



Members of the Underhill Development Review Board,

As I will be absent at the appeal meeting occurring May 6, 2024, regarding Gordon Williamson's unpermitted sawmill operation (Pleasant Valley Firewood Co.), I submit the following statement to share my input and concerns.

In July of 2022, a small sawmill operation that had previously been located behind our property, across the river, and adjacent to the shared driveway of Dream Valley Farm, Mr. Williamson and another of Mr. Williamson's neighbors, was relocated to 633 Pleasant Valley Road. Since that time, the sawmill operation has grown substantially; adding a larger sawmill, additional equipment and trucks.

I had assumed initially that the sawmill operation occurring at the original site was timber being processed from Mr. Williamson's personal property of approximately 50 acres. Seeing that my family has owned 140 acres of land in Middlesex, Vermont since the 1960's, which is also part of the Vermont Land Trust, I am familiar with Vermont's Land Use regulations, and under my assumption saw no issue with this. My family has logged and processed timber from our property for personal use utilizing similar equipment to Mr. Williamson's for decades.

Prior to July 2022, the number of hours spent processing and noise levels were much less comparatively than they are at the current site, which is situated less than 300 ft. from our house.

I also assumed in July 2022, because we had received no notice from the Town of Underhill regarding the operation of Pleasant Valley Firewood Co. at the site of 633 Pleasant Valley Rd. or a notice of Zoning Permit to permanently relocate Mr. Williamson's business, that the relocation was temporary, and that the bridge accessing Mr. Williamson's property may be being replaced to adequately support the future comings and goings of his logging operation. It turns out that my assumption was incorrect, as the sawmill operation has stayed in its current location and expanded since July 2022.

At no time was anything discussed with us or the surrounding neighbors to suggest Mr. Williamson intended to continuously operate a sawmill on the property. In an effort to be neighborly, I was willing to adjust to the commotion temporarily.

Since that time, the impact has been bothersome to the point that we have had no choice but to take further action. It is unfortunate that Mr. Williamson neglected to personally speak to his neighbors prior to relocating Pleasant Valley Firewood Co. to 633 Pleasant Valley Rd., knowing full well that he intended to take up permanent operation in such close proximity to the houses impacted. It has never been, nor is it now, our intention to interfere with Mr. Williamson from making a living, legally, in a manner that does not impact the use and enjoyment of our property and adheres to the zoning laws.

I began homeschooling our children in September 2020, which entails direct instruction from myself, on a year-round basis, largely on our property. Since the commencement of Pleasant Valley Firewood Co.'s operations at 633 Pleasant Valley Rd., the noise levels have greatly impacted my ability to homeschool our children, both inside and outside our home, approximately 6 months out of the year.

Our children are woken early in the morning, as both of their bedrooms are closest to the property line of 633 Pleasant Valley Rd. They are also unable to focus on their independent work and reading due to noise levels, and we have had to adjust our schedule to accommodate the noise. Our children have also avoided playing outside, particularly last summer, due to the noise levels (i.e. utilizing our pool, riding bikes, skateboarding, playing basketball and using the trampoline).

Some of the primary reasons we exercise our right to homeschool our children is to afford them the opportunity to get rest accordingly to their natural rhythms and needs, actively learn year-round, and spend adequate amounts of time outdoors. All of these are directly impacted by Mr. Williamson's operation of his business in close proximity to our property; the property I use to school our children.

All four of the houses located nearest to the 633 Pleasant Valley Rd. are homeowners that are home during normal business hours, due to either retirement, work schedules, or "working" from home, like myself.

I am hoping that the issue at hand can be quickly remedied by this appeal, so that we can all move on in mutual respect for one another, as neighbors.

Thank you,

Trish Vogel (Patricia)















