

A detailed written description of the project. A brief project/parcel history, current and proposed use and improvements.

Located off Route 15 in the southwest corner of Essex, the parcel at 26 Woodside Dr. River Valley Therapeutic Residence (RVTR) is a 16-bed secure residential facility in Essex, Vermont.

RVTR provides a supportive environment for adults with severe mental illness who are in need of intensive services in a secure setting. This is for individuals who do not need acute inpatient care but are not yet ready to live independently in the community. Individuals can be transitioning from hospitalization or come directly from the community.

This is a state-owned secure facility that was permitted in 2021 as a 20,000 square foot one-story building, and includes a separate building with a gymnasium from previous construction. The site has parking in the rear of the building and a fenced courtyard area between the gymnasium and the main building. The proposed project is limited to a 372 square foot addition to the main building. The proposed addition will not result in any new beds at the facility and we do not anticipate an increase in employees. Layout changes to the site will be minimal; roadways and parking will remain unchanged. Any pavements or walks that are damaged during construction will be rebuilt in-place. Minor stormwater infrastructure changes will be made to accommodate the additions foundation.

19-073-1 River Valley Therapeutic Residence – ZONING NARRATIVE

A. General Requirements

This project seeks to conform to the adopted Essex Town Plan. The proposed building addition will not change the use of the site and it will improve operations for the residence. No additional employees, occupants, or water/sewer flows are proposed. The addition to main building will not have adverse effects to adjoining or adjacent properties. The parcel will still conform to dimensional limitations of regulations and has no outstanding violations. As a secure recovery located in a secluded section in the southwest corner of the Town it seeks to adequately protect public health, safety and welfare.

B. Natural and Scenic Features

All of the proposed work takes place within the footprint of existing infrastructure on the site and in areas that are previously disturbed. There will be minimal changes to existing topography and no work is proposed on slopes at or steeper than 15 percent. No work will be performed in wetlands or wetland buffers. Natural watercourses will not be impacted. Open space is protected as there is no proposed work within open space areas and does not affect any other properties with the Open Recreation District.

C. Access

The site circulation has not been impacted by the addition, therefore there are no changes to vehicle and pedestrian access. There will not be any changes to the traffic to the site. Woodside Drive is located off VT Route 15 and the property at 26 Woodside Drive is the only drive access located on the road. Woodside Drive is not a Town Road but a Private Road that is owned and maintain by the State. There will be no changes to Woodside Drive or where it intersects the nearest town owned and maintained road. It is not expected or encouraged for pedestrians to access the site. Site access meets applicable design standards including the Town's public works specifications and requirements under Section 3.1 of the Town Zoning Regulations.

D. Site Circulation

No changes to the site circulation are proposed.

E. Parking

No changes to the parking are proposed or required.

F. Landscaping and Screening

G. There are no specific landscaping requirements for Open Recreation District and the proposed project will have minimal impact on existing vegetation. One existing tree near the proposed addition will be removed. Remaining vegetation within the project area will be protected from damage during construction and monitored to ensure health.

H. Lighting

No changes to the lighting are proposed. Site lights that are impacted by the construction will be replaced in kind.

I. Utilities and Services

There are existing connections for both water and sewer on the site. These services will not be modified or impacted by the addition. No change of flows are anticipated or expected.

The existing state stormwater permit has been amended to add the increased impervious (372 sq ft) and it has been determined that the existing stormwater infiltration system has the capacity to handle the proposed increase.

J. Fire Protection

Access and circulation will not change from the previously approved plan due to the proposed addition. There are existing fire hydrants on site to serve needs of the Fire Department including being equipped with 5" Storz connection at the steamer connection. The fully addressable fire alarm panel will be in a non-secure area and will be easily accessible to the Fire Department as necessary.