

Town of Dummerston

Development Review Board

Application for Conditional Use & Site Plan Review : Findings and Decision

HEARING SPECIFICS

DRB Application Number: 3849

Permit Application Number: 3849

Date Received: May 2, 2026

Parcel Number: 000389

Location of Property: 50 Old Sawmill Dr.

Applicant: Edward Wisdom

Mailing Address: 50 Old Sawmill Dr.

Owner of Record: Peter Thurrell

Application Description: Conditional Use review for a proposed campground operation consisting of tent platforms, RV camping accommodations, associated parking, trails, and shared facilities. Conditional Use review for Short Term Rental.

Date of Hearings: June 16 and June 30, 2026

INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

1. This proceeding involves review of application number 3849.
2. Public hearings were held on June 16 and June 30, 2026
3. The hearings were chaired by Alan McBean.
4. A site visit was conducted prior to the hearing on June 16th at 50 Old Sawmill Dr.
5. Present at the site visit were the following persons:
 - a. Members of the Development Review Board: Patty Walior, Christine Goepp, Peter Doubleday, Kyle Paquette, Alan McBean
 - b. Members of the Public: Edward Wisdom (Applicant), Peter Thurrell (Owner), Roger Jasaitis (Zoning Administrator), Gary Kessler (Abutter), Iago Viego Amboso.
6. The subject property is 6.4 acres located at 50 Old Sawmill Dr.. The property is more fully described in a Deed recorded in Book 117 Page 345 in the Town of Dummerston Land Records.
7. The property is located in the Rural Commercial District, as described on the Town of Dummerston Zoning Map on record at the Town of Dummerston municipal office and *Sections 205 and 235* of the Zoning Bylaw.
8. On May 27, 2026, notice of a public hearing was published in The Commons.
9. On May 28, 2026, notice of a public hearing was posted at the following places:
 - a. Town Office
 - b. Dummerston Post Office

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- c. Town web site
- 10. On May 21, 2026, notice of a public hearing was posted at the following place: 50 Old Sawmill Dr., which is within view of the public-right-of-way most nearly adjacent to the property for which the application was made.
- 11. On May 19, 2026, a copy of the notice of a public hearing was mailed to the Applicant.
- 12. On May 19, 2026, a copy of the notice of public hearing was mailed to the following owners of properties adjoining the property subject to the application:
 - a. Elliot Ian, 61 Old Sawmill Dr, E Dummerston, VT 05346
 - b. Goddard Yvonne M & Alan J, 2 Old Sawmill Dr, E Dummerston, VT 05346
 - c. Kessler Glenn D, 185 Canoe Brook Rd, E Dummerston, VT 05346
 - d. Goodell Group LLC, P.O. Box 24, Westminster Station, VT 05159
- 13. The application was considered by the Development Review Board (DRB) at public hearings on June 16 and June 30, 2026.
- 14. The Development Review Board reviewed the application under the Town of Dummerston Zoning Bylaw, as amended April 6, 2022.
- 15. Present at the hearing on June 16, 2026, were the following persons:
 - a. Members of the Development Review Board: Patty Walior, Christine Goepp, Peter Doubleday, Kyle Paquette, Alan McBean
 - b. Members of the Public: Edward Wisdom (Applicant), Peter Thurrell (Owner), Roger Jasaitis (Zoning Administrator), Gary Kessler (Abutter), Iago Viego Amboso.
- 16. Present at the hearing on June 30, 2026, were the following persons:
 - a. Members of the Development Review Board: Patty Walior, Christine Goepp, Peter Doubleday, Kyle Paquette, Alan McBean, Cami Elliott
 - b. Members of the Public: Peter Thurrell (Owner), Roger Jasaitis (Zoning Administrator), Chris Olsen (Abutter).
- 17. The Development Review Board reviewed the application under the applicable provisions of the Town of Dummerston Zoning Bylaws governing Conditional Use Review and Site Plan Review, including Sections 720, 721, 722, 725, and related provisions. During the June 16, 2026, hearing, the following materials and testimony were considered by the DRB:
 - a. Application and supporting materials submitted by the Applicant.
 - b. Site plan.
 - c. Testimony from the Applicant and Owner concerning the proposed campground operation, occupancy, parking, trails, lighting, wastewater concepts, signage and Short Term Rentals.
 - d. Testimony from neighboring property owner Gary Kessler regarding potential noise impacts and property boundary concerns.

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- e. Testimony and comments from the Zoning Administrator regarding site plan requirements, wastewater permitting requirements, and applicable review criteria.

This proceeding involves review of an application submitted by Edward Wisdom for development of a campground operation on property located on Route 5 in Dummerston, Vermont. This property is developed with a residence and associated solar installation, indoor pickleball court, solar installation company (Southern Vermont Solar under Conditional Use permit number 3670). The proposal includes tent platforms, RV accommodations, parking areas, access trails, and future shared sanitary facilities.

On June 16, 2026, the Development Review Board conducted a site visit and opened a public hearing on the application. During that hearing, the Applicant described a proposal that could include up to fourteen tent platforms, tree houses, and RV sites, with occupancy ranging from approximately twenty regular occupants to as many as forty attendees during community events and gatherings. The Board and neighboring property owners expressed concerns regarding the lack of specificity in the proposal, including uncertainties regarding the number and location of campsites, parking capacity, occupancy limits, wastewater disposal, water supply, event activities, and access.

Because the Board determined that the application lacked sufficient information for meaningful review under the Conditional Use and Site Plan Review standards, the hearing was recessed until June 30, 2026. The Applicant was directed to submit a revised application containing a detailed site plan, occupancy limits, parking layout, campsite locations, accessory structures, floodplain information, and additional information regarding wastewater and water supply requirements. The Applicant was also directed to cease construction activities until appropriate permits were obtained.

The hearing reconvened on June 30, 2026. The Board continued the hearing in order to obtain additional information regarding the proposed use and site layout. The applicant submitted a revised site plan and revised narrative for consideration at the June 30, 2026 hearing.

The Development Review Board reviewed the revised application under the applicable provisions of the Town of Dummerston Zoning Bylaws governing Conditional Use Review and Site Plan Review, including Sections 720, 721, 722, 725, and related provisions. During the June 30, 2026 hearing and deliberations, the following materials and testimony were considered by the DRB:

1. Revised Application and supporting materials submitted by the Applicant.
2. Revised site plan submitted following the initial hearing.
3. Testimony from the Owner concerning the proposed campground operation, occupancy, parking, trails, lighting, wastewater concepts and signage.

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4. Testimony from neighboring property owner Chris Olsen regarding potential noise impacts and property boundary concerns.
 5. Testimony and comments from the Zoning Administrator regarding site plan requirements, wastewater permitting requirements, and applicable review criteria.
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FINDINGS OF FACT

Based upon the application materials, testimony, exhibits, and deliberations, the Development Review Board makes the following findings:

Project Description

The Applicant proposes to establish a campground facility consisting of up to five tent platforms, two RV accommodations, parking areas, access trails, and a future shared bathroom/kitchen facility. The operation would accommodate camping and short-term recreational stays.

Property Overview

The property is located along Route 5 and contains an existing residence, pickleball court, a solar business, solar-related structures, existing access drives, and undeveloped wooded areas adjacent to Canoe Brook. Portions of the proposed campground are located near the brook and the lower half of the parcel including the Solar business and pickleball court structure lies within the Canoe Brook riparian area.

Proposal

The Applicant's revised submission identifies approximate locations of tent platforms, RV sites, parking areas, and a future sanitary facility. The Applicant represented that the current proposal includes tent platforms rather than enclosed structures and identified a future intention to develop shared bathroom and kitchen facilities subject to state permitting.

Parking and Access

The application proposes guest parking near the existing garage/pickleball court area with pedestrian access to campsites via trails. The revised site plan depicts multiple approximate parking areas.

Wastewater and Water Supply

The Applicant discussed several conceptual wastewater and water supply approaches, including temporary use of self-contained RV facilities and future construction of shared sanitary facilities. No approved wastewater design, water supply plan, engineering analysis, or state permits were submitted as part of the application.

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Prior Notice of Deficiencies

At the June 16, 2026 hearing, the Board specifically identified numerous deficiencies in the application and advised the Applicant that additional information would be required before the Board could evaluate the proposal. Required information included a detailed site plan, precise campsite locations and structure locations with setbacks indicated, parking layouts, footpaths, locations of communal facilities, occupancy limits, event attendance limits, floodplain information, and information relating to water supply and wastewater permitting.

Continuing Lack of Specificity

Although the Applicant made significant efforts in response to the Board's request for increased specificity, the Board finds that despite being afforded additional time to clarify the proposal, the revised application still fails to provide sufficient detail regarding site layout, setbacks, circulation, parking design, structure dimensions, sign dimensions, exterior lighting layout, and supporting infrastructure to allow the Board to evaluate compliance with applicable zoning standards.

Site Plan Deficiencies

The Board specifically finds that several items requested during the June 16 hearing were either not submitted or were submitted in a form insufficient to satisfy the Site Plan Review requirements of the Zoning Bylaw under *Section 725*, including:

1. A scaled site plan.
2. North arrow and required mapping information.
3. Clearly identified setbacks and dimensions from property boundaries with measurements included in the site plan.
4. Locations and physical dimensions of proposed structures and platforms sufficient to evaluate compliance with zoning requirements.
5. Traffic circulation patterns and maneuvering areas.
6. Information regarding grades, contours, and site features necessary to evaluate access, development and erosion impacts.

Ability to Evaluate the Proposal

Because of the deficiencies in the site plan and application materials, the Board is unable to adequately evaluate the proposal against the Site Plan Review and Conditional Use standards of the Zoning Bylaw. During deliberations, the Board found the application lacked the information necessary to determine compliance with the bylaw requirements governing site design, access, circulation, setbacks, and other review criteria.

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CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Town of Dummerston Zoning Bylaw under *Section 725* requires that applications subject to Site Plan Review and Conditional Use Review provide sufficient information to allow the Development Review Board to evaluate compliance with applicable standards.

1. The submitted application does not contain the information required under the Site Plan Review provisions of the bylaw, including a scale drawing, setback information, dimensions, circulation details, and other required site plan elements.
 2. Because the application lacks the information necessary to evaluate compliance with applicable standards, the Board cannot make the affirmative findings required for approval under the Zoning Bylaw.
 3. The Board further finds that future development of the proposed campground will require compliance with all applicable state permitting requirements, including water supply, wastewater, campground regulations, fire safety, and other regulatory requirements. However, the basis for this decision is the insufficiency of the application materials submitted for local review.
 4. The burden rests with the Applicant to provide sufficient evidence and plans demonstrating compliance with the applicable provisions of the Town of Dummerston Zoning Bylaws. After two public hearings, the DRB finds that the application record remains incomplete and does not contain the minimum information necessary to evaluate compliance with the Site Plan Review standards of Section 725 and related Conditional Use standards.
 5. Although the DRB does not find the concept of a campground use inherently incompatible with the zoning district, the Board cannot approve a proposal whose location, dimensions, access, circulation patterns, setbacks, and infrastructure remain insufficiently defined for review.
 6. The construction of a platform structure was noted at the site visit. This structure has no Zoning Permit and is in violation of the Zoning Bylaw under *Section 701*. Under *Section 701* all Land Development requires a Zoning Permit. The construction of this structure qualifies as Land Development. This structure must have a valid Zoning Permit by the end of the 30 day appeal period for this decision, or the structure must be de-constructed and all material removed from the site. The Zoning Administrator shall enforce this provision of this decision.
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DECISION

Based upon the evidence presented and the findings set forth above, the Development Review Board hereby **DENIES** the application for a campground operation.

The denial is based upon the Applicant's failure to provide a site plan and supporting documentation sufficient to allow the Board to evaluate compliance with the applicable provisions of the Town of Dummerston Zoning Bylaws. Specifically, the Board finds that the application lacks required information concerning scale, dimensions, setbacks, circulation, site features, and other elements necessary for Site Plan Review under *Section 725*.

Nothing in this decision prevents the Applicant from submitting a new application containing a complete site plan and supporting information that satisfies the requirements of the Zoning Bylaws.

The platform structure noted at the site visit must have a valid Zoning Permit by the end of the 30 day appeal period for this decision, or the structure must be de-constructed and all material removed from the site. The Zoning Administrator shall enforce this provision of this decision.

BOARD VOTE

The Development Review Board voted unanimously to deny the application as presented due to the inadequacy of the submitted site plan and supporting information.

The following members of the Development Review Board participated and concurred in this decision: Patty Walior, Christine Goepp, Peter Doubleday, Kyle Paquette, Alan McBean, Cami Elliott.

Dated at Dummerston, Vermont, this 9th day of July, 2026.



Signed for the Dummerston Development Review Board

ALAN J. MCBEAN

Print Name

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NOTICE

This decision may be appealed to the Vermont Environmental Division by an interested person who participated in the proceeding before the Development Review Board. Such appeal must be taken within 30 days of the date of this decision, pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4471 and applicable Vermont Rules of Environmental Court Proceedings.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE / MAILING

I certify that a copy of this decision was mailed or otherwise provided to the Applicant and to every person or body appearing and having been heard at the hearing, and filed with the Zoning Administrator and Town Clerk as part of the public record of the municipality, on the 9TH day of JULY, 2026.



Roger Vincent Jasaitis
Zoning Administrator

ROGER VINCENT JASAITIS

Print Name