

Westfield Planning Commission and Development Review Board (DRB)
Tuesday, February 4, 2025, 6pm
Westfield Community Center, 59 North Hill Rd., Westfield, VT

1. Call to Order
2. Agenda additions/corrections
3. Approve minutes
 - Demers Hearing
 - Eastman Hearing
 - April 22, 2024 DRB Organizing Meeting
4. Schedule for reappointments to DRB
5. Recommendations for DRB Hearing Alternates
6. Approve Rules of Procedure and Conflict of Interest Policy
<https://westfield.vt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/20241119110220.pdf>
7. Legal Trails
 - Review samples of selectboard policy
 - Recommendations for Westfield Legal Trails policy
8. Other business
9. Adjourn

**WESTFIELD DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD/
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Minutes**

February 4th, 2025 @ 6 p.m.

Westfield Community Center, 59 North Hill Road

Meeting Recordings Available to View at <https://www.youtube.com/@TownofWestfieldVT>

Town Officials Present: Pat Sagui, Development Review Board Chair; Loren Petzoldt, Development Review Board Vice Chair; Ellen Fox, Development Review Board Secretary (Partial Attendance, left at 7:14pm); Brian Dunn, Development Review Board; Will Young, Zoning Administrator; Niki Dunn, Development Review Board Clerk

Others Present: Rosemary Croizet (Partial Attendance), Gerard Croizet (Partial Attendance)

1. Call Meeting to Order: Pat called the meeting to order at 6:07pm.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda: Ellen requested to move the legal trail discussion to #4 because she has prior commitments. Ellen motioned to move agenda item #7 to #4. Loren seconded. Motion passed.

3. Approve Minutes: Loren motioned to add approving the Tanguay hearing minutes to the agenda, Ellen seconded. Motion passed. Ellen noted that the April 30th minutes have not been approved, they will be added to the next meeting agenda.

A. Demers Hearing Minutes 5-14-2024: The minutes for the Demers hearing are missing. Ellen motioned that the Demers Notice Of Decision is an accurate reflection on the content of the minutes, Loren seconded. Motion passed.

B. Eastman/ Rousseau Hearing Minutes 11-12-24: Loren motioned to approve the 11-12-24 minutes from the Eastman/Rousseau hearing, Brian seconded. Motion passed.

C. Eastman/ Rousseau Hearing Minutes 12-3-24: Loren motioned to approve the 12-3-24 minutes from the Eastman/Rousseau hearing, Ellen seconded. Motion passed.

D. Tanguay Hearing Minutes 9-10-2024: Brian motioned to approve the 9-10-2024 minutes of the Tanguay hearing, Ellen seconded. Loren abstained as he was not present at the hearing. Motion passed.

E. Town of Westfield Hearing Minutes 10-22-2024: Ellen motioned to approve the 10-22-2024 minutes of the Town of Westfield hearing; Brian seconded. Loren abstained as he was not present at the hearing. Motion passed.

F. DRB Organizational Meeting 4-22-2024: These minutes had not been made available to the board for review prior to the meeting. Ellen motioned to table this item for approval until the next meeting, Loren seconded. Motion passed.

4. Schedule for Re-appointments to DRB: This is done in alphabetical order, which would mean Brian Dunn is up for re-appointment in 2025. Brian is willing to be re-appointed. The Selectboard appoints this position at their re-organizational meeting. Loren motioned to recommend Brian Dunn for re-appointment, Pat seconded. Motion passed. Will questioned when the board reorganizes. Pat would like to do it when the full board is there. Loren noted that it needs to be after the Selectboard has their organizational meeting.

5. Recommendations for DRB Hearing Alternates: Pat noted that there is one confirmed person interested, Andrew Emery. Jane Halbeisen is also thinking about being an alternate. Loren motioned to appoint Andrew Emery as an alternate, Brian seconded. Motion passed. Will noted that Andrew is the alternate Zoning Administrator, so if he was acting as the Zoning Administrator for any issue that needs to appear in front of the DRB then he would not be able to fill in as an alternate on the DRB board.

6. Approve Rules of Procedure and Conflict of Interest Policy: This was approved in April of 2024; it was not signed at the time of approval. The board signed. Pat noted that the agenda should have read sign, not approve.

7. Legal Trails: Discussed as agenda item #4

A. Review Samples of Selectboard Policy: There was a sample policy from the Town of Readsboro that the Selectboard has also reviewed. Ellen noted that there is a law that has been introduced in the state that revolves around legal trails (Bill S4). There was also a recent court decision in Vermont regarding legal trails. Ellen would like the Selectboard to be very clear about their policy so that it can be backed up in case of any challenges. Will noted that the Selectboard is looking to possibly reclassify all legal trails to give them all a right of way of 50 feet. There is a process to make that happen which the town attorney explained in an email that was made available to the board prior to the meeting. Ellen feels that there is good wording regarding water runoff, etc. in the town bylaws that could be used when denoting road quality in the policy. Will feels the Town of Barnard policy has a better description of the standards the road needs to adhere to. Ellen noted that the policy should specifically state that work needs to fit the zoning bylaws. She also noted that other towns apply for zoning permits to do work on their own roads to make sure they abide by their own bylaws. Loren agreed that the best way to ensure road work meets standards is to say in the policy that the work needs to adhere to the zoning bylaws. Loren noted the inconsistency in the wording in the policy between Class 4 Highway and 4th Class Highway. Ellen questioned what the document between the town and the landowners would be called, whether it would be a policy, agreement, permit, etc. She also noted that there is nothing about enforcement in the policy. It should be noted in the policy how it transfers from property owner to property owner. Ellen noted that if this is done as a permit for each property then it will show up in a title search, an agreement would not. Loren questioned bringing legal trails up to class 4 standards. Rosemary and Gerard Croizet agreed that there should be some sort of enforcement on road maintenance, who looks at the road, is there a fine if not kept up to standards. She would like something noted in the policy regarding other landowners, what happens if other landowners don't want any maintenance done on the road. Ellen noted that a section regarding public participation could answer those concerns. Will thought that may be a question for the town attorney, to see what recourse the public would have aside from just attending town meetings. Loren would like to see a notification of abutting landowners included at a minimum. Rosemary would like to see some language regarding road maintenance in wetlands/ sensitive areas. Will thinks it should be similar to a DRB Hearing, they need to have engineers come out and look at the area prior to meeting with the Selectboard and setting up a maintenance plan. Gerard questioned if you could do whatever you want in the wetlands. Ellen noted that you are not supposed to, you are not supposed to build on them either unless something already exists in the wetlands. Loren would like to see the engineer come back to inspect the road after work has been done to make sure it meets the requirements that they originally set. He also questioned how you can define certain things like extreme rain events. There was discussion on who would inspect the roads, would Eric Kennison do it. Ellen also thought that the landowners could be required to self-report each year by submitting photos. Ellen will pull from the minutes to draft a policy and send it around to the other board members to review.

B. Recommendation for Westfield Legal Trails Policy: Discussed above.

8. Other Business: None

9. Adjourn: Loren motioned to adjourn at 7:24pm, Brian seconded. Motion passed.

Westfield Development Review Board Approval

Date: _____ **with** _____ **change(s)**

Westfield Development Review Board:

X

Pat Saqui
Development Review Board Chair

X

Loren Petzoldt
Development Review Board Vice Chair

X

Ellen Fox
Development Review Board

X

Brian Dunn
Development Review Board