



October 2, 2025

Tabrina Karish
State of VT
133 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05602

Re: **MINOR SITE PLAN AMENDMENT APPROVAL #DRB:2025-12**
260 WOODSIDE DRIVE, ESSEX, VT

Dear Ms. Karish:

At its meeting held on October 2, 2025, the Development Review Board voted to approve your Minor Site Plan application to add a 372 sq. ft. addition to the existing facility located at 260 Woodside Drive, Essex, VT. The approval was granted subject to the following Findings and Conditions:

FINDINGS:

1. Tabrina Karish, on behalf of the State of Vermont has submitted the following plans and proposal:

- Sheet C1.0 Existing Conditions Plan
- Sheet C2.0 Site Prep
- Sheet C3.0 Site Plan
- Sheet C3.2 Site Details

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

TOWN MANAGER	PARKS AND RECREATION	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	PUBLIC WORKS	ASSESSOR	FINANCE	TOWN CLERK	LIBRARY	FIRE	POLICE
878-1341	878-1342	878-1343	878-1344	878-1345	878-1359	879-0413	879-0313	878-5308	878-8331

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.

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.&G: Landscaping and Screening

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.

2. The parcel is known as 260 Woodside Drive, Open Space (O1) Zoning District in the Town of Essex, Chittenden County and State of Vermont. Parcel ID for this parcel is 2-005-003-001.
3. A 'Notice of Hearing' was provided to the applicant for posting on the site. The abutting property owners were mailed a copy of this draft approval prior to the hearing.
4. The Development Review Board finds that the applicant has demonstrated compliance with the minor site plan review standards contained in Article V, Section 5.5., of the *Town of Essex Official Zoning Regulations*.
5. The Department comments are as follows:

Recreation Director: *No comments.*

Police: *No issues.*

Fire: *The only comments from the fire department are to ask that any doors in this addition be keyed to their building master system for consistency.*

Public Works: *The site plans and other documentation for the proposed 372 square foot addition to the existing Main Building at 260 Woodside Drive have been reviewed by the Public Works office and comments have been provided below. Public Works recommends that all comments below be addressed by the applicant*

in subsequent submissions and reserves the right to provide future comment on all future submissions.

Stormwater:

1. The applicant shall provide a copy of the approved State Stormwater Permit with the amendment for the 372 square foot impervious increase.
2. The Town of Essex Standard Specifications for Construction require that all storm drainage pipes shall have a minimum diameter of 18". The drainage pipe to be removed and relocated shall be replaced with an 18" diameter pipe.
3. The Town does not recommend that the applicant install the new storm drainage pipe under the new sidewalk. If an issue occurs with the storm drainage pipe and excavation is required, then the sidewalk will need to be removed and replaced.
4. The Manhole Detail on Sheet C-4, should be revised to match the Storm Drain Manhole detail (Detail No. 200.03) in the Town of Essex Standard Specifications for Construction.
5. See the Storm Pipe Trench detail (Detail No. 200.04) in the Town of Essex Standard Specifications for Construction. The Pipe Trench Detail on Sheet C-4 should include information regarding minimum cover over the storm pipe.

CONDITIONS:

1. Prior to construction, the applicant shall secure a Town Zoning Permit for construction.
2. The applicant shall secure any State permits that may be required for this approval and provide a copy of same with the Zoning Permit application.
3. Upon issuance of the Zoning Permit, the Notice of Permit shall be staked at the roadside and remain in place until construction and all inspections are completed. No construction shall start until all appeal period has expired.
4. Construction shall occur between the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday – Saturday.
5. The applicant shall follow the Low-Risk Site Handbook for Erosion Control and Sediment Control.
6. All conditions of previous approvals shall remain in effect except as modified herein.
7. By acceptance of the conditions of this approval without appeal, the applicant confirms and agrees for themselves and all assigns and successors in interest that the conditions of this approval shall run with the land and the land uses herein permitted and will be binding upon and enforceable against the applicants and all assigns and successors in interest.

State of Vermont
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260 Woodside Drive
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It is the conclusion of the Development Review Board that the project described in the application referred to above, if completed and maintained in conformance with the foregoing findings of fact and conditions, will not cause a detriment to the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the Town of Essex and will conform with the *Town of Essex Official Zoning Regulations* adopted pursuant to 24 V.S.A Chapter 117.

This decision may be appealed to the Vermont Environmental Court pursuant to Section 7.4 of the *Town of Essex Official Zoning Regulations* and 24 V.S.A. § 4471. Any appeal must be filed by certified mail to the Environmental Court and by mailing a copy to the Essex Town Clerk within 30 days of the date of this approval.

TOWN OF ESSEX DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD



Ian Carroll, Chair

cc: Abutter's list

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