards, and to mitigate any undue adverse effects associated with the subdivision.[[4]](#footnote-5)
  + No one lot shall be subdivided until the Applicant has (1) obtained approval of the Final Subdivision from the DRB and (2) recorded a copy of the approved Final Subdivision Plat with the Town Clerk.[[5]](#footnote-6)
    - Applicant has 180 days from the date of final DRB approval to record with the Town Clerk a copy of the Final Subdivision Plat. If not, approval expires.[[6]](#footnote-7)

STANDARD OF REVIEW:

For DRB approval, Applicant must satisfy the three following requirements:

1. Submit all required information for the (1.1) preliminary subdivision plat,[[7]](#footnote-8) (1.2) preliminary subdivision plan,[[8]](#footnote-9) (1.3) final subdivision plat,[[9]](#footnote-10) and (1.4) final subdivision plan.[[10]](#footnote-11)
2. Certify that field makers are located on-site and will be maintained there until a final DRB decision is made on the application.[[11]](#footnote-12)
3. When and where applicable, address all required improvements and design standards limited to (3.1) roads, (3.2) lot layout, (3.3) pedestrian and bicycle access, (3.4) outdoor lighting, (3.5) landscaping, (3.6) drainage and fill, (3.7) water supply and wastewater disposal systems, (3.8) utilities, and (3.9) phasing.[[12]](#footnote-13)

The DRB may also require Applicant to provide additional information related to twelve general planning standards. RSR §§ 500(1)-(12). Some general planning standards include, but are not limited to, general health and safety standards, undue adverse impacts, control of runoff and erosion during and after construction, and site suitability.

WAIVERS REQUESTED:

Pursuant to RSR §§ 310, 420, and 704, Applicant seeks the following waivers:

1. RSR § 310.1(3). Waiver requested only if the current Plat location map (upper right corner) does not meet Town requirements. Applicant’s surveyor commented that the location map is the industry standard that meets the scale requirements (1”: 2000’).
   1. **Staff Notes: Deny. A waiver is not needed here. The Plat location map, as is, complies with Town requirements. There is no requirement to use a USGS map, just the requirement to show adjacent property and surrounding areas within two thousand feet of any property line of the proposed project.**
2. RSR § 310.2.8. Waiver requested from indicating internal contours on the Plat. Applicant noted that the contours are omitted from the Plat for legibility. Applicant further noted that the contours are indicated on the Subdivision Plan.
   1. **Staff Notes: Grant. Because the contours are listed on the Sipe Wolf Lane Subdivision *Plan*, Staff agrees that a waiver should be granted here.**
3. RSR § 320. Waiver requested from setting field markers. Applicant notes that both parcels were preexisting lots with existing survey pins, as identified on the Plat. Applicant seeks a waiver from setting additional field markers, or if some additional markers are needed, then a waiver from setting markers around the entire 15-acre parcel.
   1. **Staff Notes: Grant. Especially because no development is proposed here (other than the future conversation of the barn into a house) and the boundaries are reverting to as it was depicted in the 2006 Subdivision Plat.**
4. RSR §§ 420.2(2)-(4). Waiver requested from listing roadway widths, lines, deflection angles, radii, length of curves, tangent distances, and bearings. Applicant notes that all affected roads (Hinesburg Road, Wild Apple Lane, and Wolf Lane) are already permitted and built out. Applicant seeks a waiver here because this subdivision application proposes no changes to the roadways; thus, the information would not assist the DRB with evaluating the application and acquiring the information would be costly to the Applicant.
   1. **Staff Notes: Grant. This subdivision effectively affects a private driveway only. Because no public roadways are otherwise implicated, the DRB has discretion under RSR § 704 to issue a waiver here. Granting such waiver further aligns with the purposes of the subdivision regulations, to guide orderly development, provide for housing in appropriate locations to meet the community’s housing needs, and guide public and private actions.**
5. RSR § 420.3(5). Waiver requested from a typical cross section and proposed grading of the driveway. Applicant notes that the driveway was initially installed around 2000 as a utility road for the Wild Apple Community wastewater system. The initial portion of the driveway leading to the photography studio was upgraded to Town of Richmond driveway standards in 2016 when the structure was permitted and constructed. No change to the driveway is proposed.
   1. **Staff Notes: Grant. Especially because no change to the driveway is proposed here.**
6. RSR § 420.3.10. Waiver requested from professional engineer statement regarding public and private infrastructure. Applicant notes that all existing infrastructure has been previously approved and installed. Moreover, no new public or private infrastructure is proposed. For those reasons, in addition to the added cost, Applicant seeks a waiver for this requirement.
   1. **Staff Notes: Grant. This subdivision effectively only affects private infrastructure, a private wastewater easement. Because no public infrastructure is otherwise implicated, the DRB has discretion under RSR § 704 to issue a waiver here. Additionally, engineering seals are on every iteration of the Plat maps from 2006, 2008, and 2025. Granting such a waiver here further aligns with the purposes of the subdivision regulations, to prevent adverse impact on public facilities and guide private actions to provide adequate potable water and wastewater disposal.**

**SKETCH PLAN REVIEW (RSR § 210)**

The DRB conducted Sketch Plan Review in November 2024. Applicant was advised that an existing residential use restriction required removal before the subdivision application could continue. Later, on September 4, 2025, the DRB effectively removed the residential use restriction and granted permission for Applicant to file a both the Preliminary and Final Subdivision Applications for expedited review.

**PRELIMINARY SUBDIVSION REVIEW (RSR §§ 300-320)**

No immediate concerns from Staff. Notwithstanding the waivers requested for specific requirements discussed above, Staff agrees that Applicant meet all required submission elements for Preliminary Subdivision review.

* Applicant satisfied all copy requirements by submitting three copies of the Preliminary (and Final) Plat and Plan.[[13]](#footnote-14)
* Applicant satisfied all Preliminary Plat requirements listed under RSR § 310.1.
* Applicant satisfied all Preliminary Plan requirements listed under RSR § 310.2.

**FINAL SUBDIVISION REVIEW (RSR §§ 400-420)**

No immediate concerns from staff. Notwithstanding the waivers requested for the specific requirements discussed above, Staff agrees that Applicant meet all required submission elements for Final Subdivision review.

* Applicant satisfied all copy requirements by submitting three copies of the Final (and Preliminary) Plat and Plan.[[14]](#footnote-15)
* Applicant satisfied all Final Plat requirements listed under RSR § 420.2.
  + See Staff Note discussing roadway widths, etc.
* Applicant satisfied all Final Plan requirements listed under RSR § 420.3.
  + See Staff Note discussing waiver request for professional engineer letter.

**STAFF COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Comment: This appears to be a straightforward application to create new parcel lines. No development is proposed other than the planned, future conversion of the barn. Moreover, the original location of the barn is not to be changed, and a home already exists on the proposed smaller lot.
2. **Recommendation: grant and deny each waiver as respectively noted by Staff above.**
3. **Recommendation: approve the subdivision subject to the following conditions:** 
   1. **Incorporate by specific reference both the 2006 “Original” Subdivision Plat and the 2008 “Amended” Subdivision Plat on the “New” Sipe Wolf Lane Subdivision Plat prior to recording.**

1. RZR § 5.4. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. RSR §§ 140.3-140.4. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. RSR § 704. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. RSR § 708. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. RSR § 130. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. RSR § 705. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. RSR § 310.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. RSR § 310.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. RSR § 420.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. RSR § 420.3. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. RSR § 320. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. RSR §§ 600-680. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. RSR § 310. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. RSR § 420.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)