

DRAFT
Town of Calais
Development Review Board Minutes
Calais Town Hall
June 8, 2023

Re: Hearing on Application #2023-07, Terrence and Catherine Reed, Request for conditional use and development on camp at 383 Nelson Pond Road.

Present: DRB members: Ryan Edwards (Chair), Dot Helling (Clerk), Stephania Kaplan, Dennis Shaffer, and Scott Bassage (alternate). Quorum established.

Others present: Terrence Reed, applicant, and abutters Dan and Chrissy George and Shaun and Chrissy Fielder.

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm EST by Chair Ryan Edwards. Edwards read the warning and put on the record the fact that a site visit took place on June 7 at the property. The above named DRB members were present at the site visit, as well as Willa Farrell (DRB member), John McCullough (Zoning Administrator) and neighbors Bill Lefevre and Shaun Fielder.

Edwards reviewed the hearing procedures and members introduced themselves. Edwards then reviewed the definition of “interested persons” and identified the applicable sections under the Calais Zoning Rules and Regulations (hereafter the “regs”). The signup sheet for attendees and interested persons was circulated. This property is in the Shoreland District (SHR).

Applicant Terrence Reed was placed under oath and explained his application request. Reed recently sold his primary residence elsewhere in Calais and wants to make this camp into an energy efficient tiny house for retirement. He wants to raise the roof and add two dormers for bedrooms and a bathroom with a stairway from the existing first floor. He stated that there would be no change to impervious surfaces and that he wants to install a new roof for safety reasons, add a frostwall with studs for reinforcement of the added weight and to further ensure against structure movement while refreshing the peastone around the foundation. Reed plans to keep the existing pitch so as not to change run-off and plans no excavation using machinery in order to not disturb the existing vegetation and drainage pattern. In response to questions from DRB members, Reed testified as follows:

1. Reed plans on two dormers for two bedrooms and a bathroom, no tub.
2. There is a holding tank for sewage on the upper side of the base of the driveway which he testified is 10’ to the roadway, 20-25’ to his shore property line, and that his structure is approximately 35’ from the water’s edge. (The distance in his application sketch from holding tank to property line is incorrect.)
3. Reed says the height of the structure after raising it to install the dormers will be 30’ or less and that the current ridgeline of the camp is straight down 18’.
4. If permitted, Reed would like to change the steepness of the roof for safety concerns during snow removal.
5. Reed plans to use Chase & Chase for any necessary permit(s) for the holding tank. Prior owners, the Leonards, installed the tank but he has not seen the documentation. Stephanie Kaplan noted that Section 3.3 (A)(5) requires a Wastewater and Potable Water permit (or proof that one is not required). Reed will look for the permit and produce it.

6. Reed says he will drill a well or get any necessary water permit. He stated that his water comes from the pond, and is filtered, and he believes that use of the pond water is grandfathered.
7. Asked if the elevation would change visibility of the camp from the water, Reed thinks not because of the tall hemlocks along the front, the fact that the camp is dark brown and he would install a metal roof probably in dark green or black.
8. Asked further about the foundation work and questioned about the disruption of vegetation, Reed intends to not disrupt existing vegetation, except that he will eventually remove some hazardous trees on the property in the back, that the frost wall will be along the existing front edge of the camp and that the only disruption will be where he installs the front edge frostwall and the footings which he plans to dig up and replace by hand.
9. Regarding pollution and erosion concerns raised, Reed does not know the percentage of the slope/grade and stated that the surfaces are not uniform. He has no details for a conceptual plan at this stage. He wants to see if the DRB will approve the concept before spending money. He expects to use a pump truck for concrete that can operate from the existing driveway. He reiterated that the plumbing/holding tank is a large tank of 1500 gallons, installed in 2006 with an in-house alarm system that sets off at 80%. Typically the tank has been pumped once a season but it may require more if the property is used more, at an increased cost. Reed says the tank system puts nothing into the ground and is very accessible from the road for pumping. It is also sealed. If it fills it would back up into the camp. He has gutters at the back of the house to take water away from the house and peastone along the front for rain catching.
10. Reed may improve the steps to the camp by adding a railing and new boards on the steps that are not as slippery as the existing ones. There is a gap between the steps and the driveway where one must use the path, step on a rock and then a lower set of steps. The steps are very steep.
11. The front frostwall will be new. Reed will remove the existing 5-6 footings and replace them to prevent movement of the new structure given the added weight. He plans to dig a trench across the front with a goal of a 4' depth where possible otherwise as deep as he can go before hitting ledge.

Neighbor Dan George (not under oath) commented that Reed is improving the property. George's brother put in a foundation on a camp next door which worked. George has no concerns about this project.

Stephanie Kaplan asked about a time frame. Reed said "years to complete." The project will be slow because work is being done by hand. He will do it in phases so he can keep using it as a camp during construction. Reed envisions doing the footings during the first building season and the dormers the second year during building season.

Neighbor Shaun Fielder (not under oath) commented that there will be no additional impacts to impervious surfaces because the building is simply going upwards, ie. no change in footprint. He also commented on the visibility of the camp from the water and said that you can't see it even in winter because of the tall hemlocks. He said Reed should go with a natural color for the roof.

Scott Bassage stated that maintaining the landscape is critical and asked whether a landscape management plan might be in order. Reed said he wants to maintain the vinca groundcover, that he is sick of mowing, and that any disturbance would be "accidental."

DRB members pointed out that Section 3.8(B)(4) is applicable for vertical expansion of a structure no matter whether it is in the RR2 or Shoreland district, and that Section 2.4 (G)(3) requires a showing of no additional run-off and no change in impervious surfaces.

Reed was questioned further about the interior plans. He plans two bedrooms upstairs with a bathroom off both or one and a stairway to access. He testified all will connect to existing plumbing which is to code. He will not install a tub as it would utilize too much water, but will install a toilet, sink and shower in the new, second bathroom. The current downstairs bedroom will become a den/office.

It was pointed out that Reed will need to present a wastewater permit, a sketch with the gable end elevation and a potable water permit, if required. The DRB will provide Reed with a list of required information and materials needed in order to further consider this application. This list will be emailed to Reed no later than the end of the day on Monday, April 12, 2023. (A copy of this email list will be appended hereto.) In the meantime, this hearing was RECESSED to be continued at 7pm on Thursday, June 22, 2023 at the Calais Town Hall.

This hearing was recessed at approximately 8:20pm, then DRB members went into deliberation to discuss the application and create the list of materials required from the applicant.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy (Dot) Helling, DRB Clerk