

Town of Dorset, Vermont

**REQUEST FOR
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
AND QUALIFICATIONS**

**For Development of a
Mixed Housing Project on Raptor Lane**

May 2025



The Town of Dorset (“Town”) seeks one or more developer(s) to construct, own and operate a housing project on Town-owned property in Dorset, Vermont. The subject property consists of approximately 300-acres and is located on Raptor Lane which is off Route 30 just south of the Dorset Village Center (see Project Site Location Map in Appendix A). The property is mostly undeveloped except for the new Town offices which are currently under construction. The Town desires to see a mix of housing types (e.g., single family, duplex and multi-family) constructed on a portion of the property, particularly workforce affordable and senior housing. The Town has performed a significant amount of due diligence analysis which shows the property could accommodate 100 +/- housing units. **The Town will transfer ownership of the project portion of the property to the chosen developer(s) for \$1.00 and is committed to providing other financial incentives as outlined below.**

The objective of this Request for Expression of Interest and Qualifications (“RFQ”) is to identify developers that are qualified and have interest in developing this project in accordance with the Town’s goals to increase the availability of workforce and senior housing in town.

Based on the RFQ responses, the Town will invite developers deemed qualified to submit more detailed proposals for the development project including a comprehensive project description (e.g., project size, number/mix of residential units, etc.), conceptual plans, and financial proforma information (e.g., estimated project cost, likely funding sources and uses, purchase price/rental rates, operating proforma, etc.).

The Town hereby invites interested developers to submit a Letter of Interest and qualifications for a mixed housing project in accordance with the goals and criteria established below.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- 307-acre Town-owned parcel on Raptor Lane. Well positioned in proximity to Dorset Village Center, new Town offices and adjacent hiking and biking trails.
- Significant due diligence and site feasibility analysis already completed.
- Property can likely accommodate 100 +/- housing units.
- Existing Town-owned gravel road network (with buried electrical conduits) connects Route 30 to the developable areas of the property.
- One dollar purchase price for land.
- Town contribution up to \$2 million for needed infrastructure.
- Town contribution up to \$250,000 for share of preconstruction costs.

- Town assistance in pursuing funding opportunities.
- Town serve as co-applicant on local and Act 250 permit applications.

PROJECT BACKGROUND / HISTORY / GOALS

Need for Housing

The Town has identified an urgent need and strong desire for additional workforce affordable and senior housing in Dorset. In 2023, Town voters approved an advisory article asking the Selectboard to create a Housing Committee to research and make recommendations relative to housing needs in Dorset. One of the first tasks undertaken by the committee was to work with the Bennington County Regional Commission on a housing needs assessment to understand current housing trends in Dorset and the surrounding area. Ultimately, the committee prepared a set of recommended solutions the Town can pursue to help create needed workforce affordable and senior housing in town. A top recommendation, which is fully supported by the Selectboard, is for the Town to pursue a housing project on the Town-owned Raptor Lane property with a development partner(s).

Project Description & Goals

The 307-acre Town-owned property is located on Raptor Lane, about 1.5 miles south of Dorset Village Center. The property is well positioned in proximity to Dorset Village Center, the new town offices currently under construction, and miles of hiking and biking trails in the adjacent Owl's Head Town Forest. Dorset has a long history of having a real estate driven local economy. There is a strong primary home and vacation home market. The area school system has a significant positive impact on the real estate economy as well as the quality of life. Local realtors believe there would be strong demand for both workforce affordable and senior housing in this area of town.

The property is mostly undeveloped except for the new Town offices currently under construction (see Existing Conditions Site Plan in Appendix B). The property is served by a gravel road network (Town-owned) which was installed in the mid 2000's as part of an approved eight-lot residential subdivision. The road construction included the installation of drainage and buried electrical conduits. The gravel road network connects Route 30 to the developable areas of the property.

The Town envisions a new residential neighborhood consisting of a mix of housing types for sale or rent – single family, duplex and multi-family buildings. A primary goal is for a housing project to include as much workforce affordable housing as economically feasible. Funding agencies generally define “workforce affordable housing” as housing that is affordable to middle-income

households earning somewhere between 65% - 150% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Vermont Housing Finance Agency's (VHFA) matrix of maximum rents and purchase prices for middle income/workforce households in Bennington County can be accessed via the link provided in the Supporting Documents section below.

While the Town prefers a predominantly workforce affordable and senior housing project, it will consider a mixed income project (e.g., market rate, workforce affordable, and "affordable" housing) especially if a mix of incomes is necessary to make the project economically feasible. **The Town welcomes the market driven creativity of the development community and is open to ideas that will provide needed housing and be economically viable for the developer.**

Site Feasibility Analysis

The Town has conducted a significant amount of due diligence and site assessment to determine the development potential of the property. The Town hired Enman Kesselring Consulting Engineers to perform a development feasibility study which included an analysis of water and septic capacity. The study also included delineation of wetlands and assessment of sensitive natural resources such as threatened/endangered plants, threatened/endangered animal habitat, rare and irreplaceable natural areas, and necessary wildlife habitat (black bear, deer wintering, vernal pools). The feasibility study included the preparation of a conceptual development plan for the property (see Conceptual Development Site Plan in Appendix C). The full feasibility report prepared by Enman Kesselring is available for review using the link provided in the Supporting Documents section below.

The feasibility study identified roughly four (4) areas on the property where development can be accommodated and determined that approximately 100 housing units could be built. The number of units is largely driven by septic capacity. The conceptual plan proposes a mix of 100 single family, duplex and multi-family housing units in eight (8) clusters or pods. **Note: The plan in Appendix C is conceptual only and shows how 100 units could potentially fit within the developable areas of the property. The Town understands that developers may have other ideas, based on their knowledge of the market and costs, on what would be appropriate in terms of the number, type and configuration of housing units.**

PROJECT READINESS

Site Feasibility Analysis – As discussed above, the Town has conducted a significant amount of due diligence and site assessment work which shows the property can likely accommodate 100 +/- housing units. In addition to the site analysis work led by Enman Kesselring, the Town is currently under contract with VHB (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin) to update the wetland delineations and

perform a more thorough survey of necessary wildlife habitat (i.e., bear habitat) and rare, threatened and endangered plant species. This additional natural resource assessment work is currently underway and should be completed by summer 2025. The Town will continue to share the results of this work as it develops.

Financial Assistance – The Town is committed to providing financial assistance to the chosen developer(s) to help make a workforce affordable housing project economically feasible, including:

- **Transfer ownership of the project portion of the property for \$1.**
- **Contribute up to \$2 million for needed infrastructure** (e.g., water system, roads, stormwater management, etc.). The exact amount of contribution will be based on project size and project financial need, and may be dependent on getting voter approval (e.g., local options tax, project specific tax increment financing (TIF)) and/or obtaining applicable state/federal funding (e.g., Northern Borders Regional Commission, USDA Rural Development, state infrastructure funding, etc.).
- **Contribute up to \$250,000 for share of preconstruction costs** (i.e., design and permitting). The exact amount of contribution will be based on project size and project financial need, and may be dependent on getting voter approval (e.g., local options tax, project specific tax increment financing (TIF)) and/or obtaining applicable state/federal funding (e.g., Northern Borders Regional Commission, USDA Rural Development, state infrastructure funding, etc.).
- **Assist developer in pursuing other funding sources** such as grants, low interest loans, energy incentives, etc. The Town will also assist with conducting outreach to area employers to invest or pre-lease units in the project and explore any and all opportunities to reduce overall project cost.

Zoning – The current zoning would potentially allow a 100-unit, mixed housing project on the property. The property is zoned Rural Residential (RR) District, the purpose of which is “to provide an opportunity for residential living in a rural setting”. The minimum lot area per dwelling unit is 1.5 acres which for a 307-acre parcel would allow up to 204 units. A project of this scale and configuration would require approval as a planned unit development (PUD). Allowable uses within a PUD include single family, two-family and multi-family dwellings.

Act 250 – Based on due diligence completed to date, the Town is confident an Act 250 permit will be issued for a housing project on Raptor Lane. The Town and its consultants have already held discussions and conducted site visits with the Agency of Natural Resources (wetlands and rare, threatened and endangered species) and the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department (necessary wildlife habitat). These meetings have gone well, and the Town is confident necessary permits,

approvals, and sign-offs will be issued. As stated above, the Town is willing to share the cost of permitting and will serve as co-applicant on local and Act 250 permit applications.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The supporting documents listed below are available for review and download and can be accessed from the White + Burke Real Estate Advisors website using the link:

<https://whiteandburke.com/rfps/>.

- Raptor Lane Project Site Location Map
- Overall Property Map prepared by Enman Kesselring Consulting Engineers
- Existing Conditions Site Plan prepared by Enman Kesselring Consulting Engineers
- Conceptual Development Site Plan prepared by Enman Kesselring Consulting Engineers
- Raptor Lane Housing Project Feasibility Report prepared by Enman Kesselring Consulting Engineers, dated December 2024
- Owl's Foot Subdivision/Survey Plan (8 Lot subdivision) prepared by Gary Rapanotti LS, dated March 2004.
- VHFA Maximum Rent & Purchase Price Affordability Thresholds matrix.
- Mandatory Consumer Disclosure form.

REQUEST FOR DEVELOPER QUALIFICATIONS

Interested and qualified developers shall submit a Qualifications Proposal by the deadline below and must include the following information:

1. Expression of Interest – Cover letter expressing developer's interest in the project including an overview of developer's understanding of the project goals and general approach to be taken.
2. Project Description – Initial thoughts on the type of project developer is interested in developing including housing types (e.g., single family, duplex, multi-family) and approximate number of units. **Developer should indicate whether they are interested in developing the entire project or only a portion of the project.**
3. Affordability – Initial thoughts on maximum rental rates and purchase price developer considers to be affordable to the local workforce and the number or percentage of units in the project that will be workforce affordable.

4. Statement of Qualifications – Developer’s statement of qualifications and summary of experience with developing and operating similar housing projects.
5. Project Team and Resumes – Description of principals and key personnel to be involved in the proposal including name, address, and qualifications of each.
6. List of Relevant Projects – List of projects successfully developed by the developer that are similar in program and scope.
7. Financing – Initial thoughts on funding sources likely to be used to finance the development project including the level of Town financial assistance you expect will be necessary.
8. Signed Consumer Disclosure (see Appendix D).
9. Other – Any other information the developer feels is important for the Town to consider.

The Town will review the Qualifications Proposals and decide who will be invited to submit more detailed proposals for the development project (see “Request for Proposals Phase (Information Only)” below).

SELECTION CRITERIA

The Qualifications Proposals will be evaluated on the strength of the following categories:

- Developer’s understanding of the project’s goals.
- Qualifications and experience of proposer with developing and operating similar projects.
- Developer’s initial thoughts on the type of project likely to be constructed and how it relates to the Town’s vision for the property.
- Strength of the project team.
- Completeness of submission
- Any other factors deemed relevant.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES

May 1, 2025: RFQ issued and available upon request.

- May 20, 2025 @ 10 AM:** Information and site visit. Meet at intersection of Route 30 and Raptor Lane. Park along Raptor Lane.
- May 23, 2025 @ 1 PM:** Developer questions due (Questions and responses will be circulated to all interested parties).
- May 29, 2025 @ 3 PM:** **Qualifications Proposals due**
- June 11, 2025:** Issue Request for Proposals (RFP) to developers deemed qualified by the Town.
- July 16, 2025:** Development Proposals Due.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The point of contact for any questions relating to this RFQ and for delivery of all proposals is:

Joe Weith
White + Burke Real Estate Advisors, Inc.
Phone: (802) 862-1225 ext. 4
Email: jweith@whiteandburke.com
2. The Qualifications Proposal shall be submitted electronically in PDF format to Joe Weith at jweith@whiteandburke.com.
3. The Town is responsible for paying its broker/consultant White + Burke. Developer shall have no responsibility to pay any fees to White + Burke. Developer shall be responsible for paying all fees due to its broker if it chooses to engage one to assist with this transaction.
4. The Town assumes no responsibility or liability for any cost incurred by proposers in responding to this RFQ.
5. Submission of a proposal does not create a binding agreement between the Developer and the Town, nor does it obligate the Town to award a contract or enter into further negotiations. The Town reserves the right to reject any proposals, modify or withdraw this RFQ at any time, and negotiate with any proposer at its sole discretion. Any contractual obligations shall arise only upon execution of a formal written agreement signed by authorized representatives of both parties.
6. The Town reserves the right to supplement, amend or otherwise modify any elements of this RFQ without limitation.

7. Information provided by the Town in this RFQ regarding site feasibility, local zoning regulations, Act 250 permitting, or any other regulatory requirements is for informational purposes only. While the Town has made reasonable efforts to ensure the accuracy of such information, no representation or warranty, express or implied, is made as to its completeness or accuracy. Developers are solely responsible for conducting their own due diligence, including but not limited to verifying zoning requirements, permitting obligations, environmental conditions, and any other factors that may affect project feasibility. The Town shall not be liable for any errors, omissions, or misstatements in the information provided, nor for any costs or liabilities incurred by Developers as a result of reliance on such information.
8. Representations regarding potential Town contributions toward infrastructure improvements, preconstruction costs, or other financial support must be formally approved through the appropriate municipal processes and memorialized in a written agreement executed by authorized Town representatives.
9. The sale, lease, or other conveyance of the property, or portions of the property, is subject to the provisions of 24 V.S.A. § 1061, which governs the conveyance of municipal real estate. Accordingly, any proposed conveyance is contingent upon compliance with applicable statutory requirements, including but not limited to public notice and the opportunity for voter petition and vote. The Town makes no representations or guarantees regarding the timing or outcome of this process.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PHASE (INFORMATION ONLY)

Based on the RFQ responses, the Town will invite developers deemed qualified to submit more detailed proposals for the development project. The information to be requested in the Request for Proposals (RFP) will likely include:

- Detailed description of the project including, but not limited to:
 - Number of residential units by type (e.g., single family, duplex, multi-family) and the planned mix by number of bedrooms and bathrooms.
 - Number of stories, size (square feet), and approximate building height for each building.
 - Site features including roadways, driveways, parking areas, number of parking spaces, etc.

- Other amenities to be provided such as pedestrian paths and outdoor common areas.
- Schematic site plan
- Schematic building renderings/elevations
- Project cost estimate broken down into general standard categories (i.e., building and site construction costs, contingencies, overhead and profit, soft costs, etc.).
- Financial plan including sources & uses (including development fee, if any), sales prices/rental rates, operating costs, and operating proforma projected for at least 10 years.
- Detailed project schedule with critical dates and major milestone events including design and permitting, construction, and proposed occupancy date.

APPENDIX A

Raptor Lane

Project Site Location Map



LEGEND

Roads

-  Interstate
-  US Highway; 1
-  State Highway
-  Town Highway (Class 1)
-  Town Highway (Class 2,3)
-  Town Highway (Class 4)
-  State Forest Trail
-  National Forest Trail
-  Legal Trail
-  Private Road/Driveway
-  Proposed Roads

 Town Boundary

NOTES

Map created using ANR's Natural Resources Atlas

3,073.0 0 1,536.00 3,073.0 Meters

WGS_1984_Web_Mercator_Auxiliary_Sphere

© Vermont Agency of Natural Resources

1" = 5041 Ft.

1cm = 605 Meters

THIS MAP IS NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

DISCLAIMER: This map is for general reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable. ANR and the State of Vermont make no representations of any kind, including but not limited to, the warranties of merchantability, or fitness for a particular use, nor are any such warranties to be implied with respect to the data on this map.

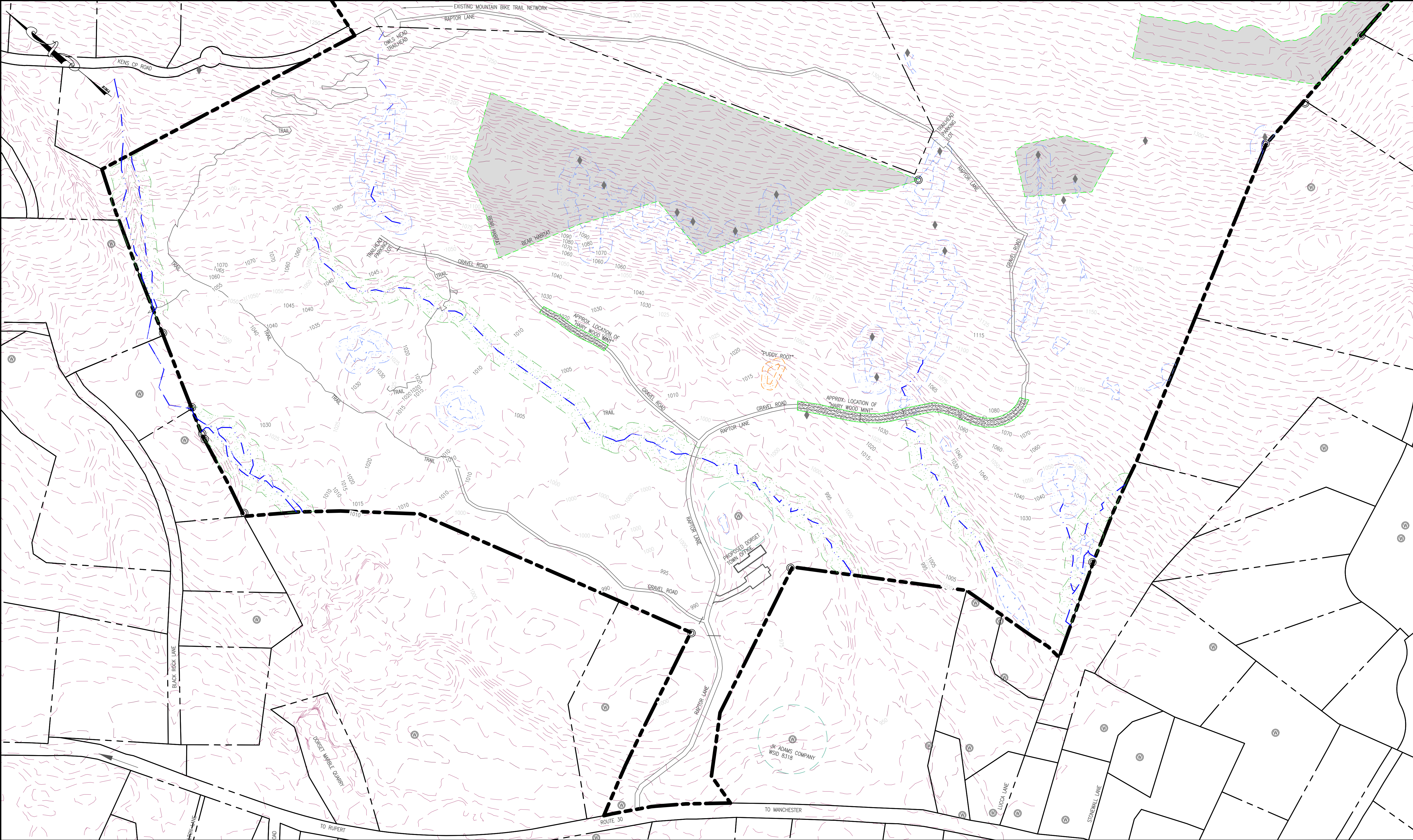
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March 26, 2025



APPENDIX B

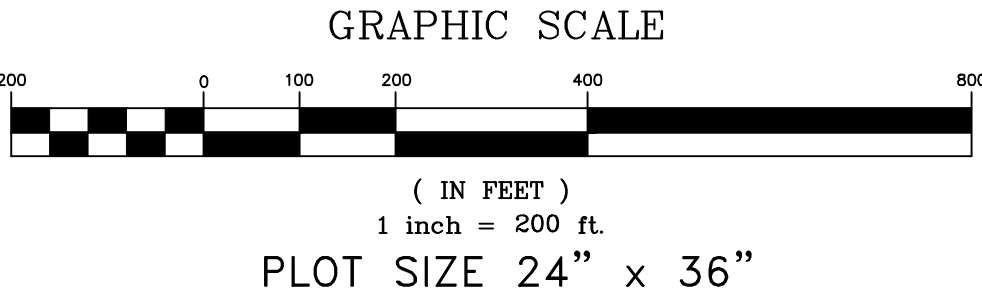
Existing Conditions Site Plan



- REFERENCES**
1. THIS PLAN IS NOT A BOUNDARY SURVEY. PROPERTY LINES ARE APPROXIMATE BASED ON PARCEL MAP INFORMATION FROM THE STATE OF VERMONT NATURAL RESOURCES ATLAS.
 2. THE VERTICAL DATUM IS APPROXIMATE BASED ON ELEVATION DATA DOWNLOADED FROM THE STATE OF VERMONT OPEN GEODATA PORTAL LIDAR FINDER.
 3. PROPERTY LINES, EASEMENTS, AND OTHER REAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTIONS PROVIDED IN THIS PERMIT APPLICATION ARE FOR THE USE OF LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL PERMIT PROGRAMS ONLY. THEY DO NOT DEFINE LEGAL RIGHTS OR MEET LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A LAND SURVEY AS DESCRIBED IN 26 V.S.A. SUBSECTION 2502(4), AND SHALL NOT BE USED IN LIEU OF A SURVEY AS THE BASIS OF ANY LAND TRANSFER OR ESTABLISHMENT OF ANY PROPERTY RIGHT.
 4. RARE AND THREATENED SPECIES MAPPING, WETLAND, WETLAND BUFFER, VERNAL POOL, RIVER, BEAR SCORCHED TREE, IRON PINS, CULVERTS, SPRING, RICH FERN, TRANSITION HARDWOOD LIMESTONE FOREST, AND MESIC RED OAK-NORTHERN HARDWOOD FOREST MAPPING IS ALL DEPICTED BASED ON INFORMATION PROVIDED BY VHB THROUGH SHAPE FILES DATED MAY 14, 2024 AND DEPICTED ON PLAN TITLED "NATURAL RESOURCES MAP" DATED OCTOBER 28, 2019.
 5. TEST PIT LOCATIONS AND PERMITTED WASTEWATER SYSTEMS ARE DEPICTED BASED ON PLANS PERMITTED BY BRUNO ASSOCIATES WITH THE PROJECT NAME OWL'S FOOT SUBDIVISION, APPROVAL DATE BY THE STATE OF JULY 23, 2004.
 6. PROPOSED TOWN OFFICE BUILDING, WELL, AND WASTEWATER SYSTEM DEPICTED BASED ON PLANS BY ENGINEERING VENTURES, CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS SET, DATED FEBRUARY 1, 2024.

LEGEND

---	APPROX. LOCATION OF PROPERTY LINE		HAIRY WOOD MINT
---	EDGE OF STREAM		PUTTY ROOT BUFFER
---	EXISTING 5' CONTOUR		BEAR HABITAT
---	EXISTING 25' CONTOUR		
W	EXISTING WELL (ANR)	SF	SINGLE FAMILY HOME
---	PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY WELL SHIELD	DUPL	DUPLEX BUILDING
◆	NATURAL SPRING (VHB)	MULTI	MULTI-FAMILY BUILDING
◎	IRON PIN FOUND (VHB)		
---	WETLAND BUFFER		
---	WETLAND		
---	STREAM BUFFER		



CREATION DATE: 11/15/24

RELEASE DATE: 11/15/24

ISSUED FOR REPORT

REVISIONS:

THE CERTIFICATION ON THIS DRAWING ONLY INDICATES THE VT REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARATION AND IS NOT ISSUED FOR CONSTRUCTION UNLESS NOTED IN THE REVISION BOX.

REGULATORY APPROVAL STAMP

ENMAN • KESSELRING
CONSULTING ENGINEERS
Environmental • Civil
61 Prospect Street
Rutland, Vermont 05701
www.EnmanKesselringEngineers.com
(802)775-3437
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TOWN OF DORSET HOUSING STUDY
RAPTOR LANE
DORSET, VERMONT

EXISTING CONDITIONS SITE PLAN

SCALE: AS NOTED

DESIGN BY: PMG

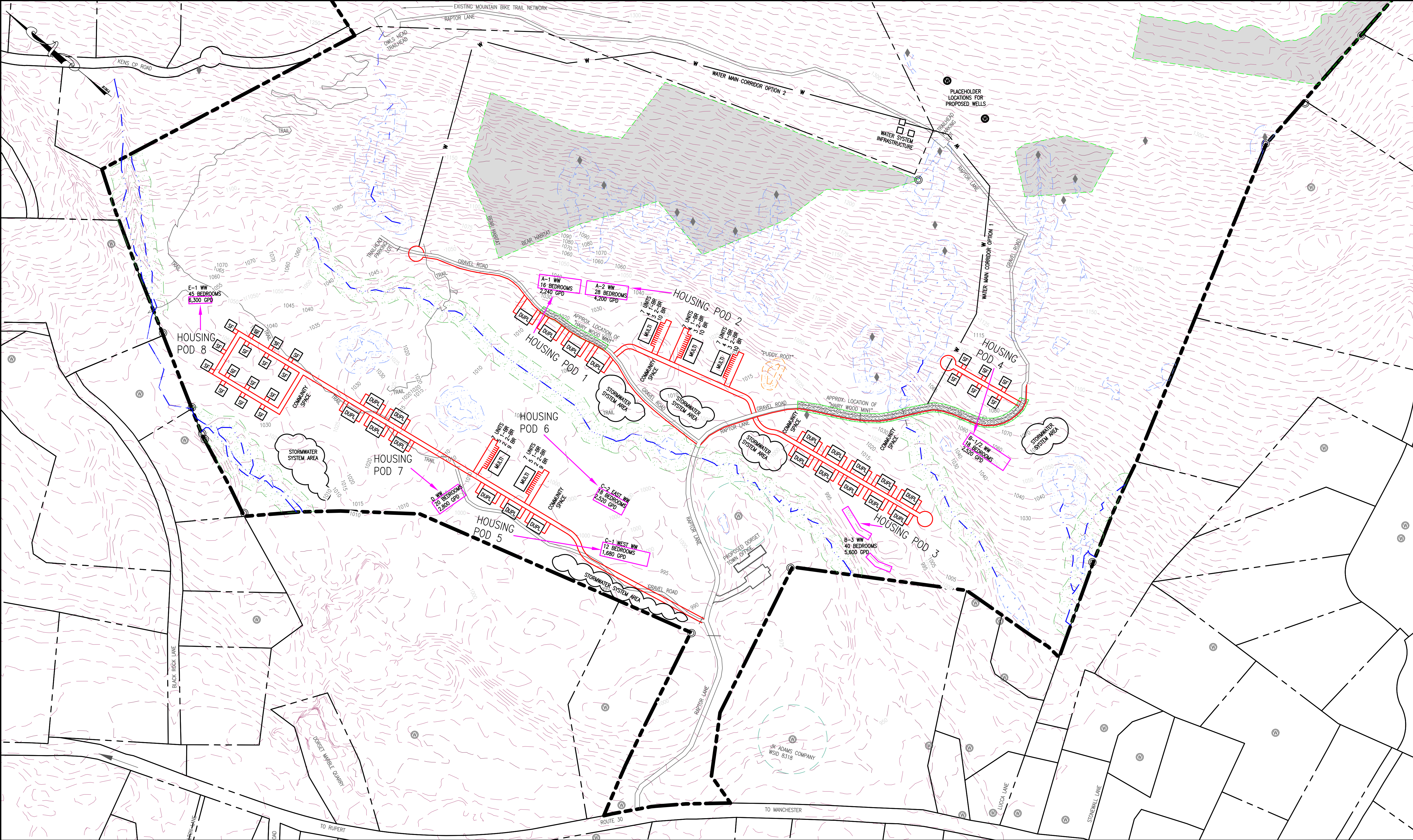
DRAWN BY: KMFG

SHEET NO: C2

PROJECT NO: 2406

APPENDIX C

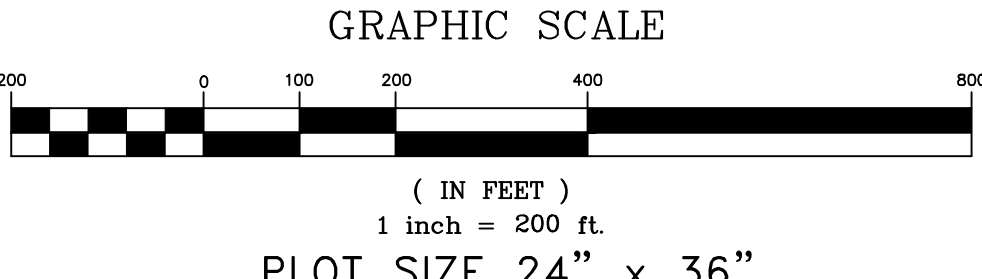
Conceptual Development Site Plan



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LEGEND

	APPROX. LOCATION OF PROPERTY LINE		HAIRY WOOD MINT
	EDGE OF STREAM		PUTTY ROOT BUFFER
	EXISTING 10' CONTOUR		BEAR HABITAT
	EXISTING 50' CONTOUR		SINGLE FAMILY HOME
	EXISTING WELL (ANR)		DUPLEX BUILDING
	PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY WELL SHIELD		MULTI-FAMILY BUILDING
	NATURAL SPRING (VHB)		
	IRON PIN FOUND (VHB)		
	EXISTING CULVERT		
	WETLAND BUFFER		
	WETLAND		
	STREAM BUFFER		



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THESE PLANS ARE FOR THIS PROJECT ONLY AND ARE NOT FOR REUSE ON THIS PROJECT OR ANY OTHER PROJECT WITHOUT WRITTEN CONSENT OF ENMAN KESSELRING CONSULTING ENGINEERS P.C.	
TOWN OF DORSET HOUSING STUDY RAPTOR LANE DORSET, VERMONT	
CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT SITE PLAN	
SCALE:	AS NOTED
DESIGN BY:	PMG
DRAWN BY:	KMFG
SHEET NO:	C3
PROJECT NO:	2406

APPENDIX D

Mandatory Consumer Disclosure



Vermont Real Estate Commission Mandatory Consumer Disclosure



[This document is not a contract.]

This disclosure must be given to a consumer at the first reasonable opportunity and before discussing confidential information; entering into a brokerage service agreement; or showing a property.

RIGHT NOW YOU ARE NOT A CLIENT

The real estate agent you have contacted is not obligated to keep information you share confidential. ***You should not reveal any confidential information that could harm your bargaining position.***

Vermont law requires all real estate agents to perform basic duties when dealing with a buyer or seller who is not a client. All real estate agents shall:

- Disclose all material facts known to the agent about a property;
- Treat both the buyer and seller honestly and not knowingly give false or misleading information;
- Account for all money and property received from or on behalf of a buyer or seller; and
- Comply with all state and federal laws related to the practice of real estate.

You May Become a Client

You may become a client by entering into a written brokerage service agreement with a real estate brokerage firm. Clients receive the full services of an agent, including:

- Confidentiality, including of bargaining information;
- Promotion of the client's best interests within the limits of the law;
- Advice and counsel; and
- Assistance in negotiations.

You are not required to hire a brokerage firm for the purchase or sale of Vermont real estate. You may represent yourself.

If you engage a brokerage firm, you are responsible for compensating the firm according to the terms of your brokerage service agreement.

Before you hire a brokerage firm, ask for an explanation of the firm's compensation and conflict of interest policies.

Brokerage Firms May Offer

NON-DESIGNATED AGENCY or DESIGNATED AGENCY

- **Non-designated agency** brokerage firms owe a duty of loyalty to a client, which is shared by all agents of the firm. No member of the firm may represent a buyer or seller whose interests conflict with yours.
- **Designated agency** brokerage firms appoint a particular agent(s) who owe a duty of loyalty to a client. Your designated agent(s) must keep your confidences and act always according to your interests and lawful instructions; however, other agents of the firm may represent a buyer or seller whose interests conflict with yours.

THE BROKERAGE FIRM NAMED BELOW PRACTICES NON-DESIGNATED AGENCY

I / We Acknowledge Receipt of This Disclosure

This form has been presented to you by:

White + Burke Real Estate Advisors, Inc.

Printed Name of Real Estate Brokerage Firm

Joe Weith

Printed Name of Agent Signing Below

Joe Weith

03/03/25

Signature of Agent of the Brokerage Firm

Date

Printed Name of Consumer

Signature of Consumer

Date

[] Declined to sign

Printed Name of Consumer

Signature of Consumer

Date

[] Declined to sign