

WAITSFIELD DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD 2011 Annual Report

The Waitsfield Development Review Board (DRB) is comprised of seven members appointed by the Selectboard. Two alternate members have also been appointed to serve in the absence of a quorum of regular members.

The Board's function is to administer the Town's zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations in conjunction with the Zoning Administrator. Specifically, the Board reviews applications for conditional use approval and the subdivision of land, and considers appeals of Zoning Administrator decisions and requests for variances.

A permit is required for most development activity in the town and landowners are encouraged to consult with the Zoning Administrator before starting construction or site development.

As was the case the previous two years, permit activity was slow in 2011. Two minor subdivision applications were approved by the Board, and two additional applications have undergone sketch plan review. The DRB issued 10 conditional use approvals, mostly involving modifications to buildings and site plans. The only new commercial space approved was a replacement greenhouse and a four-unit apartment building that is not yet built. One application for a variance was denied.

In addition to the projects approved by the DRB, the Zoning Administrator issued 44 zoning permits in 2010, including one permit for a new single-family home (compared with 79 and three, respectively, the prior year). The Zoning Administrator also administers the flood hazard regulations (which are incorporated into the zoning bylaws), so was very busy post-Irene assisting owners of flood-damaged properties to rebuild in compliance with the regulations.

Eleanor D'Aponte resigned from the board last year, although she agreed to remain as an alternate member. Eleanor's regular contributions will be missed, but her willingness to remain involved on a limited basis is greatly appreciated. In addition, Vickie Trihy – who has served as Zoning Administrator since 2008 – resigned her position to pursue other career goals. Vickie served the town well during her tenure, and we thank her for her professionalism and good humor.

While Vickie will be a hard act to follow, we are fortunate that Susan Senning accepted the challenge. Susan, who assumed the role of Zoning Administrator this summer, is a recent graduate of Vermont Law School. All indications are that she will perform the job with impartiality and exceptional competence – welcome aboard Susan!

The DRB meets the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Office. Notices of public hearings are published in the Valley Reporter and on-line at www.waitsfieldvt.us. Our meetings are frequently televised on Mad River Television's Channel 45.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christina Cook
John Donaldson
Gib Geiger
Christopher Jernigan

Mike Kingsbury
Brian Shupe
Eleanor D'Aponte (alternate)
Mark Sinclair (alternate)



Bridge Street Block Party, 09/02/2011.

(Photo: David Garten)