

**Chelsea, Vermont, Development Review Board**  
**Meeting Minutes July 17, 2024**

**Members Present:** Johanna Welch (Chair), Ed Kuban, Jr (Vice Chair), Patricia Swahn, Charles Peel

**Others Present:** Brett Murphy, Rocky Spino, Jessica Allen, Michael Button, Bill McEwen McEwen

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Johanna opened the meeting at 6:30 pm. The hearing began with a reading of the notice as posted and published. No conflicts of interest or ex-parte conversations were disclosed. Johanna reviewed the definition of interested parties and explained the hearing process and swore in attendees. The DRB moved directly to the first agenda item.

**Application #ZP24-09 by Rocky Spino (Applicant) on behalf of Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont (Owner) for rebuilding of a 40'x80' gymnasium within the Flood Hazard Area at the Brookhaven Home for Boys. The building was a total loss from a July 2023 flood rebuilding falls under the "substantial improvements" clause of the Chelsea Flood Hazard Bylaw and requires Conditional Use approval by the Development Review Board. This property is located in the Village District at 329 Vermont Route 110 (Parcel#110-090.100).**

Johanna invited Rocky Spino to join the DRB and present his application. Rocky described the Brookhaven facility as a therapeutic treatment center and licensed educational facility. They house up to eight boys aged 8-14 who require treatment.

The gymnasium housed a basketball court, climbing wall and recreational gear, had electricity but no other utilities. The gym was a total loss and moved off its foundation in the July 2023 storm. The Center has been working with FEMA to provide funding and to guide them in the requirements.

Rocky explained that the population of boys required restrictions which often involves supervision or limitation of access or locations and it was crucial for the gymnasium to be located as close to the school as possible. The prior and currently proposed location is easy to access year round. This space is multi-use allowing our youth to be able to have an enclosed gymnasium in all weather elements. In addition they use this facility to host graduation ceremonies, picnics with families and other gatherings on campus.

The footprint of the old building 40x80 will be replaced with the exact same footprint. The new building will be built on 47 piers that are 7 feet and will be constructed by bolting sill to piers raising the building over 5 feet. TCE, a **BOWMAN** Company, did an extensive survey and identified where the 100 year flood mark was and FEMA is requiring it to be 2 feet above that. There will be fill and erosion stone under the building to support the piers placement.

A diagram was presented that shows the new gymnasium with a finished floor elevation located 2' above the 100-yr flood elevation. The proposal showed rip-rap and fill around a pier foundation to achieve this new floor elevation. The new floor elevation would be 5 ft 2 inches above finished grade.

The DRB asked if consideration had been made to not use fill and just elevated the building? The applicant responded that with advice from FEMA and the contractor they ended up with a plan that includes a building with a wooden floor elevated on concrete piers with rip rap and fill installed to support the piers.

Johanna asked if there were any interested persons present that had concerns. Michael Button indicated that owns the house next door and it is clear to him that by elevating the building the slopes of the fill are going to encroach upon his property line and will change the drainage directing water directly into his garage. Michael is also concerned that the fill will move during a storm event and end up on his property. Bill McEwen agreed with Michael's concerns.

Johanna then moved to agenda item #2.

**Application #ZP24-10 by Rocky Spino (Applicant) on behalf of Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont (Owner) for rebuilding of a 40 ft foot bridge within the Flood Hazard Area at the Brookhaven Home for Boys. The bridge was a total loss from a July 2023 flood rebuilding which will include fill and excavation within the Flood Hazard Area and requires Conditional Use approval by the Development Review Board. This property is located in the Village District at 331 Vermont Route 110 (Parcel#110-090.000).**

Johanna invited Rocky Spino to join the DRB and present his application. He indicated that there was a footbridge linking together their facilities and trails that is used by the public and snowmobile clubs that was also destroyed in the July 2023 flooding.

The foot bridge will be replaced as the same size and in the same location as the previous bridge by Blow & Cote. The foot bridge is described as a 40' pedestrian bridge, approx. 7'5" between handrails, bridge beams to be 8'6" above streambed measure to bottom of beams; pressure treated deck with 4X4 carrier timber across beams with 2X6 deck attached to 4X4's; wood deck surface to be attached to steel beam on 5 centers with bolts; beams will be placed on concrete abutments and attached to the concrete; necessary stone fill and abutment protection will be provided; necessary approach ramps to be built to get on and off the bridge. New abut. Includes exca, reinforced concrete plus 3' stone fill.

A VT DEC stream alterations permit and USACOE permit have both been obtained for the foot bridge.

Johanna made a motion to close the hearing, Charles seconded the motion and the hearing was closed at 7:20pm.

**Deliberation:**

At 7:20 the Board went into deliberation. Based on the application and information as presented, the DRB unanimously voted to approve application ZP#24-10 and to approve application ZP#24-09 with conditions as outlined in the Decision.

The DRB meeting ended at 8:15 pm.

Submitted by,

Mary Ellen Parkman  
DRB Clerk