

FINAL 5/5/25 MINUTES

APPROVED ON 6/2/25

On 6/2/25, Don Wells moved to approve the 5/5/25 minutes as drafted and Julia Callan seconded. The Board unanimously approved and on 6/2/25, Melissa Manson signed the 5/5/25 minutes as drafted and submitted them to the clerk for publication.

**TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
PLANNING COMMISSION AND ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, May 5, 2025, 7:00 PM

Members Present: Aaron Forbes, Dan Pipes, Melissa Manson (Chair), Don Wells, Vanessa Kittell, Julia Callan, Demetrius Bolduc

Minute Taker: Vanessa Kittell

Public Present: Shawna Ratner, Rusty Branon, Emily Kloft, (NWRP), Emily Biron (via Zoom);

1. **Meeting, Called to Order,** 7:02 p.m., and the Board determined that a quorum was established.
2. **Reorganization of the Board:** Per rules requiring annual organization of the Board, Aaron Forbes nominated Melissa Manson as Chair and seconded by Don Wells. Board unanimously approved. Aaron Forbes nominated Demetrius Bolduc as Vice Chair and Melissa Manson seconded. Board unanimously approved. Aaron Forbes nominated Vanessa Kittell as Secretary and Dan Pipes seconded. Board unanimously approved.
3. **Adjustments to Agenda:** Dan Pipes moved to adjust agenda to undertake the public hearing before undertaking other agenda items. Melissa Manson seconded and the Board agreed to adopt agenda as amended.
4. **PUBLIC HEARING:** Application #25-019 Final Minor Subdivision Plan for 2-lot subdivision at 1733 Reynolds Road; Jacques Leo Berard Revocable Trust:
 - a. Melissa Manson swore in petitioner as represented by Rick Berard and requested that any interested parties identify themselves.
 - i. The following persons identified themselves as abutting landowners/interested parties and stated that they did not wish to testify: Shawn Ratner, Dan Pipes, and Rusty Branon.

- b. Board Member Aaron Forbes stated that his mother owned land adjacent to the petitioned land. Aaron Forbes requested to recuse himself on the basis that he felt this created a conflict of interest.
- c. Town Zoning Administrator Robert Karim confirmed that Applicant's petition was complete and that petition representative Rick Berard had undertaken pre-hearing meeting with Town Zoning Administrator and hearing had been properly noticed.
- d. Rick Berard testified that the Application proposed to create a subdivision of the land by creating a 2-acre lot on the East side of Reynolds Road leaving remaining 381 acres original parcel. Rick Berard testified that the proposed land was "raw land" that had no buildings on it and did not contain any wetlands. He testified that the proposed 2-acre lot did not presently include any proposed building(s) or septic plans.
- e. Rick Berard testified that his father, Jacques Leo Berard recently passed away and the Trustees of the Revocable Trust would be able to provide a statement indicating agreement with the proposed Application.
- f. In accord with his testimony, Rick Berard presented a plat map with the proposed subdivision as proposed by surveyor Mark Day. The plat map showed that the proposed 2-acre lot satisfied all road frontage requirements and other requirements under LUR.

5. Emily Kloft, Northwest Regional Planning: Presentation on Future Land Use:

- a. Emily Kloft presented the Norwest Regional Planning's Future Land Use presentation with land use maps indicating impact of recent statutory change created by Act 181, on Town's Village districts. The memorandum and maps presented by NWRP are attached to these minutes. Emily Kloft stated that the NWRP was looking for feedback from the Board and anticipated presenting to the Town Select Board in late summer or October 2025.
- b. Emily Kloft also presented data from NWRP's housing targets as set by State legislature.
- c. Board and public comment included that the changes put forward by changes implemented in Act 181 were substantial, once-in-a-generation changes to land use and planning law. Board encouraged NWRP to solicit more public feedback by presenting to the public. Board stated that the changes outlined in the Future Land Use law change would be unlikely to help Town with encouraging more housing development. The main challenge to building in Town's Village districts at present, (and other Villages in regional municipalities), was lack of water and sewage infrastructure, challenges that must be initially addressed to permit *any* additional building.
- d. Public Comment also encouraged NWRP to provide feedback to State leaders that the housing targets of Town was unrealistic and not modeled on a consideration of making more modest investments in areas with present existing infrastructure. Placing 60% of housing targets on larger communities with existing municipal infrastructures was too low and unfairly burdened smaller communities in region with the 40% of additional housing targets. This expectation shifted burden onto smaller

communities that could least afford to make greater investments in municipal sewer and water systems, creating greater barriers in undertaking.

6. **Approval of meeting minutes:** Julia Callan moved to amend 4/21/25 minutes to add “Julia Callan” Board member present and omit “Peter Burns,” and accept 3/17/25 and 4/23/25 as drafted. Dan Pipes seconded and the Board unanimously agreed.

7. **Public Comment not related to the agenda:** None.

8. **Confirmation of next meetings:**

- a. **June 2, 2025, 7:00 p.m. at Town Offices,** Regular monthly DRB/PC meeting and By-law Review Planning Meeting;

9. **Deliberative Session upon Application #25-019 Final Minor Subdivision Plan for 2-lot subdivision at 1733 Reynolds Road; Jacques Leo Berard Revocable Trust Berard:**

Vanessa Kittell moved to go into Deliberative Session and Julia Callan seconded and Board agreed and entered Deliberative Session at 8:12 p.m. Board undertook Deliberative Session and at the motion of Aaron Forbes and seconded by Don Wells, Board agreed and exited Deliberative Session at 8:35.

Upon exiting Deliberative Session, Melissa Manson announced that the Application would be accepted upon the following conditions: receipt of letter from Revocable Trust Trustee(s) stating permission and agreement with Application for subdivision; inclusion of a building envelope showing minimization of impact upon state soil in accord with LUR 8.4 C. 1., conservation resources present at proposed 2-acre lot subdivision; and encouragement for continued shared use of 2-acre lot’s existing access road with any proposed driveway to minimize impact upon conservation resources.

10. **Executive Session:** Dan Pipes moved to go into executive Session and Vanessa Kittell, seconded. Board entered Executive Session at 8:38. Aaron Forbes moved to exit Executive Session and Julia Callan seconded. Board exited Executive Session at 8:54.

11. **Adjourn:** Melissa Manson moved to adjourn and Vanessa Kittell seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.