1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M.

   Members present: Robert J. Wernecke, Chair; Karla Nuissl, Vice-Chair; John Friedrich; Josh Fitzhugh; and Shane Mispel.

   Staff present: Thomas J. Badowski, Zoning Administrator and Carla Preston, Recording Secretary.

   Others present: Sandra F. Vitzhum, Amanda Smith, David Hedding, Barbara Menard, Roger Menard, Henry A. LaGue, Jr., Michael J. Kuhn, Steve Wilson, and Mitchell Jay.

   The Board explained its Policy and definition of party status and interested persons to attendees. Copies of the Rules and Policies and Procedure were available as handouts. No one present requested party status.

2. New business

   A. 17-070 – Bartlett Hill Company, LLC submitted an application for a three lot Boundary Adjustment. The property is located on Bartlett Road, Berlin, Vermont, in the Rural Residential and Highland Conservation Zoning Districts, Parcel ID: 11-016.100. Sandra F. Vitzhum was sworn in to give testimony on this matter. In addition, abutters Amanda Smith, David Hedding, Barbara Menard, Roger Menard, Henry A. LaGue, Jr., Michael J. Kuhn, Steve Wilson, and Mitchell Jay.

   The following documents were submitted and admitted as exhibits: Exhibit #1: Application for Boundary Adjustment, 17-070, received on 09/22/2017; Exhibit #2: Survey showing existing lots, prepared by Richard W. Bell Land Surveying, Inc. dated May 2009, with revisions on 06/29/2010, 06/30/2010, 01/06/2016; Exhibit #3: Survey, prepared by Richard W. Bell Land Surveying, Inc. dated 08/2017, revised on 08/19/2017 to show the adjusted property lines; and Exhibit #4: Narrative dated 09/19/2017.

   Sandra Vitzhum advised that her original idea was to sell the two small lots created in a prior subdivision and retain the large parcel. In 2009, she proposed to subdivide the 83.25 acres parcel into three lots consisting of 76.66 acres (Lot #1), 3.89 acres (Lot #2), and 2.7 acres (Lot #3), however the Mylar was never filed. In 2016, she divided that 83.25 acres parcel into three lots consisting of 29.01 acres (Lot #1), 27.20 acres (Lot #2), and 27.03 acres (Lot #3). Ms. Vitzhum explained that she has been unable to sell the larger sized lots and now wants to go back to her original plan with a few small lots and one large lot. The proposed Boundary Adjustment will change the size of the existing lots as follows: Lot #1, consisting of 29.01 acres, will increase by 47.87 acres for a total of 76.88 acres; Lot #2, consisting of 27.20 acres, will decrease by 24.01 acres for a total of 3.19 acres; and Lot #3, consisting of 27.03 acres, will decrease by 23.85 acres for a total of 3.18 acres.

   Ms. Vitzhum advised that there are still three lots with different shapes and sizes. There is currently no development on the lots. In response to the Board’s questions, she confirmed that no new lots are being created, there is no impact on roads, rights-of-way, or public facilities. Access to the lots would be via Bartlett Road.
Ms. Vitzhum explained that subsurface disposal systems have been approved by the state on two lots and is pending approval on the third lot. She acknowledged that the plans showed a boundary line through a subsurface disposal field which will be shifted. She confirmed that all of the subsurface disposal systems will fit on the lots as sized. The subsurface disposal system for Lot #1 has been approved by the state and shown on another set of plans. She advised test pits have been done and perked and the systems have been designed. Applications have been submitted to the state.

Zoning Administrator Badowski advised that the adjusted lots meet size, depth, frontage and other criteria for the Rural Residential District. The smaller lots are located within the Rural Residential District.

With respect to access, Ms. Vitzhum advised she met with Berlin’s Road Foreman about a new curb cut. The location was acceptable which will now be submitted to the Berlin Select Board for approval. She confirmed that there are no easements on any of the lots.

For the benefit of the abutters present, Ms. Vitzhum pointed out the properties involved in relation to their homes. Amanda Smith and David Hedding noted they had reviewed the plans but wanted to verify that there would be no impact on their property. Barbara Menard and Roger Menard also wanted to be sure there would be no impact on their property. No objections were raised from abutters present.

Based on documents presented and testimony heard, Ms. Nuissl made a motion, seconded by Mr. Friedrich, to close the hearing with respect to Application 17-070. The question was called and the motion passed unanimously.

B. 17-071 – Bartlett Hill Company, LLC submitted an application for Concept Plan Review and Final Plan Review of a Minor three lot Subdivision involving an approximate 76.88 acres parcel. The property is located on Bartlett Road, Berlin, Vermont, within the Rural Residential and Highland Conservation Zoning Districts, Parcel ID: 11-016.100. Sandra F. Vitzhum was sworn in to give testimony on this matter. In addition, abutters Amanda Smith, David Hedding, Barbara Menard and Roger Menard were sworn in to give testimony on this matter.

The following documents were submitted and admitted as exhibits: Exhibit #1: Subdivision Application, 17-071, received on 09/22/2017; Exhibit #2: Survey showing new lots created, prepared by Richard W. Bell Land Surveying, Inc. dated August 2017 with revisions on 08/19/2017; and Exhibit #3: Narrative dated 09/19/2017.

Ms. Vitzhum explained that the proposed subdivision affects Lot #1 (76.88 acres), which was recently adjusted in size as a result of the Boundary Adjustment. She wants to divided Lot #1 into three lots which would consist of: Lot #1, 73.40 acres; Lot #4, 1.75 acres; and Lot #5, 1.73 acres.

Ms. Vitzhum again invited her neighbors to review the plans explaining access, sizes, and which lot was impacted by the proposed subdivision. She confirmed one lot has been approved by the state for subsurface disposal system and the others are in the process of being approved. The subsurface disposal systems are completely located on the lots being created. The wells would all be located up the hill but are not yet shown on the plans. She did not have the applications submitted to the state available but noted that they were available online. She noted that her original subdivision showed the locations for the wells and disposal systems, however due to the changes in lot sizes, those applications have to be resubmitted.
Mr. Badowski advised that all three lots meet the criteria with respect to size, frontage, depth, and so forth. In response to the Board’s question regarding how he determined the type of subdivision for the purpose of warning the application, he advised two new lots were being created for a total of three which is a Minor Subdivision. He acknowledged that five lots had been recently created, but his research found no provision regarding timeframe. The application was warned for both Concept Plan and Final Plan review of a Minor three lot subdivision.

The Board acknowledged that under the proposed regulations, the application would have been warned as a Major Subdivision. The Board advised that state approvals for subsurface disposal systems for each lot must be submitted. In addition, curb cut approvals by the Select Board should be provided and added to the file.

Based on documents presented and testimony heard, Mr. Fitzhugh made a motion, seconded by Mr. Friedrich, to close the hearing with respect to Application 17-071. The question was called and the motion passed unanimously.

C. 17-083 – State of Vermont and LaGue, Inc. submitted an application for a Boundary Adjustment. The properties are located on Fisher Road, Berlin, Vermont, in the Commercial District, Parcel IDs: SA6-017 and SA6-018. Michael J. Kuhn, Buildings Engineer III with the State of Vermont and Henry LaGue were sworn in to give testimony on this matter.

The following documents were submitted and admitted as exhibits: Exhibit #1: Application for Boundary Adjustment, 17-083, received on 09/25/2017; Exhibit #2: Site Plan of Proposed Lot Line Adjustment & Storage Garage, prepared by Grenier Engineering P.C., dated 12/14/2015 with revisions on: 03/18/2017 showing 0.9 acres added to Lot #2, 05/14/2017 re Right-of-Way, and 07/06/2017 re Right-of-Way and property line distances; and Exhibit #3: Memo dated 08/07/2017 from Grenier Engineering, PC describing the project.

Michael Kuhn advised that they are proposing to adjust the boundary line between Henry LaGue’s parcel, (Lot #2) and the Vermont State Psychiatric Care Hospital, (Lot #1) to allow access to Lot #2 from Fisher Road. He explained that initially Mr. LaGue requested a 60-foot wide Right-of-Way for access to his lot but later asked to increase the size of the Right-of-Way to 70 feet to allow him access from Fisher Road which would improve his future development capabilities. The result of the boundary line adjustment would decrease Lot #1 consisting of 7.34 acres by 0.9 acres for a total of 6.44 acres, and would increase Lot #2, consisting of 4.12 acres by 0.9 acres, for a total of 5.02 acres.

Mr. Kuhn advised that a gravel road was built during construction which is now used as access for Lot #2. With respect to landscaping, trees that were lost during storms were replaced with newer vegetation. All setbacks are met and they allowed space for additional screening when Lot #2 is developed. He advised that both the City of Montpelier and the Vermont Electric Company were notified. He noted that the State of Vermont will be returning to the DRB at the next meeting regarding their proposed storage shed.

Mr. Badowski confirmed that abutters were notified and that setbacks were met. No new lots were being created as a result of this boundary line adjustment.

Based on documents presented and testimony heard, Mr. Friedrich made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fitzhugh, to close the hearing with respect to Application 17-083. The question was called and the motion passed unanimously.
D. 17-081 – MJM Enterprises, Inc. submitted an application for Site Plan Review and Sign Package Review associated with the redevelopment of an existing restaurant (Burger King). The property is located at 1331 US Route 302, Berlin, Vermont, in the Highway Commercial District, Parcel ID: US302-022. Steven Wilson, LEED AP, with Bohler Engineering was sworn in to give testimony on this matter. In addition, abutter Mitchell Jay, owner of Mid-State Dodge was also sworn in to give testimony on this matter.

The following documents were submitted and admitted as exhibits: Exhibit #1: Application for Zoning Permit, 17-081, received on 09/25/2017; Exhibit #2: Site Improvement Plan, prepared by Bohler Engineering, Albany, NY, dated 07/06/2017 with multiple revisions up to 09/19/2017 consisting of: Cover Sheet (1); General Notes Sheet (2); Demolition Plan (3); Site Plan (4); Preliminary Grading Plan (5); Soil Erosion & Sediment Control Plan (6); Soil Erosion Control Notes & Details Sheet (7); Utility Plan (8); Construction Detail Sheet (9, 10 and 11); Landscape Plan, L-1; Exhibit #3: Survey of MJM Enterprises, Inc., prepared by VT Survey Consultants, LLC, dated 06/13/2016; Exhibit #4: Lighting Proposal – parking and building; Exhibit #5: Rendering showing elevations for Burger King Corporation, prepared by Carrols Corporation, Syracuse, NY, dated 06/23/2017; Exhibit #6: Rendering showing Floor Plan & Misc. Details. A-1, prepared by Lauer-Manguso & Associates Architects, Buffalo, NY, dated 06/07/2017 with revisions on 09/20/2017; Exhibit #7: Letter dated 08/23/2017 from Stephen J. Murphy, President of MJM Enterprises, Inc. authorizing Carrols Corporation to make application to the Town of Berlin for the reconstruction of the Burger King Restaurant; Exhibit #8: Letter dated 09/19/2017 from Steve Wilson with Bohler Engineering addressing site plan review criteria; Exhibit #9: Letter dated 09/26/2017 from Steve Wilson with Bohler Engineering, amending proposed hours of operation to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; Exhibit #10: Emails dated 08/22/2017 from Steve Wilson with Bohler Engineering to the Berlin Volunteer Fire Department and Berlin Police Department describing the project and requesting an impact statement; Exhibit #11: State of Vermont, Policy, Planning & Intermodal Development Division, Letter of Intent, dated 08/21/2017; Exhibit #12: Proposed Wall Sign Package for Burger King Restaurant, prepared by Federal Heath Sign Company, Tampa, FL, consisting of 3 Burger King Logos totaling 58.8 square feet and “Home of the Whopper” totaling 27.6 square feet for a total of 86.4 square feet; and Exhibit #13: Burger King Drive Thru Menu Board.

Overview: Steve Wilson explained that Carrols Corporation, headquartered in Syracuse, New York, is purchasing the property and Burger King from MJM Enterprises, Inc. Bohler Engineering is acting on behalf of Carrols Corporation. Based on their assessment of the property and other factors they determined that the restaurant needed to be rebuilt. He presented renderings of the existing site and how it would appear once the project is complete.

Mr. Wilson noted that the current site is very disorganized and mentioned the large amount of asphalt at this site, about 98 percent. They propose to remove thirty percent of the asphalt and reorganize the site. The thirty percent less asphalt will become greenspace. He advised that the current structure is built over a large drainage pipe however they have been unable to determine ownership of the pipe. The 40-inch pipe will remain however the building will not be constructed over it. The will eliminate the left turn in and direct traffic counterclockwise one way only. He described traffic circulation from the rendering. There is currently parking for over 100 vehicles which will be reduced to 46 spaces which works for the Burger King model. There would be a sidewalk connection to the bus stop which is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). They will add safe places to cross the street which will link the site to the plaza. A dumpster corral will be added that matches the building for screening purposes. He briefly mentioned drainage and noted that they have obtained a Letter of Intent (LOI) from the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans).

Mr. Wilson advised that parking will be eliminated in the front and the building will be located 43 feet closer to the street. In addition to greenspaces, landscaping has been added in various places,
all exterior lighting will be light-emitting diode (LED), and treatment for stormwater drainage has been provided where none existed by the addition of a hydromantic separator. He advised that they will maintain the municipal sewer and water supply connections. A grease trap will be added where none existed. They also plan to add bicycle rack. He noted overall the site will be reformed with numerous improvements.

Mitchell Jay advised he is an abutter, owner of Mid-State Dodge, and has questions about parking. He noted that this project will shut off the interconnecting traffic.

a. Safety of vehicular and pedestrian circulation on site and any adverse impacts on the adjacent street network. A new pedestrian connection to a new sidewalk along U.S. Route 302 will be installed providing a link to the existing bus stop. All new sidewalks and handicapped parking spaces will be ADA compliant. A new pedestrian connection to the shopping plaza to the south will be provided. The northern driveway will be striped and signed to allow right turn in only. Signage will be added to encourage counterclockwise circulation with no left turn, do not enter, etc. There will be sufficient space for tractor trailer trucks to navigate the site. Vehicles will enter at the traffic light and exit at the traffic light. The drive thru lane will control traffic circulation through a combination of striping and curbing. They will maintain existing driveways from U.S. Route 302 and the common Right-of-Way between the properties at the traffic light.

Mr. Wilson advised that there is currently a row of Jersey barriers preventing vehicles from crossing the lots in the back. The purpose was to prevent people from crossing over to the abutter’s property.

The Board expressed concerns about traffic flow for exiting vehicles avoiding the drive thru lane and crossing the common Right-of-Way which would be in the path of vehicles entering the site to the rear parking area. The Board suggested limiting the number of points where vehicles could cross the Right-of-Way versus having it unrestricted. The Applicant was asked for alternatives to limit points where people could exit the Burger King property by crossing that incoming lane.

Mr. Wilson advised he was concerned about traffic jamming up around the drive thru. There is an escape point before the island, vehicles need to exit before the ordering point at the menu board. He advised that it could be redesigned so that the area is not left unrestricted, for example adding an island for more greenspace.

Mr. Jay advised that the Jersey barriers were placed there about four months ago by Connor, owner of the other property. He is not sure whether the barriers are on the property line.

Mr. Wilson explained that VTrans made recommendations regarding sidewalks and curbed concrete cross walk. There would be sidewalks around the building and in front with connections to parking areas. A rack will be added with a capacity for eight bicycles. He noted that they are not creating additional traffic therefor there would be no adverse impact on the street network. The proposed building is a bit smaller than the existing building (existing 3,300 square feet and proposed 2,800 square feet). He confirmed that they have an LOI from VTrans.
b. **Adequacy of circulation, parking, and loading facilities.** Mr. Wilson advised that they are proposing a total of 46 parking spaces which is significantly less than currently exists. Parking will be located to the rear or interior side of the buildings. Parking along the front of the building will be reduced from 27 spaces to 12 spaces. A ten-foot landscape buffer will be added to the north side of the property. They will provide three ADA compliant accessible spaces. The shared access with the shopping plaza to the south will be maintained.

Mr. Wilson advised that they do not need a loading dock however loading and delivery areas will be provided. Deliveries will generally occur two to three times per week during off peak times. Trucks would park temporarily in the parking lot. He confirmed that there is sufficient turning radius for tractor trailer trucks and noted that that issue was also reviewed by VTrans. They have provided space for refuse storage and disposal which would be screened. He noted that snow storage areas are available along the western and northern sides of the parcel.

Mr. Jay mentioned the waterline located along their properties to be sure everyone aware of it, especially during construction of the sidewalk. He noted that necessary repairs in the past were difficult because shut off valves were not easily accessible.

Mr. Wilson advised he has discussed that waterline with the City of Montpelier which used to be a privately-owned waterline. He agreed that shut off valves needed to be accessible.

c. **Bicycle and Pedestrian Access.** The Applicants have provided for pedestrian circulation within the site and access through the site to adjacent properties and along public roads. A new pedestrian connection will be installed that links to the new sidewalk along U.S. Route 302 and the bus stop. All new sidewalks and handicapped parking spaces will be made ADA compliant and a bike rack will be installed along the front of the building with the capacity for eight bicycles.

d. **Adequacy of landscaping.** Mr. Wilson advised that about thirty percent more greenspace will be provided on the site and referred to their landscaping plan, L-1. New landscape buffers will be created along the northern and western property limits and existing landscaped areas along U.S. Route 302 will be enhanced with additional landscaping. Proposed landscaping will consist of a combination of shade and street trees, shrubs, planting beds, and grassed areas. Mr. Wilson indicated that there would be a few trees along the front within the grassed area. There are trees in the back as well.

In response to Mr. Jay’s question concerning elevations, Mr. Wilson confirmed that there would be no change in elevation along the grassed areas. There would be no change in drainage; water will flow across the lawn toward the road as it does now.

e. **Hours of Operation.** Mr. Wilson noted that the current hours of operation were stated in their narrative, primarily from 6:00 AM to 1:00 AM. They wish to amend the hours of operation to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. He advised that the existing hours of operation is consistent with their lighting plan.

The Board explained the hours of operation should agree with the lighting plan. The Board has not limited hours of operation for business entities but did not want to leave it open ended. The Board recommended the Applicants discuss the possibility of operating 24/7 with the Berlin Police Department for possible impacts.
Mr. Wilson agreed to follow up on this issue with the owners. He advised that other than security lighting, signs and parking lights would not be illuminated with the restaurant is closed.

**f. Setbacks.** Mr. Wilson advised that all setbacks are met. He was uncertain whether title searches had been completed but was not aware of any easements, including an easement regarding the 40-inch drainage pipe.

**g. Adequacy of Exterior lighting.** Mr. Wilson referred to their lighting plan and advised that all outdated pole mounted lights will be upgraded with high efficiency dark sky friendly LED fixtures. The existing lights will be removed. Their lighting plan shows the location of pole lights. There will be building lights located over doors. He indicated that the lighting plan has been revised and agreed to submit the updated lighting plan. The lighting plan should show the location of the lights on the building as well. They believe that the proposed lighting will be sufficient and shall not create excessive illumination or off-site glare.

**h. Stormwater and Drainage.** Mr. Wilson advised that adequate provisions have been made for the management of erosion, sedimentation and stormwater runoff. The amount of impervious area will be reduced from 98 percent to 73 percent which results in a significant reduction on stormwater runoff. He referred to their Utility Plan which showed existing and proposed drainage consisting of overland flow, inlets, and pipes. The plan had been revised and submitted to the town about a week earlier. He described the infiltration basin and drainage flow in detail. He pointed out the structures and pipes and where runoff sheet drains across the site. He pointed out the contours and explained that from the back of the Burger King property, runoff hits the hydromatic separator and discharges to the state's drainage system. There are catch basins along the road. Mr. Wilson advised that they had a lot of discussion with VTrans about drainage and noted that it is included in their Letter of Intent from VTrans. They now have permission from the state to discharge there. The entire building was moved based on VTrans comments.

After further discussion, it was revealed that the Applicants were required to obtain stormwater and operational permits from the Agency of Natural Resources. The Board explained that less detailed testimony is needed from the Applicant when state permits regarding stormwater and operations are also required. Copies of those applications and permits when issued are requested as part of the file with the town.

Mr. Wilson confirmed that because the project involved over an acre of disturbance, stormwater and constructions permits from ANR are required. He agreed to provide copies of the applications and permit from ANR when issued. He advised they are also required to obtain an Act 250 permit.

Mr. Wilson advised that he reached out to the Berlin Sewer Commission and will be invited to a preconstruction meeting.

**i. Utilization of renewable energy resources.** The Applicants advised that redevelopment of the property does not preclude opportunities on site for utilization of renewable resources on site or by adjacent properties.

**j. Municipal Services Impact Evaluation.** Mr. Wilson advised that the Berlin Volunteer Fire and Police Departments were notified in August of the redevelopment project and that an impact
statement was requested. He indicated that they also need a permit from the Vermont Department of Labor and Industry.

Mr. Badowski advised that the Chief of Police reported no concerns or impact based on the proposed project. VTrans has submitted a Letter of Intent. He advised he has not received a response from the Berlin Volunteer Fire Department.

**k. Flood Hazard Review.** Mr. Wilson advised that the project is not located within a floodplain.

Signage. Mr. Wilson referred to the rendering that shows elevations and signage. The existing freestanding sign will remain. The Applicants are proposing wall signs consisting of three Burger King logos each at 19.6 square feet and “Home of the Whopper” at 27.6 square feet for a total of 86.4 square feet. He advised that “Home of the Whopper” would appear on the south side of the building. He pointed out the locations of the *Burger King* logos.

The Board indicated that proposed signage exceeds the amount permitted based on the frontage of the building facing U.S. Route 302. The side of the building facing U.S. Route 302 measures around 37 feet which would allow about 74 square feet of building signs. The regulation is based on building frontage, not road frontage. Section 3.13 Signs (B)(1) reads: “The total allowable sign area for wall signs for an establishment shall be two square feet of sign area for each one linear foot of building or structure frontage facing the thoroughfare from which the sign is to be viewed. No single establishment, regardless of size, shall be allowed more than three hundred square feet of total sign area (excluding freestanding signs).”

The group discussed whether the common Right-of-Way toward the south could also be considered as a public road. The question is how a thoroughfare is defined.

Mr. Wilson felt they were being penalized for relocating and repositioning the building so that the longer side faced the south at the Right-of-Way versus U.S. Route 302. He reiterated the overall improvements to the site based on this proposal. He asked if the width of the canopies could be included in the overall width of the side of the building facing U.S. Route 302.

The Board agreed to respond to a request for an interpretation of a thoroughfare. It will also consider other options made for approval including counting the width of the canopies as part of width of the building. The sign package must be considered as proposed which includes Burger King logos, Home of the Whopper, Menu Board and directional signs. The Board noted that menu boards have been determined to be informational and are not considered part of signage. The proposed Menu Board would be illuminated and located toward the back.

Mr. Wilson indicated that although shown with logos, the directional signs will not have any logos so they are not part of the square footage of signage being proposed. He understood that even if the canopies were included in the measurement of the building frontage, the total signage still exceeded the amount permitted by about five square feet. Mr. Wilson agreed to consult with the owners to see if smaller signs are available.

The Board agreed to include in its deliberation review of past decisions with respect to signage applications and how it viewed thoroughfares.
The Applicant was reminded of documents or information needed which included an updated circulation plan along the rear of the property with recommendations for limiting crisscrossing of incoming and exiting traffic, hours of operation, lighting, and updated signage. In addition, copies of the applications submitted to ANR for stormwater and construction as well as permits once issued are needed.

Mr. Fitzhugh made a motion, seconded by Mr. Friedrich, to recess the hearing with respect to Application 17-081 to November 7, 2017. The question was called and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Review and approval of the Minutes.

The Chair called for approval of the Minutes of the October 3, 2017 meeting.

Mr. Friedrich made a motion, seconded by Ms. Nuissl, to approve the Minutes of the October 3, 2017 meeting as submitted. The question was called and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comment

Persons present participated in the meeting as noted above.

5. Other Business


The Board voted to go into deliberative session at 9:17 P.M. and out at 9:29 P.M. to discuss the status of Findings. The Board’s decision with regard to (closed) adjourned applications will be reported in its Findings.

7. The next meeting of the Development Review Board is scheduled for Tuesday, November 7, 2017.

8. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Preston

Carla Preston
Recording Secretary
Town of Berlin