



Planning & Zoning Office
Town of Richmond P.O. Box 285
Richmond, VT 05477
(802) 434-2430
tmacia@richmondvt.gov
www.richmondvt.gov

Town of Richmond Development Review Board Staff Notes, 1/8/2025

RE: SP2025-01- The Town of Richmond is seeking Site Plan Review to amend the site plan for the preexisting outdoor recreation facility located at Browns Court. The Applicants are looking to make the following changes to the site: improving the parking area, adding a new storage shed, adding a bocce court, improving the existing baseball field, adding pickleball courts, and landscaping changes.

LOCATION: 58 Browns Court

EXISTING ZONING: High Density Residential

PARCEL HISTORY:

1. Zoning Permit 07-03, Approved 4/10/2007
2. Site Plan Review 2020-016, Approved 3/19/2020
3. Zoning Permit 2020-021, Approved 4/1/2020

LIST OF SUBMISSIONS:

- A. Cover Letter
- B. Site Plan Review Application
- C. Trip Generator Report
- D. Rec Field Design
- E. Boundary Survey
- F. Abutters List
- G. Parking Sign
- H. Court Sign Dimensions

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION:

1. Application received 12/19/2024
2. Warning and agenda sent to Seven Days 12/20/2024
3. Hearing notice sent to applicant 12/20/2024
4. Abutters letter sent 12/20/2024

STAFF NOTES (In Bold):

1. The Applicants are proposing an expansion of an existing Outdoor Recreation Facility or Park. The Applicants are seeking to add the following improvement
 - a. Storage Shed
 - b. Bocce Court
 - c. Improvements to the Existing Ballfield

- d. Pickleball Court
 - e. Updated Parking area
2. The Applicants are also proposing landscaping to screen the proposed pickleball courts.
 3. The project is located in the High-Density Residential district and is subject to Section 3.2 of the Richmond Zoning Regulations.
 4. Section 3.2.5.c notes that no zoning permit may be issued for uses that generate more than 10 vehicle trip ends for the first 40,000 square feet of land development area.
 5. The Applicants traffic report notes that they are allowed 106 PM trip ends. The report notes that the expansion of the use will only generate 38 PM trip ends and will comply with Section 3.2.5.c.
 6. This project is Subject to the regulations applying to all lots noted in Section 4 of the Richmond Zoning Regulations.
 7. The project is in compliance with sections 4.2,4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6,4.7,4.8,4.10, 4.1, 4.12
 8. The project is required to comply with the Richmond Public Work Specifications noted in Section 4.1 of the Richmond Zoning Regulations.
 9. Section 1.3 of the Richmond Public Work Specifications notes that “ A property owner must apply for an access permit (or amendment) for any new access on to a road or street, such as for a new road or driveway (or for any new uses that increase the ADT for the driveway”. As noted in Section 1.3 expanding the use at Browns Court will require an updated access permit approved by the Selectboard.
 10. The Applicants Project is subject to the noise restriction noted in Section 4.9 of the Richmond Zoning Regulations.
 11. Section 4.9.1 notes that noises in the High Density Residential District Shall not exceed an average of 70 decibel per hour on average or an instantaneous noise of 80 decibels from 7:00 am- 11:00PM.
 12. The Applicants indicated in their narrative that the decibel range for pickleball court varies but is on average 70 decibels an hour. **(Sheet C1.00 indicates that there will be trees screening the pickleball court to help reduce the noise. However, the applicants have not submitted site specific data showing what the levels of noise will be from the pickleball courts. The applicants also cite a source that says that pickleball paddles can be as loud as 71.8 decibels which would be in excess of the max average allowed. The board should consider whether or not the courts are located far enough away from the property boundary to not exceed the required noise levels. The board should also consider requiring site specific data on the anticipated noise levels of these courts.**
 13. A Recreation Facility or Park , as defined in Section 7 of the zoning regulations is a Conditional Use per Section 3.2.2 m. of the Richmond Zoning Regulations.
 14. An outdoor recreation facility or park is conditional and is subject to Conditional Use Review as noted in Section 5.6.
 15. Conditional Use Review is Subject to the Site Plan Review Regulations noted in Section 5.5.3.
 16. Amendments to Site plans are regulated by Section 5.5.5.
 17. Section 5.5.5. notes that any changes to landscaping or pedestrian circulation patterns require site plan approval by the Development Review Board. **(The additional recreation equipment which will lead to changed pedestrian circulation patterns and the proposed landscaping changes noted on the applicants Site Plan both trigger Site Plan Review)**
 18. Section 5.5.2 notes the requirements for a Site Plan

- a. Names of the owner of the parcel (This is only included in the boundary survey not on the site plan itself)
 - b. Names of all the abutters (Abutters list provided)
 - c. Professionally prepared site plan unless a waiver from this requirement is requested by the applicant. Shows the following (The Applicants did not formally request a waiver from this requirement in their cover letter. The Applicant will need to clarify if they wish to request this waiver.)
 - i. Existing Features (The Applicants site plan page does not note the acreage. However, the boundary survey in the site plan notes the lot size is 3.13 acres. Diagram C1.01 does note contours of the new site. The Boundary Survey shows an area of unclear title by the front entrance.)
 - ii. Proposed land development (The Applicants have provided documentation of the proposed land development.)
 - d. Phasing plan for the project (The Applicants indicates that they plan on working during the Summer and Fall of 2025)
19. The Board may impose conditions on any of the items noted in Section 5.5.3a.i.-vii.
 20. Section 5.5.3.b i-xi notes the various requirements for landscaping.
 21. The Applicants noted that the new gravel parking area will be screened by the existing screen of trees. In addition, the pickleball court will be screened by 60 cedar trees, the bocci court will be screened by an additional 20 cedar trees and the portlets will be screened by an additional 4 cedar trees. This is for a total of 84 cedar trees. However, the Applicants site plan description notes a total of 99 Emerald Green Arborvitae. The Applicants indicated that they plan to spend \$100 per tree. There is an existing tree line that screens the property. (There are major discrepancies from what the Applicants note on sheet C1.00 and the descriptions of the proposed landscaping in the site plan description. The Applicants need to be clear as to what types of trees are to be planted. While they did note the cost per tree, they did not provide a total landscaping cost for the project. In addition, it is unclear exactly how many trees are supposed to be planted. They will need to provide this information to be in compliance with Section 5.5.3.b.vii.)
 22. Changes to Parking are regulated by Section 6.1.2 of the Richmond Zoning Regulations.
 23. Section 6.1.2.a notes that all parking spaces shall have a minimum width of 9 ft and a length of 18 feet.
 24. The Applicants site plan does not clearly note the length and width of the parking spaces . (While the length and width of all the parking spaces are not noted looking at image C1.01 it appears that the length of the parking spaces are 18'.6" ft. This would meet the minimum length requirements. The Applicants did not note the width of the parking spaces.)
 25. Section 6.1.2 notes that parking areas with a 90 degree angle need a minimum two-way aisle width of 24 feet.
 26. Sheet C1.01notes that the two-way isle width is 26 feet.
 27. Section 6.1.2.c notes the minimum required parking spaces for a particular use.
 28. The Parking table noted in Section 6.1.2.c notes that Recreation Facilities require 2 spaces plus .25 spaces per 1000 SFGHA.
 29. The Applicants plan set notes that they are required to have a minimum of 14 parking spaces.
 30. The Applicants are proposing 30 parking spaces which meets the minimum requirement noted above.

31. Section 6.1.6.b notes that all parking areas shall be hard surfaced, asphalt or paved, unless the applicants request a waiver from the DRB.
32. The Applicants have requested a waiver from the surfacing requirements and are requesting a gravel parking area.
33. Section 6.1.6.c. notes that “all parking areas and associated roadways shall be designed and constructed with detention devices, such as, but not limited to overland grassed and/or stone lined swales, detention basins, and settling ponds, in order to assure that the post development peak flow stormwater volumes from such parking areas and roadways do not exceed the predevelopment quantities based on the run-off from a twenty-five year, twenty-four hour storm event”.
34. The Applicants have requested a waiver from the drainage requirement (**While the Applicants have requested a waiver from this requirement they have not provided any justification for this waiver other than the cost of providing the information. They have not indicated whether or not all of the stormwater from the parking area will be contained on the site. The Applicants need to outline why they should not have to comply with this section of the regulations.**)
35. The Applicants have indicated that there will be designated parking for persons with disabilities as required by Section 6.1.6.6.d.
36. The applicants have indicated that there will be one parking space for persons with disabilities.
37. The parking meets the setback requirements noted in Section 3.2.4 as required by Section 6.1.6.6.f
38. The Parking area is already screened by existing vegetation as required by Section 6.1.6.6.g
39. Section 6.1.6.6.h notes that the DRB has to approve the landscaping for the parking area. (**The Applicants have not provided landscaping for the parking area. The board will need to consider whether to require landscaping for the parking area.**)
40. Section 6.1.6.6.i note that all parking areas shall have plans for pedestrian paths to minimize the hazard to pedestrians.
41. The Applicants requested a waiver from this requirement. (**The Applicants have requested a waiver but they have not explained why they need a waiver.**)
42. The Applicants have provided a bicycle rack per sheet C1.01 in compliance with Section 6.1.6.6.j.
43. The Applicants are requesting a waiver from the striping requirement noted in Section 6.1.6.6.k.
44. Section 6.1.6.6.o notes that fire lanes need to be approved by the Richmond Fire Chief and shall be clearly marked. (**The Applicants site plan does not note fire lanes.**)
45. The driveway to the parking area must comply with the driveway regulations noted in Section 6.2 of the Richmond Zoning Regulations.
46. Section 6.2 notes that the commercial driveways have a minimum required width of 20 feet for its length.
47. The Applicants Sheet C1.01 notes that the driveway width is 16 feet (**The Applicants proposed driveway is not in compliance with the Driveway Standards noted in Section 6.2 of the Richmond Zoning regulations. The Applicants will need to redesign the driveway to be in compliance with Section 6.2. In addition, the applicants will need to apply to amend the access permit for this lot based on the changes to the use.**)
48. The Applicants are also proposing new signage for Browns Court.

49. All Signage is subject to the Sign Regulations noted in Section 5.7 of the Richmond Zoning Regulations.
50. Section 5.7.2 notes the Regulations for all signs
51. The Applicants have proposed one free standing sign at the entrance to Browns Court That meets the Requirements noted in Section 5.7.2.
52. Signs located in the High Density Residential district are regulated by Section 5.7.3
53. The Applicants have applied for one free standing sign as permitted by Section 5.7.3.a **(The Applicants have not shown where the sign will be located on their site plan. Applicants should provide more information on the anticipated signage.)**
54. The Applicants also want to attach two signs to the pickleball court noting the hours of operation and court rules.
55. These signs will be 2 feet square.
56. Section 5.7.1.e notes that signs directing the public on recreational land are allowed provided they do not exceed 2 square feet.

ITEMS FOR DRB CONSIDERATION:

1. Consider requiring the Applicants to submit more site-specific data on the noise levels of the pickleball courts to ensure compliance with Section 4.9.1.
2. Consider requiring the Applicants to relocate the courts further from the property boundaries to ensure compliance with Section 4.9.1.
3. Determine what the Landscaping plan is for the project as noted in Section 5.5.3.b
4. Consider whether to grant a waiver from the parking requirements requested by the applicants
5. Consider whether to grant a waiver from the stormwater requirements noted in Section 6.1.6.6.c.
6. Consider whether to require landscaping for the parking area as noted in Section 6.1.6.6.h.
7. Consider waving the pedestrian path requirement in Section 6.1.6.6.i

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DRB CONSIDERATION:

1. Continue the application till the following information is provided
 - a. Name of the owner of the parcel on the site plan.
 - b. Site specific data on the noise levels of the pickleball courts to ensure compliance with Section 4.9.1.
 - c. Consider requiring the Applicants to relocate the courts further from the property boundaries to ensure compliance with Section 4.9.1.
 - d. An accurate landscaping plan for the site that notes the following
 - i. The correct number of plantings.
 - ii. The correct species of plantings.
 - iii. A more detailed maintenance plan for the plantings.
 - iv. Letter noting that all landscaping is indigenous to Vermont or New England.
 - v. Invoices noting the total amount of landscaping planted to determine compliance with Section 5.5.3.b.vii.
 - e. Stormwater Plan for the parking lot.
 - f. A redesigned commercial driveway that has a minimum width of 20 feet.
2. Approve the application but require the applicants to submit the following information prior to obtaining a zoning permit
 - a. Name of the owner of the parcel on the site plan.

- b. Site specific data on the noise levels of the pickleball courts to ensure compliance with Section 4.9.1.
- c. Consider requiring the Applicants to relocate the courts further from the property boundaries to ensure compliance with Section 4.9.1.
- d. An accurate landscaping plan for the site that notes the following
 - i. The correct number of plantings.
 - ii. The correct species of plantings.
 - iii. A more detailed maintenance plan for the plantings.
 - iv. Letter noting that all landscaping is indigenous to Vermont or New England.
 - v. Invoices noting the total amount of landscaping planted to determine compliance with Section 5.5.3.b.vii.
- e. Stormwater Plan for the parking lot.
- f. A redesigned commercial driveway that has a minimum width of 20 feet.

