



**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 3<sup>rd</sup>. 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ms. Ogilvie announced that additional proposed zoning amendments are in the process of being drafted for the Board’s review. Those include changes to the Wetlands Conservation District, 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.  
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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*.  
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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.  
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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.  
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207 **8. Adjournment**  
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209 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 pm. All voted in favor and the**  
210 **motion passed.**