



Stratham Planning Board Meeting Minutes

November 6, 2024

Stratham Municipal Center

Time: 7:00 pm

Members Present: Thomas House, Chair
David Canada, Vice Chair
Chris Zaremba, Regular Member
John Kunowski, Regular Member
Nate Allison, Alternate Member

Members Absent: Mike Houghton, Select Board's Representative

Staff Present: Carol Ogilvie, Interim Town Planner

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Mr. House called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and took roll call.

2. Approval of Minutes

a. October 16, 2024

Mr. Zaremba made a motion to approve the October 16, 2024 meeting minutes. Mr. Canada seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. House asked Mr. Canada to chair the rest of the meeting.

3. Public Hearing (Old Business):

a. Anthony Fusco, Fox Construction, LLC (Applicant), Charles B. Rocha III and Lori J. Rocha Revocable Trust (Owners) - Request for approval of Conditional Use Permits to allow encroachments into the Wetlands Conservation and Shoreland Protection Districts for the construction of a driveway serving a proposed residence at 23 Winding Brook Drive, Tax Map 16, Lot 1, Zoned R/A. This application was continued from October 16, 2024.

Scott Frankiewicz with New Hampshire Land Consultants represented Anthony Fusco with Fox Construction and the property owners, the Rochas. Mr. Frankiewicz provided an update on the application. A site walk with the Planning Board was conducted on October 31, 2024. The applicant was scheduled to go before the Zoning Board of Adjustment last night, but something came up and it was continued to December 3rd. Mr. Frankiewicz stated that additional plans (e.g. driveway cross section, silt fence detail, and guard rail detail) were requested by the Planning Board at the last meeting and he submitted those to the office. The project will be reviewed by the ZBA for a Special Exception in the Shoreland Protection District and a Variance in the Wetlands Conservation District.

Mr. Canada asked the Board if they have any questions or comments.

45 Mr. Allison asked for confirmation on his assumption that taxes have been paid to date on this
46 parcel as if it was a buildable lot. Mr. Frankiewicz replied that it is an individual lot on the tax
47 maps. Mr. Fusco replied that to his knowledge all of the taxes have been paid and the parcel is not
48 in current use.

49
50 Mr. Allison mentioned a comment letter submitted by Andrew Goddard of 2 Sanctuary Drive and
51 asked if there is a plan to construct a retaining wall in the 50-foot wetland setback. Mr. Frankiewicz
52 replied that is not on the plans submitted on October 31. Mr. Allison asked additional questions
53 regarding the house construction which were addressed by Mr. Frankiewicz; however, the
54 Planning Board review is limited to the driveway crossing.
55

56 Mr. Zaremba asked what the size of the parcel is. Mr. Frankiewicz replied 1.4 acres.
57

58 There was a discussion as to the locations of the various required buffers and setbacks. It was
59 determined that the applicant would return to the Planning Board at their next meeting and
60 present revised plans clearly depicting buffer and setback areas. Mr. House requested that the
61 plans be stamped by a NH professional engineer, specifically with respect to the driveway
62 culvert.

63
64 **Mr. House made a motion to continue the application to November 20, 2024. Mr. Zaremba**
65 **seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.**

66 **4. Public Hearing (New Business):**

67 a. Chinburg Development LLC (Applicant and Owner), Request for approval of a Conditional Use
68 Permit under Section 7 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow construction of a sign for a new
69 residential subdivision at 189 Bunker Hill Avenue, Tax Map 6, Lot 167, zoned R/A.
70

71 Christian Blouin of Chinburg Development described the application. The sign is proposed to be
72 60 inches by 36 inches with stone support pillars to serve a residential subdivision. The pillars are
73 2-feet by 2-feet wide and 6-feet tall and the sign will have no internal or external lighting. Mr.
74 Blouin provided the subdivision plan with the location of a landscape easement.
75

76 Mr. House asked if it is a two-sided sign. Mr. Blouin replied no. Mr. House asked what direction
77 will the sign face. Mr. Blouin replied it will be at an angle better seen when driving west on Bunker
78 Hill Avenue. Mr. House asked if it will be seen from the other direction. Mr. Blouin replied that
79 more or less the sign will be straight (visible from both directions) but will be contoured slightly
80 for the entrance perspective.
81

82 Mr. House questioned adding the name of the road (Tilton Drive) to the sign. Mr. Canada replied
83 that the street sign is sufficient.
84

85 Mr. Kunowski stated that during the Planning Board discussions for the subdivision, he recalls
86 comments about the curve in Bunker Hill Avenue near the subdivision and is concerned the sign
87 could be a hazard. Mr. Blouin replied that it will not be a hazard to vehicles leaving the
88 development. Mr. Canada added that it is a state road under NH DOT review.
89

90 Mr. Allison stated that the sign and the associated landscaping appear to be within the sight line of
91 the development and he asks that it be constructed far enough from the edge of the right of way as
92 possible.
93

94 Mr. Blouin read the applicant's response to each of the Conditional Use Permit criteria.
95

96 Mr. Allison asked if the proposed size of 60 inches by 36 inches includes the pillars. Mr. Blouin
97 replied no that the pillars are outside the 60 inch by 36 inch sign. Mr. House summarized that the
98 entire structure is about 9 feet wide.
99

100 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion to open the public hearing. Mr. House seconded the motion.**
101 **All voted in favor and the motion passed.** Nobody from the public spoke. **Mr. Zaremba made**
102 **a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. House seconded the motion. All voted in favor and**
103 **the motion passed.**

104
105 Mr. Zaremba asked if the Board wants to require that the name of the road, Tilton Drive, be added
106 to the sign. The Board members discussed it and determined that they did not feel strongly about
107 requiring it.
108

109 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion that the Planning Board approve the Conditional Use Permit**
110 **under Section 7.3.d of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a monument sign serving the Windsong**
111 **Place subdivision at Tilton Drive subject to the following conditions:**

112 **1.) The sign shall be in accordance with the specifications provided and shall not be**
113 **illuminated.**

114 **Mr. House seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.**
115

116 **5. Public Meeting (New Business):**

117 a. 219 Portsmouth Avenue. Debra Ficara (Applicant), Ficara Family Revocable Trust (Owner) -
118 Request for approval of a Route 33 Heritage District application to construct a detached accessory
119 dwelling unit at 219 Portsmouth Avenue, Tax Map 21, Lot 89, Zoned Route 33 Heritage District.
120

121 Mr. Canada read an email from the applicant requesting a change to the application and requesting
122 a postponement to the next meeting.
123

124 **Mr. Kunowski made a motion to postpone the meeting to December 4, 2024. All voted in**
125 **favor and the motion passed.**

126 **6. Public Hearing (New Business):**

127 a. Discussion of proposed zoning amendments for 2025. Topics of discussion included:
128 1. Table of Dimensional Requirements and Explanatory Notes
129 2. Residential Open Space Cluster Development
130 3. Accessory Dwelling Unit requirements
131 4. Sign Ordinance amendments
132 5. Re-zoning of split-zoned PRE and R/A parcels
133

134 Ms. Ogilvie explained that these five amendments were reviewed at the last public meeting of the
135 Planning Board. She described some minor changes as a result of Planning Board comments at the
136 last meeting.
137

138 **Mr. Kunowski made a motion to open the public hearing. Mr. House seconded the motion.**
139 **All voted in favor and the motion passed.**

140 Ms. Ogilvie continued to present the proposed amendments to the Board. There were no comments
141
142

143 from the Board on amendments related to the Table of Dimensional Requirements and Residential
144 Open Space Cluster Developments.
145

146 Ms. Ogilvie requested confirmation from the Board if the proposed language regarding the
147 maximum height of an ADU at 1.5 stories is acceptable. The Board confirmed.
148

149 Ms. Ogilvie presented the Board with a change in the Sign Ordinance amendment to include
150 feather flags as a prohibited sign in Section 7.6.i. with banners and pennants and remove
151 “temporary signs” from Section 7.6.i. as a prohibited sign as there is a section that allows
152 temporary signs. The intent is to allow banners, pennants, and feather flags as temporary signs if
153 approved by the Building Inspector. The Board agreed with the changes.
154

155 Fred Emanuel of 6 Patriots Road asked if the flags on the light poles in the Town Center would be
156 prohibited. Mr. Canada replied that they are pre-existing and that the Town is not required to follow
157 the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Emanuel stated that he likes the flags in the Town Center. Mr. House
158 described that they are not feather flags. Mr. Emanuel asked if festive or decorative flags are
159 prohibited. Mr. Canada replied that flying pennants and banners with sign language is prohibited.
160

161 Mr. Zaremba asked if the 24 square foot sign area for residential subdivision signs is limited to the
162 sign area or does it include the posts. Mr. Canada stated it was discussed previously, and the
163 ordinance is referring to just the sign area and not the posts. Ms. Ogilvie stated that the supporting
164 framework of the sign is addressed separately in the ordinance.
165

166 Ms. Ogilvie briefly introduced the split zoned parcel rezoning ordinance and stated there are no
167 changes from when the Board last saw this.
168

169 David Choate of Colliers International spoke on behalf of the NHSPCA. He also introduced
170 Brianne Wood from the NHSPCA. He stated there is a typo in the lot number for 102R Portsmouth
171 Avenue in the public notice. Mr. Choate requested confirmation that specific uses like veterinary
172 hospitals and kennels which are prohibited in the PRE District, would not apply to the NHSPCA
173 property as it is listed separately from those uses in the Table of Uses. Mr. House confirmed that
174 is the case. Ms. Wood stated that the properties at 102R and 108 Portsmouth Avenue were acquired
175 by the NHSPCA in the past few years and wants to make sure the exception for the NHSPCA
176 applies to all three parcels. Mr. Choate added that those properties are residentially used and single-
177 family and two-family dwellings are permitted uses in both zones. Mr. House agreed that
178 residential uses are allowed. Mr. Canada stated that all of those uses were likely included on the
179 site plan approval for the NHSPCA completed a couple of years ago.
180

181 Mr. Emanuel requested that five additional parcels on Millbrook Drive (3 Millbrook Drive, Tax
182 Map 13, Lot 71; 5 Millbrook Drive, Tax Map 13, Lot 72; 7 Millbrook Drive, Tax Map 13, Lot 73;
183 14 Millbrook Drive, Tax Map 13, Lot 76; and 16 Millbrook Drive, Tax Map 13, Lot 75) be rezoned
184 from Residential/Agricultural to Professional/Residential. The Board agreed.
185

186 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. House seconded the motion.**
187 **All voted in favor and the motion passed.**
188

189 Ms. Ogilvie announced that additional proposed zoning amendments are in the process of being
190 drafted for the Board’s review. Those include changes to the Wetlands Conservation District,
191 creation of a Portsmouth Avenue Heritage Overlay District, Professional/Residential District

192 architectural standards, and amending the Route 33 Heritage District to allow greater residential
193 densities.

194

195 **7. Public Meeting (New Business):**

196 a. Discussion of proposed amendments to Subdivision Regulations including to Sections 4.3 *Soils*
197 *Based Lot Size Determination*, 4.4.2 *Pork Chop Lot Subdivision*, and 4.6 *Open Space Cluster*
198 *Subdivision*.

199

200 Ms. Ogilvie described proposed Subdivision regulation changes to move to public hearing at the
201 next Planning Board meeting. The Board reviewed the changes and agreed to proceed to the
202 public hearing.

203

204 Mr. House offered a kind reminder to the Planning Board, that members review the Stratham
205 Master Plan and keep the goals in mind with regards to items before the Board.

206

207 **8. Adjournment**

208

209 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 pm. All voted in favor and the**
210 **motion passed.**