DRAFT

Town of West Rutland Development Review Board (DRB) Special Meeting & Hearing Minutes October 21 , 2026 7:00 pm Town Offices (35 Marble St.)

DRB Members present: Mike Moser (Chair), Yvonne Wedin (via Zoom), Ron Ryan, Tim Ponto (vice Chair). Absent: Deborah Higgins

Attending in Person: Jeffrey Biasuzzi, Zoning Administrator (ZA & Recorder), James Gillespie (for Applicant; Stewarts' Shops), Robert Foster (co-applicant), Harvey & Shirley Garrapy, Bryon Bailey, Clayton Bailey, Sean Barrows, Agnes Coughlin **Attending Remotely**: Molly Russell (for Stewart's Shop Corp.) The Meeting was electronically recorded on Zoom.

Call to Order: Chairman M. Moser re-opened the in-person & remote Meeting and Hearing at 7:05 pm. He led the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance. He introduced DRB Members & ZA.

Agenda: The Chair requested a Motion on draft Agenda. R. Ryan Moved to accept the Agenda as written. All agreed and Motion passed.

Past Minutes: Tim Ponto made a Motion to Accept the Minutes of the May 20, 2026 minutes as written. All approved and Motion Passed.

Continued Deliberative Sessions: The Members recessed to a separate room to continue deliberations on Applications 26-27 (for Brzoza BLA), 26-28 & 26-29 (for McGann BLA). A majority of Members voted to approve all Applications as proposed. The Board then closed Deliberative Session and authorized the ZA to issue the permits.

Upon return to the Conference Room, Chair M. Moser requested all persons in attendance that wished to testify in the warned Public Hearing to stand and take an Oath of Truth. Vice Chair T. Ponto recited; "*I hereby swear that the evidence I give in the cause under consideration shall be the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God."*

Open Public Hearing for Application 26-29; requesting approval for a merger of 232 & 266 Main Street; demolition of all existing improvements; and construction of a Convenience Store with Offices and Fuel Pump Island with canopy: M. Moser outlined the Hearing procedure. He declined an early request from an applicant to recuse himself from participation. He then requested the Zoning Administrator to describe Application 26-29.

ZA J. Biasuzzi discussed the Application, which requested that adjacent Foster and Stewart's Shops Corporation (SSC) properties be legally merged resulting in a 1.6 +- acre Parcel. All improvements on this Parcel would then be removed. A 50' x 75' structure would be constructed in the northern part of the Parcel, to include a 4500 sq. ft. retail sales Convenience Store with Fuel sales, and an 1800 sq. ft. company Office area (totaling 6300 sq. ft.).

An eight- pump fuel island would have a 25' x 100' canopy between the building and Main Street.

The ZA stated the proposed site design conforms to dimensional requirements for the Commercial zoning district. However, the building site is mostly in a FEMA Flood Hazard Area (FHA). Wetlands have been delineated, and the proposed improvements are also within the 50 foot wetland buffer. The ZA noted that the Town just learned that Stewart's Shops have elected to withdraw their initial design, and submit a revised plan. James Gillespie was introduced, and asked to present the SSC revised Proposal.

J. Gillespie presented new plans that detailed a smaller retail store, which would be oriented north-to-south, located in the central area of the Parcel. The Office space was withdrawn. The Fuel Pump Island and canopy would be of same design as the initial proposal. This would also be reoriented north-to-south, and relocated to the eastern portion of the Parcel. Both structures would then be outside the FEMA FHA and wetland buffer zones. The Green Space area would be increased by approximately 10% over initial design. Mr. Gillespie noted that the two proposed street entry/exit intersections with Main St. are very similar to the existing locations. Exterior lighting fixtures would confine illumination within the property, and be turned off (except for a minimum of security lights) when store was closed.

Neighboring Owner Harvey Garrapy expressed his concern about lighting and wind-blown trash. He preferred a privacy fence be installed along the entire eastern length of the Stewart's property. Mr. Gillespie offered to include the fence in the project.

J. Biasuzzi stated that the Town has received complaints about transient individuals "hanging out" behind the commercial businesses and walking through back yards towards the woods north of the former RT. 4A "Jug Handle". A perimeter fence may serve as a partial solution to this possible public nuisance.

Agnes Coughlin, of Elm St., abuts the north boundary of SSC, was also concerned on how (the initial plan) could impact her homestead with regard to exterior lighting and the wetlands. She requested being notified of future project changes.

S. Barrows (resident & Town Highway Foreman) expressed appreciation for relocating the access locations back to (about) where they are now. There was considerable concern that that the inital location would create a serious traffic intersection issue; especially as the new Store is likely to increase traffic volume.

J. Biasuzzi made a (personal) observation that the south gable wall of the (revised) Store would be close to the travel way; and thought that it was architecturally "plain" even with the proposed landscaping. The ZA also requested receipt of updated photometric design, details on gas delivery schedules and traffic pattern.

Continue Public Hearing for Application 26-29: Due to the late hour, Chairman Moser asked DRB Members for a Motion to Continue the Public Hearing until Wednesday Nov. 18th, 2026 , to reconvene at 7:00 pm at Town office. He also asked to Adjourn the evening's Meeting. R. Ryan so Moved, all approved and the Motion passed. *Submitted By: J. Biasuzzi, Recorder*