

**170 Cherry Tree Hill  
East Montpelier, Vermont**

**PRD Narrative**

Janice Walrafen and Ellen Leonard purchased the property at 170 Cherry Tree Hill Road in 2004 and were granted home occupation permits to operate a licensed, early childhood education program and after-school art and music lessons. The property currently has 2 Units, one with an accessory unit. (Noted on the site plan at 1., 1A., 2.) that were occupied prior to our ownership and have been maintained as affordable housing units and community arts center. This reflects a “grandfathered” arrangement as the current zoning is designated as a single family dwelling.

The purpose of this application is to update our zoning designation to reflect the property's uses over the past 15 years as a planned residential development (PRD) and community center. We are also requesting a density bonus to provide a total of 4 affordable housing units, as per Section 5.6 Planned Residential Units: A (1) and E(1) of the East Montpelier Land Use and Development Regulations. The proposed new housing units will be occupied by a current resident and a family whose members work, garden and participate in our community activities.

The property is located in Zone D (Rural residential/agricultural). We request that the main house (1 on site map) be designated as a affordable housing unit with four bedrooms, each with a private bath, sharing a single kitchen and combined Community Center. It is also the location of our licensed early childhood education program, which serves fifteen children per day. We have been hosting 9 weeks of summer day camps serving children aged 6-13 as part of our Community Center's recreational and social activities that serve families in our community. Co-owner Janice Walrafen also uses a portion of the main house for her home business, a ceramic tile studio.

The second existing Unit (2 on site map) is currently being rebuilt due to excessive mold and rot that resulted from defects in the original construction, and is the home of co-owner, Ellen Leonard, who meets the Town's affordable housing guidelines (income not greater than 80% of the Washington County median income of \$58,171 [Source: <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/washington-county-vt/>]).

The existing accessory building (1A on site map) is currently occupied by a community member who also meets affordable housing guidelines. This building is essentially a refurbished woodshed with no foundation, and under this proposal will no longer be used as a residence. It will instead provide office space and other support for Community Center activities.

We are requesting approval for the addition of two additional single family units, in accordance with the PRD guidelines. The guidelines call for the clustering of residential development to preserve and maintain open space and authorize the Town to grant a density bonus to facilitate the provision of additional affordable housing (Section 5.6 A (1) of Land Use and Development Regulations). The PRD also calls for the designation of a “Building Envelope” within which future development is confined. This is shown

in both the plat and site plan. The area of the “Building Envelope” is 1.96 acres leaving 8.26 acres outside the “Building Envelope”.

We are not subdividing the property for the purpose of constructing these additional affordable housing units, and therefore do not anticipate the need for a subdivision review as part of this application.

The open land will continue to be used for intensive organic home gardens and hayfields.

The property will be owned by the Cherry Tree Hill LLC. The members of the LLC will have groundleases(house sites) and privately own the houses on them. The accessory building (1a) and the pool (1b) will be owned with housesite 1. All of the open space will be owned by the LLC including the barn(5). [See site plan]

Following Section 5.5 (C)of the Land Use and Development Regulations, we attest that the proposed development will not result in an undue adverse effect on any of the following:

- (1) The capacity of existing or planned community facilities and services: There is an extreme shortage of early childhood educational opportunities in our area, and we have been serving our community's families for 15 years. Thus our community center provides a much needed resource for the community. Our programs have an excellent reputation, always have a waiting list for our services, and many families choose to continue bringing their children to our summer day camps after they graduate from the pre-school. Children who have attended our summer camps frequently return as counselors in the camps as they grow older. [SURVEY quotes are attached]
- (2) Character of the neighborhood or area affected: By clustering two additional units within the already-inhabited areas of our property, we can affirm that there will be no notable changes in the character of the neighborhood. We will conform to PRD guidelines for clustered housing, as noted above.
- (3) Traffic on roads & highways in the vicinity: We do not anticipate any increase in the amount of traffic to and from our facility as a result of this application. The two new units will be inhabited by people who already live, work and garden here. Our plan includes a proposed redesign of our parking area to improve the safety and required maintenance of the driveway. We have discussed the design with the road commissioner and found the design would improve the drainage and impact on the road work. We are submitting an application to be approved by the Selectboard and Road Commissioner.
- (4) Bylaws in effect: All existing dwellings have approved or “grandfathered” wastewater systems. The two new proposed residences will share a system that has been located and had preliminary testing done for feasibility. We are requesting approval of the PRD contingent on the final approved system application for the new dwellings.
- (5) The utilization of renewable energy resources: The property currently has two solar trackers that provide all the electrical needs for the main house/community center. We anticipate adding one additional solar tracker for the three other dwellings. The rebuilt and new dwellings will comply with or exceed current energy efficiency standards.

### Section 5.6 Planned Residential Units General and Specific Standards

D. Because we are not subdividing, we ask that non-relevant standards be reviewed with this in mind. This application includes a site plan and plat prepared by a licensed surveyor and a preliminary wastewater design that will be completed by Chase and Chase engineers. We also included an application to the selectboard for a revised road cut and parking plan (see attachment). We will apply for all relevant building permits as needed.

E. (1) We are requesting the maximum density increase allowable for PRD's in our district. [Sect. 5.6(E)(1)]

(2) We ask that the DRB approve the request for the community center and affordable housing designations for unit 1, as it is a permitted conditional use in our district.

**Attachments:** Community Survey; Plat and Site Plan; Septic Permit draft plan; Driveway and parking changes application.