

**TOWN OF SWANTON  
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**10/30/14 PUBLIC HEARING  
SWANTON DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD**

The Swanton Development Review Board held a Public Hearing on Thursday, October 30, 2014 at the Swanton Town Offices, 1 Academy Street, at 7:00 P.M.

**Present:**

**Joel Clark  
Spencer LaBarge  
Lucie Hill  
Janette Hoague  
Gabriel Liegey  
Yaasha Wheeler, Clerk**

**Also Present:**

**Matthew Luneau (CU#505)  
Michael Gervais (CU#505, #514-2014)  
Ronald Gadue (CU#505)  
Keith Taruski (CU#505)  
Jeff Handy (CU#508)  
Ralph Hubbard (#514-2014)  
Mark St. Pierre (#514-2014)**

Mr. Clark opened the meeting at 7 p.m. It was noted that Zoning Administrator, Ronald Kilburn, was not able to be present for the hearing. Establishing that there had been no ex parte communications or conflicts of interest amongst the board, Mr. Clark swore in those present.

- 1. CU#505 Continuation of Conditional Use Request of Matthew & Ilze Luneau to create a seasonal campground (Youth Camp) at their property located at 175 Sweet Hollow Rd. R1 Agricultural/Residential District.**

Matthew Luneau came forward with Michael Gervais, land surveyor. Mr. Gervais explained that, on the east side of the property, there would be 3 small cabins (12' x 16'), each housing up to 8 people. One large cabin would house up to 16 campers, for a total of 40 people in all. The big hall (60' x 100') could be used for dining, basketball, and more. The pond would be used for recreation, and the parking area would include up to 21 spaces.

Mr. Clark noted the condition of the previous DRB decision letter regarding the Luneau application, in which the board had considered the property's 4.9 acres close enough to require 5.0 acreage to gain a waiver; and in which the DRB asked for a response to Keith Taruski's allegations of trash burning and loud parties on the property, as well as the addressing of Section 4.7 (campgrounds) and more information on the youth camp's operation. The applicants had responded to all requirements. Mr. Clark added that the bylaws were designed more for state park type of camps, rather than youth camps, so, in the absence of specific guidelines within the bylaws, the board members were using their best judgment in reviewing the application.

Mr. Luneau explained that the water source would come from an on-site well, and the showers would be portable. Mr. Gervais suggested that the showers might require a holding tank to contain runoff, which would then be pumped out periodically; otherwise, a leach field might be required. Mr. Luneau said that the lighting scheme was not fully detailed yet, but they planned for the cabins to have electricity and for the parking area to be illuminated. Mr. Gervais informed the board that he had not yet looked into the state permits for the septic and well, but hoped that the state would allow for holding tanks, given the short-term nature of the operation. If not, a septic would be required, in which case, the cost to put in more permanent showers and bathrooms would be a minimal addition to the cost of installing a septic system.

Mr. Liegey asked if there would be separate facilities for the boys and girls, and Mr. Luneau stated that he intended to host boys one week, and girls another week. Mrs. Hill pointed out that the adult staff and supervision would involve both men and women, so separate facilities might still be needed. Mr. Clark stated that his main concern was safety, and encouraged discussion with the fire department. Mr. Liegey noted that the parking and bathrooms was some distance from the cabins, which he felt may be difficult. The board noted the curb cut (no culvert) that led through the cedar hedge to the area, through which traffic would access the property. Mr. Gervais stated that the road was "solid" but was not gravel.

Mr. Ronald Gadue asked when the activities would take place, and Mr. Luneau replied that they were planned for July and August and the day's activities would be over by 9 p.m. the latest. The campers would arrive on Monday morning and leave Friday afternoon. He did not feel that the activities would be extremely noisy. Mr. Gadue said that he did not mind "a few weeks," but did mind "the whole summer." Mr. Clark suggested that perhaps the board could specify that the operation was limited to 4 weeks within the months of July and August. Mr. Luneau said it would be difficult to tell how much interest the camp would

draw; based on his past experience with operating basketball camps, the camp could run only one week during that time, or all eight or so weeks.

Mrs. Hoague noted that the newspaper had mentioned some other activities on that property. Mr. Luneau agreed that a singer was usually hosted in August, as well as a harvest festival, both of which occurred on the weekends. A prayer group or Bible study might also meet on the weekends. No one spent the night, and the activities were orderly and, to his knowledge, not disturbing to others.

Mr. Keith Taruski stated that the Luneaus often hosted get-togethers that went on until late in the evening, and that the other neighbor hosted loud parties with alcohol. One of the neighbors was burning trash as well. He stated that, having developed properties as a business, and owned many properties himself, he had seen many people with big dreams that failed; the plan needed to be properly evaluated. He worried about the traffic and did not feel that the camp fit in with the R1 district purpose. Also, he was concerned that the camp would reduce the value of the surrounding properties; that the kids would not have appropriate oversight; that the soils, surface waters, and Rail Trail would be negatively impacted; that the high density of population on the camp would be unsafe in an emergency circumstance; that the parking would be located within the buffer area; and that the lot coverage would be exceeded.

Mr. Luneau responded that he had never hosted a party at the property, and did not drink. Mr. Taruski modified the word "party" to "gathering."

Mr. Clark read Ilze Luneau's letter in response to Mr. Taruski's email, which claimed that the Luneaus burned trash and hosted loud parties at night. In her response, Mrs. Luneau explained that the allegations were false and must either be a lie or a misunderstanding.

Mr. Mark St. Pierre applauded Matthew Luneau's courage, noting that he himself was from Richford and would love to have that type of energy in his town. He felt the camp was a great opportunity.

Mr. Clark asked about the location and steepness of the bank near the proposed cabins, and Mr. Gervais estimated that there was about a 25-foot elevation difference with a 20% grade.

**2. CU#508 Conditional Use/Conversion Request of the Lawrence Handy Revocable Trust to convert a seasonal dwelling (camp) into a single-family year round dwelling at 174 Maquam Shore Rd. SR Shoreland Recreation District.**

Mr. Jeff Handy, trustee to the trust of Lawrence Handy, stated that the application involved converting a seasonal camp to a year-round home. Mr. Clark asked if the septic was capable of handling the conversion, and Mr. Handy replied that it was a conventional septic with a

1000-gallon concrete tank. The tank has had year-round use in the sense that various siblings of the family have stayed at the camp through portions of the year. Mrs. Hoague asked about the options if the septic failed, and Mr. Handy replied that he assumed a back-up septic could be placed on the property that the Handys owned across the street. Mr. Clark suggested that an engineer's letter certifying the sufficiency of the septic for the conversion would probably be a condition of approval.

**3. #514-2014 Sketch Plan and Possible Final Plat Approval Request of Ralph & Patricia Hubbard to create a three (3) lot subdivision of their farm situated at 2303 Highgate Rd. R1 Agricultural/Residential District. Lot #1, 6.1 acres with barn and house with 301 ft. road frontage; Lot #2, 1.17 acres with house and 297 ft. road frontage; Lot #3, 88 acres farm land with 800 ft. road frontage.**

Mr. Ralph Hubbard came forward with Mr. Mark St. Pierre, as well as Mr. Michael Gervais of Northern Land Surveying. Mr. Gervais stated that the application involved a three-lot subdivision of over 90 acres. Lot 3 had 88 acres, while Lots 1 and 2 would have a septic (currently existing on Lot 1) and a wastewater system as well. Both would have a shared well until Lot 2's wastewater permit went through. A 40-foot easement went through the properties. Both had road frontage, with only one curb cut, and the applicant hoped to use the existing drive to access the farm land. Mr. Gervais added that the face of the barn had been offset by 50 feet to meet the setbacks. Everything met the required lot frontage, lot size, and setbacks.

Mr. Hubbard informed the board that the right-of-way could see potential change, depending on the discussion between the buyer of the properties and the engineer. Mr. St. Pierre would be buying the properties.

**4. Public Comment—None.**

**5. Any Other Necessary Business**

The board reviewed the Mylar for the Dean subdivision. It was noted that the DRB had requested the applicant to work out a boundary line adjustment with Edward Lamothe, which included a land-swap. The adjustment itself never came before the DRB, although it was a condition of the approval. Because the adjustment was minor, the DRB agreed to simply sign the Mylar.

The DRB agreed to sign the Staples Mylar.

The Swanton U.S. Customs headquarters announced its move from Swanton along Route 7 to Highgate, along Route 78, and sent an environmental impact statement, as required by law. The Zoning Administrator would handle any permits for the proposed renovation of the Swanton buildings.

Mr. Liegey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Labarge, to enter deliberative session at 8:22 p.m. Motion carried.

Mr. Labarge made a motion, seconded by Mr. Liegey, to exit deliberative session at 8:32 p.m.

Mrs. Hill made a motion, seconded by Mr. Labarge, to CONTINUE CU#505 Continuation of Conditional Use Request of Matthew & Ilze Luneau to create a seasonal campground (Youth Camp) at their property located at 175 Sweet Hollow Rd. R1 Agricultural/Residential District. She made a motion to continue the application to allow the DRB to conduct a site visit scheduled for November 22, at 9:30 a.m. Motion carried.

Mr. Labarge made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Hill, to APPROVE CU#508 Conditional Use/Conversion Request of the Lawrence Handy Revocable Trust to convert a seasonal dwelling (camp) into a single-family year round dwelling at 174 Maquam Shore Rd. SR Shoreland Recreation District. Approval was given on the CONDITION that the applicant submit to the Zoning Administrator an engineer's or septic designer's evaluation of the septic and its ability to handle year-round occupancy. Motion carried.

Mrs. Hoague made a motion, seconded by Mr. Liegey, to APPROVE #514-2014 Sketch Plan and Final Plat Approval Request of Ralph & Patricia Hubbard to create a three (3) lot subdivision of their farm situated at 2303 Highgate Rd. R1 Agricultural/Residential District. Lot #1, 6.1 acres with barn and house with 301 ft. road frontage; Lot #2, 1.17 acres with house and 297 ft. road frontage; Lot #3, 88 acres farm land with 800 ft. road frontage. Motion carried.

Mrs. Hill made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Hoague and Mr. Liegey, to approve the Development Review Board minutes of September 25, 2014 as printed. Motion carried.

Mr. Labarge made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Hoague, to adjourn the hearing at 8:35 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yaasha Wheeler  
Swanton DRB Clerk

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Joel Clark

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Lucie Hill

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Spencer Labarge

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Gabriel M. Liegey

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Janet Hoague