

Poultney Development Review Board
Hearing Minutes
Wednesday, July 2, 2025 – 5:30 PM
Poultney Town Hall, 9 Main Street | Hybrid via Zoom

Board Members Present: Jaime Lee (Chair), Jonathan Andrews, Doug Langdon, Mary-Sue Reed, and Mark Teetor. Others Present included Jeff Biasuzzi, Zoning Administrator, Charlie Brown (Applicant — Application 25-18), George Miller (representative from Orica on behalf of Application #25-18), Heidi LaRouche (Applicant for Application #25-17), Jeff LaRouche (Applicant for Application #25-17, joining via phone), and Paul Donaldson (Town Manager).

Interested parties in attendance included Maureen and Patrick Quinn, Pat Davenport, Valerie Broughton, Chris Smid, Pete Kelley, Mike and Nancy Liberatore, Carol Bunce, Russell Johnson, Maya and Michael Kraus, Janice Edwards (via Zoom), Mark Flynn (via Zoom), and Jaime and Louis Milazzo (via Zoom).

1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM.

2. Approval of Agenda. Motion by Mark T. to approve the agenda. Seconded by Jonathan A. Oral vote unanimous, motion carried.

2. Introduction of Board Members, Discuss Hearing Procedure. After Board members introduced themselves, Chair Lee and Zoning Administrator Jeff B. described the intended order of the night's proceedings.

4. Public Hearing – Application 25-18: Open Public Hearing for Application 25-18 from Charles & Mary Brown requesting installation of three small Structures for the storage of slate mining explosives on Parcel B of their lands at 1298-1300 Blissville Road (Tax Map 1-010114). This is a Conditional Use in the Ag. Rural 2 acre Zone and Zoning Section 526 (Storage of Flammable Liquids, Solids, Gases).

Summary: Charlie Brown appeared before the Board for a Conditional Use application. The request involved placement of storage containers for explosives, a necessary component of quarry operations and a prerequisite for ATF permitting.

Testimony & Discussion:

Interested parties were sworn in, and the Zoning Administrator described the project context and regulatory implications.

The applicant and associates described the proposed containers, including size, security features, and siting.

The Board discussed compliance with setback requirements and performance standards under Poultney Zoning Bylaws.

The containers were described as tamper-proof and ATF-certified. Use of the containers for sales or distribution was clarified as not resembling retail activity; ATF protocols strictly regulate access.

Board and public questions addressed safety, location relative to dwellings, and operational scope.

Public Comments: Multiple individuals were sworn in as interested parties. No objections were recorded.

Board Action: The Board closed the hearing to testimony and would enter Deliberative Session at the conclusion of all Hearings.

5. Public Hearing – Application 25-17: Open Public Hearing for Application 25-17 from Heidi & Jeffrey LaRouche request for a change of use to a Contractor Yard and (seasonal) Campground on a portion of their land at 639 VT Rt. 31 (Tax Map 25-2550020). These are Conditional Uses in the Utility District and Zoning Sections 516 (Camping Trailers), 705 (Campground), & 708 (Contractors Yard).

Summary: Jeff LaRouche appeared before the Board via telephone for a Conditional Use application involving the use of an existing building on his property. The proposal included converting a portion of the structure to accommodate light industrial or fabrication-related activity. The application was submitted for property located in a rural residential zoning district.

Testimony & Discussion:

Interested parties were sworn in, and the Zoning Administrator provided a procedural summary. Jeff LaRouche presented the application by phone and responded to questions from the Board. Notably, the Applicant clarified that they were no longer seeking a permit for a Campground.

The Board inquired about:

- The building's existing and proposed use
- Whether water, septic, or power connections were present or proposed
- The scale and hours of activity
- Whether any materials would be stored outside

- The nature of any associated traffic or deliveries

Public Comments from Interested Persons:

Michael Kraus read aloud from a letter that was previously submitted to the Development Review Board, available for review at the Town Office. The letter expressed concerns about the nature of the activity and compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. In addition, the letter described a specific event on Christmas Eve in which a tractor trailer delivered traffic cones to the property in the evening hours, creating a significant noise disturbance. At the conclusion of the reading, Michael respectfully requested the Board deny the application in light of ongoing, alleged violations, and distributed a petition to that effect signed by twenty neighbors.

Pat Davenport echoed the concerns of her neighbors, and also made note of the dangerous driving of ATVs on state roads, seemingly originating from the Applicant's property.

Carol Bunce supported Michael's testimony and clarified for the Board that, according to Poultney's town records, the parcel consists of 9.2 acres. She was also witness to the Christmas Eve delivery and noted that the unloading flatbed clogged a lane of traffic. She further inquired about septic capacity at the site.

Patrick Quinn described an exchange with the Applicant in which there was some conclusion on the property boundaries. He asked whether the site will be the LaRouche's primary residence, considering their more recent purchase of property in a nearby Zoning district.

Maya Kraus commented that the area in question was highly susceptible to noise issues. She asked the Board and Zoning Administrator to clarify the process of Zoning violations and appeals. She also inquired about property value and property taxes. Finally, she pointed out that since Campground was no longer a use being considered by the Applicant, the hearing may need to be re-written to accurately reflect the proposal on the table.

Pete Kelly expressed that many of the noise complaints being discussed could be considered subjective, but that he had concerns about water and wastewater capacity. Otherwise he commended the Applicant for their business model.

Mark Flynn echoed the comments of his neighbors and inquired about zoning violation procedures. He also asked whether there were local requirements for site plans and traffic studies, as he observed during previous hearings.

Jaime Milazzo shared positive experiences communicating with the LaRouches, but expressed concerns about non-compliance and the precedent it would set.

The Board acknowledged these concerns and noted that additional materials may be required to clarify the scope of the proposal.

Board Action: The Board scheduled a continuation for July 30, 2025 at 6pm at the Town Office. The Board then motioned to enter Deliberative Session without closing the Hearing to testimony. Motion by Jonathan A., seconded by Mark T. Oral vote unanimous, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jaime Lee, DRB Chair
Jeff Biasuzzi, Zoning Administrator