



Stratham Planning Board Meeting Minutes

November 5, 2025

Stratham Municipal Center

Time: 7:00 pm

Members Present: Thomas House, Chair
David Canada, Vice Chair
Mike Houghton, Select Board's Representative
Chris Zaremba, Regular Member
Nate Allison, Alternate Member

Members Absent: John Kunowski, Regular Member

Staff Present: Vanessa Price, Director of Planning and Building

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mr. Canada called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm and took the roll call.

2. Approval of Minutes

A. October 8, 2025, Planning Board meeting minutes

Mr. Zaremba made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 8, 2025. Mr. Canada seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

B. October 15, 2025, Planning Board meeting minutes

Mr. Zaremba made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 15, 2025. Mr. Canada seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

3. Public Hearing:

A. Brendan Sheehan (Applicant and Owner) request for a Design Review of a proposed residential development at 210 Portsmouth Avenue (Tax Map 21, Lot 81) in the Route 33 Legacy Highway Heritage District and the Wetland Conservation Overlay. The project includes the construction of nine duplexes, each with two-bedroom units, and a community building under condominium ownership, while retaining the existing duplex and barn. Application submitted by Beals Associates, 70 Portsmouth Avenue, Stratham NH 03885.

Ms. Price introduced the project. The most recent set of plans is dated October 28, 2025, which removed the community building. The existing duplex and barn will be retained, but the barn will be moved within the site. Ms. Price noted that a Conditional Use Permit is required for wetlands impacts from the road per Section 11.5 of the Ordinance. Ms. Price received initial comments from town department heads on the project. The police chief had no concerns. The fire chief and fire inspector met with the Applicant to discuss fire flow options. The Applicant proposed a fire pond, which was not supported by the fire chief due to environmental impacts on the pond, which can make it an unreliable source of water. Fire truck turnarounds were also discussed. The fire chief considers the road to be a fire access road and requested a 24-foot-wide road minimum to

45 accommodate the Exeter and Portsmouth fire trucks. The Building Inspector and DPW staff had
46 no comments at this stage. There are existing trails on the site that don't appear to be impacted by
47 the project, and the Parks and Recreation Director noted he would like to see it remain for public
48 use. The Heritage Commission reviewed the project on October 14th and discussed with the
49 Applicant their request for a greater representation of a New England style of housing in
50 accordance with the architectural standards for the Route 33 Legacy Highway Heritage District.
51 The Conservation Commission reviewed the project on October 23rd and has concerns with
52 wetlands impacts and requested mitigation. Other questions voiced were what existing trees will
53 remain, the reliability of the existing pond being converted to a fire pond, the protective well radius
54 and nitrate loading that could affect neighboring properties. The Commission asked if a portion of
55 the property could be put into conservation. Ms. Price noted that a comment letter was recently
56 submitted by SELT, which holds a conservation easement on an abutting property.
57

58 Mr. House noted this is a Design Review that is non-binding. The discussion is intended to be a
59 question-and-answer session where the Board can steer the Applicant in a direction for the formal
60 application.
61

62 Mr. Sheehan described the project. The number of units has decreased since the preliminary
63 consultation, and he believes the new proposed design is a well-built design that can support the
64 community to be built on this property with minimal impact on wetlands. He will provide a
65 different type of housing that Stratham doesn't currently have. He corrected Ms. Price that there
66 will be a community center with co-working, fitness, and workshops for residents. He believes
67 there is a direct correlation between the Town's Master Plan, current zoning, and what he's
68 proposing that don't really have too much conflict. The condos will be three stories high, including
69 a finished basement. Each unit will be two bedrooms and two and a half bathrooms. The units will
70 be side by side, so entrances on the left and the right. The property is part of the Stratham Hill Park
71 trail system, so the residents who live at the property will have direct access to Stratham Hill Park.
72 Mr. Sheehan believes the project delivers the vision of the Town of Stratham by supporting
73 diversity of housing types and innovation while encouraging long-term residency and providing a
74 mixed style of living that people who are either long-term residents of Stratham looking to
75 downsize out of their larger homes, or newer residents of the Town, younger, trying to start a life
76 here. He plans to restore the existing house, which is falling to the ground, and will relocate and
77 restore the barn. The barn will be used for storage for the residents. He added that not only is it
78 stated in the Master Plan, but in the State of New Hampshire, there is a need for more small, low-
79 maintenance homes for both seniors and young adults. The Town of Stratham's working
80 population is declining, and there's pressure to attract and retain new residents, specifically
81 families. He stated that a lot of the developments that are currently being proposed in the Town
82 have focused on larger, single-family homes and not a lot of this newer style of innovation, which
83 is something that was built a long time ago, and since then, there's been a gap. The duplex style
84 layout is efficient. You can put a lot of people very close together, and it allows for people to have
85 a sense of community and belonging, whether they're living by themselves or living with a family.
86 He stated they will be providing more to the tax base than a single-family home would. Mr.
87 Sheehan demonstrated on a plan that there are three different locations on the property that provide
88 access to the Stratham Hill Park trail system. He stated there will be no impact on the trail crossings
89 and they will still be able to be accessed. There will be no change of rights of land ownership that
90 would prohibit people from using this property for the Stratham Hill Park trail system.
91

92 Mr. Canada asked if that right would be included in the deed.
93

94 Mr. Sheehan replied that it is to be discussed.

95 Mr. Sheehan provided a visual aid of the development and described it. He described that the style
96 of the units will be modern style, colonial.
97

98 Mr. Canada asked if there is one design for all nine houses.
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100 Mr. Sheehan replied yes.
101

102 John Lorden, Beals and Associates, spoke on behalf of the Applicant. He explained that the revised
103 plans incorporate comments from the Conservation Commission, Heritage Commission, and the
104 fire chief. The project requires two Conditional Use Permits, one for the access way in the no-
105 disturbance buffers and one for disturbance within the 50-foot [setback] for continuation of the
106 access way, construction of drainage, the construction of the barn and one duplex, and disturbance
107 for well installation and access. He addressed the staff memo and noted that a few items are
108 outdated. He first addressed the comment that a variance to the front setback is needed. He stated
109 that they are not changing the lot, not reorganizing, and not subdividing it. He addressed the staff
110 comment regarding more than one primary dwelling shown on the site. He agreed, but stated it is
111 allowed by the ordinance for condominium development. He disagrees with the staff comment that
112 the private right-of-way must be built to town standards as 60 feet wide. He stated this is private,
113 shared driveway that they will build to the standards that the fire department needs, but it is just a
114 shared driveway. Regarding parking regulations not being met, he assumes that is in reference to
115 the community center. The latest plan calls the building out as a pump house, but he thinks the
116 intention is that the pump house will be stored in the community center, which will be for the
117 private use of the residents. People will not be driving to it, so they are not planning on any parking
118 spaces. Mr. Lorden stated with regard to fire protection, there are three options they are exploring:
119 a cistern, a fire pond, or individual sprinkler systems in each unit. Regarding the Conservation
120 Commission, he does not believe the Commission expressed concerns about the direct impact. He
121 stated they talked and verified that the only way to access the upland portions of the property is to
122 go through the wetlands. The Commission asked if there would be mitigation, and we responded
123 that it is not planned because it doesn't meet the threshold. He stated that the Commission
124 applauded the project's design of bringing different types of housing to the area while minimizing
125 impacts, and they were happy that the project didn't extend further into the site. He asked for
126 questions from the Board.
127

128 Mr. Canada asked Ms. Price if, under the regulations, the Town require a historic survey of any
129 structures.
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131 Ms. Price replied it is not currently required.
132

133 Mr. Canada asked the Applicant if he would support a historical survey of the house and barn that
134 researches the history and costs about \$2,000 or \$3,000. It is in preparation of an application to the
135 New Hampshire Registry of Historic Places, which the Applicant wouldn't have to do, but for
136 other projects, the Board has required the survey to be completed.
137

138 Mr. Sheehan would need more details before committing to that.
139

140 Mr. House asked Mr. Canada if the relocation of the barn affects his comments.
141

142 Mr. Canada replied no.
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144 Mr. Sheehan added that the barn is currently completely collapsing inside of itself and the exterior

145 foundation is falling down.
146

147 Mr. House commented that the farthest resident from the barn might not want to walk to the barn
148 in the wintertime, so he thinks parking might be necessary including handicap accessibility.
149

150 Mr. Sheehan replied that he is not opposed to parking at the community center but objects to it
151 being called a place of assembly.
152

153 Mr. House replied it is, whether it is public or private, people will be assembling there.
154

155 Mr. Sheehan replied it is more like a co-working facility, and he believes a place of assembly is
156 over 50 people at one time. He will research it some more.
157

158 Mr. House asked how long the driveway is.
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160 Mr. Lorden replied 1,150 feet.
161

162 Mr. House replied that it is quite long and asked that they check the regulations for that; even
163 though it is private, there are regulations that need to be met for the fire department, etc.
164

165 Mr. Lorden replied that they have met with the fire department, and they show two turnarounds
166 where the fire department requires only one. They are debating whether they will keep the second
167 one.
168

169 Mr. House asked if they had met with any neighbors regarding the project.
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171 Mr. Sheehan replied he met with Edie Barker. Mr. House reminded the Applicant that they need
172 approval for a road name from the Select Board.
173

174 Mr. House asked about the property ownership.
175

176 Mr. Sheehan replied it will be condominium ownership with one owner owning all units and
177 renting them out. Mr. House stated that the Town will need to review the HOA documents.
178

179 Mr. Houghton suggested that the HOA documents include stipulations for the gathering place in
180 terms of its intended use for clarity of expectations.
181

182 Mr. Sheehan agreed.
183

184 Mr. Canada asked Ms. Price if a subdivision plan is required for condominiums.
185

186 Ms. Price replied yes and because of the community center building, a site plan is also required
187 therefore both the Site Plan and Subdivision Regulations apply to this project.
188

189 Mr. Zaremba asked if there will be two parking spaces for each unit.
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191 Mr. Lorden replied yes.
192

193 Mr. Zaremba asked Ms. Price if regardless of private vs. public, that the road must meet the town's
194 standards.

195 Ms. Price replied yes.
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200 Mr. Zaremba asked if the road length needs a waiver for exceeding 1,000 feet. Ms. Price replied
201 that is only for cluster subdivisions.
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204 Mr. House doesn't understand having one owner of the condominiums.
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207 Mr. Sheehan replied the property is owned by a business today.
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210 Mr. House asked then why create condominiums.
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213 Mr. Sheehan replied he would need to consult with his lawyer to answer that.
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216 Mr. House replied if they are rentals then there is no separate ownership.
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219 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion to open the meeting to the public. Mr. Houghton seconded the
220 motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**
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223 Mr. House invited members of the public to speak.
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226 Edie Barker, 216 Portsmouth Avenue, stated the plans she saw depicted Wellhead Protection radii
227 that extend onto her property, and she has not been approached by the developer for an easement
228 for that.
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231 Mr. Sheehan replied they are working with a hydrologist, Edgewater Strategies, who is going to
232 provide a different well drawing set and if they need to do that, then he will contact the abutters.
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234

235 Ms. Barker expressed concern with the road being within the 20-foot property line setback and its
236 potential impact of the wetlands on her property and how that might affect her fields if it changes
237 the wetland that they share together.
238
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240 Forrest Barker, 216 Portsmouth Avenue, asked where is the trail on the plan.
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243 Mr. Lorden replied it is not shown on the plan, but it is to the left of the wetland.
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245

246 Forrest Barker asked if it is obstructed by the well, buildings, or road.
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249 Mr. Lorden replied if it is, they would recreate it in such a way that access will be continued.
250
251

252 Scott Williams, employee at 216 Portsmouth Avenue and a resident of Stratham, stated that they
253 currently farm about six acres which is part of the Crockett Hills development, and they have
254 access to it through the subject property. He asked where on the plans that access road is currently
255 as it there is a grade stake labeled with what appears to be a leach field proposed in the middle of
256 the road. The stake is blocking access to his equipment unless he moves it and he assumes the
257 owner will not want him driving over the leach field to access the farmland.
258
259

260 Mr. Sheehan replied that when he purchased the property there was an existing trail that Barker's
261 farm was driving over to get to the field.
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264 Mr. House asked if it is an easement.
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245 Mr. Sheehan replied no easement.
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249 Mr. House asked that the Applicant address that next time.
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255 Mr. Williams stated that he expects town records or the people representing Crockett Hills would
256 confirm this, but when Crockett Hills was developed, it was understood that this farmland would
257 be maintained as farmland, and obviously to do that, whoever's farming it, requires access to it,
258 and currently that is the only access to this farmland with the equipment required to farm it. So,
259 there's a concern worthy enough.
260

261 Mr. Allison asked if Mr. Williams knows how many years the access has been used continuously.
262
263

264 Edie Barker replied close to 20 years ago, and it was a handshake deal between the Barkers and
265 the previous owner, the Roberts.
266

267 Mr. House asked the Applicant to show that on the plans for the next application, and he
268 encouraged the Applicant to discuss it with the neighbors.
269

270 Mark Mordecai, 19 Crockett's Way, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Hills of
271 Crockett Farm, asked if there would be a maintained vegetation barrier on the property line that
272 abuts Crockett Farm's land.
273

274 Mr. Lorden replied that they will do their best to leave what they can.
275
276

277 Mr. Sheehan replied he does not have a solid answer on that right now.
278
279

280 Mr. Mordecai stated that part of the character of this area is agricultural and if we start to build
281 housing on agricultural land, we're going to lose that character for the Town of Stratham. He
282 encouraged the developer to consider what could be incorporated to maintain the character of both
283 abutters' land. The agricultural land that the Barkers farm is leased from the Hills of Crockett
284 Farm. It was part of the condominium declaration that it remain as agricultural land, not just
285 conservation land. He stated the Hills of Crockett Farm owners would be very concerned if there
286 were access issues to continue that agricultural use, not just conservation use; that would be an
287 issue for us and our declarations. Mr. Mordecai asked about wetlands. He stated the wetland survey
288 that was done for the project was completed in January, and said if you've ever walked that property
289 in the spring, it's a soddy mess. He thinks there needs to be a more serious wetland survey done in
290 the springtime, instead of when everything is frozen solid and there isn't a lot of standing water.
291 He believes that before wetland mitigation is discussed, it is important to understand what the
292 impact would be. Mr. Mordecai's final question is with regard to the part of the property that isn't
293 proposed to be developed now, but could be developed in the future, so is there an opportunity to
294 put that part of the property into a conservation easement.
295

296 Denise Sweetser, 208 Portsmouth Avenue, expressed concerns with the pond in the yard because
297 when it rains a lot, her property sees flooding from it, and she never used to until Mr. Roberts'
298 grandson dug around it, and now she has a problem. She asked what they were going to do with
299 that. Mr. House replied that the Applicant will look into that and come back to the Board with
300 answers. He explained that the Applicant can't answer all the questions tonight, but they are
301 hearing you. Mr. House stated this is not the only hearing on the project, and the public is welcome
302 to come back.
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300 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion to close the meeting to the public. Mr. Canada seconded the**
301 **motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

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309 Mr. House asked Ms. Price to give an overview of the comment letter from SELT.

310 Ms. Price explained that the letter was sent on November 4, 2025. SELT holds a conservation
311 easement on Barker's Farm. SELT is the primary holder of the conservation easement and other
312 entities also hold an interest in the Conservation Easement including the Town of Stratham
313 Conservation Commission, the State of New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage
314 Investment Authority, and the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. The comment letter
315 includes information on the roles of the conservation entities and purpose of the easement. SELT
316 expressed concerns with groundwater and surface water resources, reduced setbacks for the paved
317 drive, the location of the paved drive that crosses the shared wetlands between the properties, and
318 the proposed utility easement for the wellhead protection radii.

319 Mr. Zaremba asked that future plans submitted to the Board show the entire property and not just
320 the development area.

321 Ms. Price requested the board to make a motion to close the Design Review as the Applicant has
322 one year to submit a final application to achieve vesting from ordinance and regulation changes.

323 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion to close the design review. Mr. Canada seconded the motion.**
324 **All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

325 B. Tucker DeWitt (Applicant and Owner) request for approval of a Conditional Use Permit for a
326 ground-mounted, 1,037 square-foot/21.2 kWDC solar photovoltaic system in the front yard of 11
327 Squamscott Road (Tax Map 21, Lot 94) in the Residential/Agricultural Zoning District.
328 Application submitted by Harmony Energy Works, 10 Gale Road, Hampton NH 03842.

329 Ms. Price stated the Applicant is here to request approval for a small-scale, ground-mounted solar
330 array in the front yard. There is no other possible location as the rear yard has a significant garden.
331 There is adequate buffering in front of the property. There were no concerns from other town
332 departments.

333 George Horrocks of Harmony Energy Works spoke on behalf of the Applicant. He described that
334 the location is the best place on the property for a ground-mounted system. It is off to the side of
335 the driveway as one approaches the house and behind a barrier, so it is shielded from the road with
336 fairly dense trees and bushes. It meets the setback from the road and meets the height requirement.
337 The purpose of the array is to generate power for the property owner.

338 Mr. House asked Mr. Horrocks to explain the meaning of the blue and green lines on the plans.

339 Mr. Horrocks replied Those are trench lines. He explained the blue line runs from the array to the
340 existing barn where the inverter will be located; from there, the trench will run to the back of the
341 house where the meter and disconnect are located.

342 Mr. House asked what was to the left of the barn.

343 Mr. DeWitt replied that it is a garden.

345 Mr. House asked if the reason why the front of the array couldn't be aligned with the front of the
346 barn is because of the garden.

347
348 Mr. DeWitt replied that there is also a small slope with a dirt road, and if the array was placed
349 there, he could not access that part of the property with a tractor.

350
351 Mr. Houghton asked what keeps them from putting it back where it says water body.

352
353 Mr. DeWitt replied that it is about an acre's worth of phragmites, which means it is a bit of a
354 wetland, and there is also about an acre or two of blueberries.

355
356 Mr. Canada asked if the array would be visible from the road.

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358 Mr. DeWitt replied no, and the house is not visible from the road either.

359
360 Mr. House asked if it can be seen in the winter.

361
362 Mr. DeWitt replied You can't see anything from the road. There are bushes that he trims back to
363 see around the corner so he can safely exit his driveway. He added that there is vegetation that
364 grows very heavily in the spring and summer, and even when it dies back, there is still thick
365 vegetation. Mr. Horrocks added that the array will be over 110 feet from the road.

366
367 Mr. Zaremba commented that he finds it hard to believe this is the only spot on the property for a
368 ground-mounted solar array, and the zoning says it must be installed either in the side yard or rear
369 yard to the greatest extent practical.

370
371 Mr. DeWitt explained that there is not enough space to the right of the house, as it is close to the
372 property line, and there is an existing shed, and then the closer to the phragmite, the wetter the
373 ground gets.

374
375 Mr. Zaremba asked what about between the house and the water body.

376
377 Mr. DeWitt replied that is where he has existing playground equipment. He described the locations
378 of the current land uses on the property, including the garden, wetlands, playground equipment,
379 farmland, and chickens and pigs.

380
381 Mr. House had the same thought as Mr. Zaremba and asked if the array could be moved slightly
382 south to line up with the left corner of the barn.

383
384 Mr. DeWitt replied that it would impact his tractor's access to the rear of the property.

385
386 Mr. Allison noted that the plans do not show much of the land use descriptions provided by the
387 Applicant.

388
389 Mr. Canada stated that the basic reason for the rule against siting arrays in the front yard is to
390 protect the neighbors and to protect the motoring public driving by, and that is not an issue here.
391 Mr. DeWitt added that he would gladly put it somewhere else, but the next best place is where the
392 blueberries are, because it is unobstructed and gets a lot of sun. Mr. Allison and Mr. Houghton
393 agreed with Mr. Canada. Mr. House asked if it can be seen looking into the driveway. Mr. DeWitt
394 replied no, one would have to get up, drive to the barn, get out, and then look down the hill. He

395 added that the neighbors can't see it because he can't see his neighbors.
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400 There were no more questions from the Board. Mr. House appointed Mr. Allison as a voting
401 member for the meeting.
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403

404 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion to accept the application as complete. Mr. Canada seconded
405 the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

406 **Mr. Canada made a motion to open the meeting to the public. Mr. Zaremba seconded the
407 motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

408
409 Karlene Oleniak, 7 Squamscott Road, commented that she agrees with the Applicant that the array
410 location will not cause any visual disruption to her as a neighbor or when driving by.
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412

413 **Mr. Houghton made a motion to close the meeting to the public. Mr. Zaremba seconded the
414 motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

415 Mr. House invited the Applicant to present how the project addresses the conditional use permit
416 criteria. Mr. Horrocks presented the criteria justification.
417
418

419 *Criteria 1, Spirit and Intent of the Zoning Ordinance and Master Plan.*

420 Harmony Energy Works is not aware of any existing violations of the Stratham Zoning Ordinance
421 associated with the property intended for this installation. The array has been designed and laid
422 out with all due consideration of zoning requirements, including setbacks and other constraints,
423 and will be constructed with minimal disturbance to the property and properties that surround it.
424
425

426 *Criteria 2, Site Suitability.*

427 A solar installation has been designed and laid out with due consideration of nearby structures and
428 trees and will have ample space for vehicles and personnel to access, inspect and service the array.
429 There are no obstructions that would prevent public services from accessing the installation, nor
430 does the installation provide obstruction to public services from accessing any other structures on
431 the property. Environmental constraints exist within the applicable setbacks that prevent the
432 installation and reliable operation of the solar array. There are no obstructions that would prevent
433 appropriate utilities from accessing the installation, nor does the installation itself provide such an
434 obstruction.
435
436

437 *Criteria 3, External Impacts.*

438 The array at its closest point to Swampscott Road on the north is 110 feet from the road and
439 separated from the road by dense trees and bushes, making the proposed array almost invisible
440 from the road. In addition, significant coverage from the trees surrounding the property on the east
441 and west make the array not visible from neighboring properties. The array has no moving parts,
442 emits no noise, odors, vibrations, dust or fumes under normal operation or any failure mode. The
443 array is not equipped with lights and will not add to the lighting that already exists on the property.
444 Mr. House asked if the array is flat or tilted. Mr. Horrocks replied tilted primarily at a 30- to 35-
445 degree pitch which allows the snow to slough off.
446
447

448 *Criteria 4, Character of Development and Impact on Natural, Cultural, Historic and Scenic
449 Resources.*

450 The house and barn on the property were constructed in 1978 and are not historical resources as
451 indicated above. The array is 110 feet or more from the road and separated from the road by dense
452
453

445 trees.
446

447 *Criteria 5, Impact on Property Values*

448 Harmony Energy Works has not received reports of any diminution of neighboring property values
449 resulting from any other solar installations. A 2025 Zillow data study states, on average across the
450 United States, homes with solar sell for 6.9% more than homes without solar. The installation of
451 the solar array adds to its energy independence as well. All solar energy produced by the array is
452 intended to be used to offset the owner's own electrical usage.

453
454 *Criteria 6, Fiscal Impacts*

455 The Town is not tasked with any maintenance or upkeep of the proposed installation, and thus it
456 is expected to experience zero fiscal impact as a result of its construction and operation. According
457 to an MIT study, this size array is projected to provide a positive impact on the community air
458 quality by producing clean energy, resulting in significantly lower amounts of nitrous oxide (smog)
459 and SO₂ (acid rain) than electricity generated by other means.

460
461 *Criteria 7, Public Interest*

462 Solar PV arrays generate clean energy from sunlight that is readily available without the use of
463 any hazardous materials or the emission of any fumes or noise; therefore, we believe that such
464 installations to therefore in the public interest of the community.

465
466 Mr. House asked what the highest point above the ground for the array is. Mr. Horrocks replied 10
467 feet, 10 inches. Mr. House noted that it is less than 11 feet, which is the zoning requirement.

468
469 **Mr. Houghton made a motion to grant the Conditional Use Permit for 11 Squamscott Road
470 with respect to Section 3.6 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow the array to be situated in the
471 front yard. Mr. Canada seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

472
473 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion in addition to the previous motion, to add the conditions that
474 have been found to exist by the following findings of fact:**

- 475 **1. The proposed development is located on a single-family home site that has no existing
476 violations of the Stratham Zoning Ordinance. It will be constructed in alignment with the
477 spirit and intent of the Stratham Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.**
- 478 **2. The site is suitable for the proposed Small-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Energy System.
479 The solar installation has been designed with consideration for nearby structures and
480 trees, and it will provide ample space for vehicles and personnel to access, inspect, and
481 service the array. This installation is situated adjacent to the driveway. There are no
482 environmental constraints within applicable setbacks that would hinder the installation
483 and reliable operation of the solar array. Additionally, there are no obstructions that
484 would impede utility access to the installation, nor does the installation itself create any
485 obstruction.**
- 486 **3. The external impacts of the proposed Small-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Energy System
487 are minimal. The array is located 110 feet away from Squamscott Road and is separated
488 from the road by dense trees and bushes.**
- 489 **4. The character of the development will remain unaffected, as the house and barn on the
490 property were built in 1978 and are not considered historical resources. The small-scale
491 solar array is positioned 110 feet or more from the road, with the separation enhanced
492 by dense trees and bushes.**
- 493 **5. There will be no greater reduction in neighboring property values than would occur with
494 any other use or development allowed in the underlying zone.**

495 **6. The proposed use will not negatively impact the town's finances. Furthermore, the permit**
496 **is in the public interest as it promotes the use of clean energy.**

497 **The general conditions of the draft Notice of Decision are also incorporated. Mr. Canada**
498 **seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

500 C. Boulders Realty Corp. (Applicant and Owner), Request for Design Review for a proposed housing
501 development consisting of 20 residential lots with approximately 49 units at 13 and 15
502 Stoneybrook Drive, Zoned Special Commercial. Application submitted by Jones & Beach
503 Engineers, Inc., P.O. Box 219, Stratham, NH 03885.

505 Ms. Price stated that the Applicant requested a continuance of the application in order to redesign
506 the plans because the submittal does not meet the setbacks in the Wetlands Ordinance.

508 **Mr. Houghton made a motion to continue the Boulders Realty application for 15**
509 **Stoneybrook Drive to the December 17th Planning Board meeting. Mr. Zaremba seconded**
510 **the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

512 D. Lindt & Sprungli (USA) Inc. (Applicant and Owner) request for a Site Plan Amendment to extend
513 the existing dead-end fire lane to the existing parking area to create a fire access loop around the
514 southeast side of the existing building #1. The property is located at One Fine Chocolate Place
515 (Tax Map 3, Lot 1) in the Industrial District. Application submitted by Tighe & Bond, Inc., 177
516 Corporate Drive, Portsmouth NH 03801.

517 Mr. Allison recused himself from this project.

520 Ms. Price introduced the fire access road project. She stated it has been discussed with the fire
521 chief, who supports a proper fire access road to the building. The Applicant submitted two waivers
522 (from HISS mapping and test pits) that the Board needs to consider before considering the
523 application as complete. The fire department requested that the road material have the ability to
524 hold emergency vehicles, and the building inspector encourages third-party review of compliance
525 with regulations.

527 Ben Curcio, Tighe, and Bond presented the project on behalf of the Applicant. He explained that
528 there is an existing dead-end fire lane on the south back side of the facility. There is interest in
529 connecting it to the north side of the parking area to complete a full emergency services loop. This
530 will require additional paving over portions of an existing gravel drive area and a small extension
531 to a circular parking area. The application materials include a greens report showing there is a
532 small amount of impervious area added as a result of the work. There is a negligible or marginal
533 increase in total storm water runoff, in terms of flow; about a 1% increase across all relevant storm
534 events that we would study, and all this storm water would need to be managed by the adjacent
535 detention pond. Two waivers were submitted with the application for high intensity soil survey
536 mapping and test pits. Typically, these requirements refer to projects requiring a subdivision or
537 septic permit application or proposal. A leach field is not being proposed as part of this project,
538 and the lot is served by municipal sewer, therefore a high intensity soil survey for this project
539 would really bear no implication on the design or have any impact in terms of health or safety as
540 a result of the project.

541 Mr. House called for a Board discussion on the waivers, starting with HISS mapping.

542 Mr. Houghton stated that for this project, he does not see HISS mapping as needing to be required.

545 The Board agreed.
546

547 **Mr. Houghton made a motion to approve the waiver from Section 4.3.2.e regarding HISS**
548 **mapping for One Fine Chocolate Place.**

550 **1. Granting of the waiver will not be detrimental to the public safety, health, or welfare.**
551 **or injurious to other property and public interest.**
552 **2. The waiver will not, in any manner, vary other provisions of the Stratham Zoning**
553 **Ordinance.**
554 **3. Such waiver will substantially secure the objectives, standards and requirements of**
555 **these regulations.**
556 **4. And a particular and identifiable hardship exists as neither a subdivision nor leach**
557 **field are being proposed as part of this process, and therefore, strict conformity to the**
558 **requirement would be unnecessary to the Applicant and has no bearing on the design**
559 **of the fire lane.**

560
561 **Mr. House seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**
562

563 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion to grant the waiver from the checklist item F (test pits) by the**
564 **following findings of fact:**

565 **1. The granting of the waiver will not be detrimental to the public safety, health, or welfare**
566 **or injurious to other property and will promote the public interest;**
567 **2. The waiver will not, in any manner, vary other provisions of the Stratham Zoning**
568 **Ordinance;**
569 **3. Such waiver will substantially secure the objectives, standards, and requirements of these**
570 **regulations;**
571 **4. A particular and identifiable hardship exists as a leach field is not being proposed as part**
572 **of this project and the lot is served by municipal sewer therefore performing test pits and**
573 **percolation tests to determine the area reserved for leach fields would be an unnecessary**
574 **hardship to the applicant and has no bearing on the design of the fire lane.**

575 **Mr. Canada seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.**
576

577 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion to accept the application as complete. Mr. Canada seconded**
578 **the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

580 Mr. Houghton commented that there is a fire access road that extends from Lindt to Rollins Farm
581 Road, which is in disrepair. He realizes that it is not subject to the application, but would like to
582 go on record that it should be cleaned up. Mr. Curcio replied okay.

584 Mr. House stated that per the building official's request, he would like to make sure the road is
585 built to town standards. Mr. Curcio replied okay.

587 Mr. Zaremba asked if the genesis of this project was a fire department request. Mr. Curcio replied
588 yes. Mr. Zaremba asked if this is the start of a larger development. Mr. Curcio replied no. Mr.
589 Zaremba asked if there is a gate to prevent regular vehicle access like delivery trucks. Mr. Curcio
590 replied it is not intended for that. The new entrance will be striped with no parking signs and the
591 sidewalk in front of it will have a mountable curb, such that it's not going to attract any actual
592 drivers unless errant or intentionally ill-intended.

594
595
596
597 Mr. Zaremba made a motion to open the meeting to the public. Mr. Canada seconded the
598 motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed. No members of the public spoke.
599

600
601
602
603 Mr. Zaremba made a motion to close the meeting to the public. Mr. Canada seconded the
604 motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.
605

606 Ms. Price asked the Board to motion and vote for a third-party engineering review. Mr. House
607 made a motion to continue the application until December 3 to have the CMA third-party
608 planning review conducted. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the
609 motion passed.
610

611 E. 2026 Zoning Amendments
612
613

614 Mr. Allison returned to his seat on the Board.
615
616

617 Ms. Price stated that she discussed the six proposed amendments with Town Counsel. There were
618 no significant changes to three of them, but there were more significant changes to the amendments
619 proposed for the Route 33 Legacy Highway Heritage District, the Technical Review Committee,
620 and Residential Open Space Cluster Subdivision. Ms. Price stepped through the amendments with
621 no changes starting with Table 4.2 and the explanatory notes in 4.3. The Board had no comments.
622

623 Mr. House made a motion that the Planning Board approve to amend Table 4.2 and 4.3
624 Explanatory Notes (a), and to renumber accordingly, and move to the town ballot. Mr.
625 Houghton seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.
626

627 Ms. Price explained the minor, non-significant changes to the proposed amendments to Section
628 5.13. There were no comments from the Board.
629

630 Mr. Zaremba made a motion that the Planning Board approve to amend Section 5.13.3, Use
631 Regulations for Solar Energy Systems, and update Table 1 for the Route 33 Legacy Highway
632 Heritage District uses, and move to the town ballot. Mr. House seconded the motion. All
633 voted in favor, and the motion passed.
634

635 Ms. Price explained that there was a minor change to the definitions amendment that clarifies the
636 purpose of the amendment. There were no comments from the Board.
637

638 Mr. Canada made a motion that the Planning Board approve to amend Section 2 to update
639 definitions and renumber accordingly, and move to the town ballot. Mr. Zaremba seconded
640 the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.
641

642 Mr. House noted there are no members of the public present.
643

644 Ms. Price explained the changes to the next three amendments from the last meeting. The first
645 relates to the Route 33 Legacy Highway Heritage District and includes a new limitation that new
646 construction shall not exceed the footprint of all historical structures and retain the historical
647 character of the site and District. The next change is based on advice from Town Counsel that the
648 Town continue to allow a condominium form of ownership in the Manufactured Housing District,
649 as that is the purpose of that District. The Board asked questions on the residential density allowed
650 in the R/A and Route 33 Heritage Districts, and Ms. Price explained that only one single-family
651 home or one duplex would be allowed per lot, but if a mixed-use development was proposed,
652

644 additional residential units would be allowed. The Board was satisfied with the changes.
645

646 Mr. Canada asked if an amendment could be proposed that addresses the percentage of wetlands
647 on open space land and the residential lots in Open Space Cluster Subdivisions. The Board
648 discussed it, and there was an amendment in March 2025 that addressed the concern. Mr. Zaremba
649 expressed concern that if the open space cluster subdivision requirements become too stringent, it
650 will steer developers towards traditional subdivisions. Mr. Canada replied that there are still
651 advantages to a cluster subdivision, including smaller lots. Ms. Price added that there are benefits
652 to a developer for reduced infrastructure costs. The Board discussed and approved increasing the
653 percentage of required open space from 35% to 40% in open space cluster subdivisions.
654

655 Ms. Price described the proposed cottage court design standards. The Board was not in favor of
656 adding cottage courts and would like it researched for future consideration.
657

658 Ms. Price described suggested changes to the addition of a Technical Review Committee, including
659 adding a Planning Board member as part of the TRC. The Board agreed. Mr. Canada commented
660 that the Applicant's attendance at the meeting should be added.
661

662 **Mr. Zaremba made a motion to continue the last three amendments to November 15, 2025.**
663 **Mr. House seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.**
664

665 **5. Public Meeting (Miscellaneous)**

666 A. Additional discussion of proposed Zoning Amendment for Impact Fees.
667

668 Ms. Price presented the Board with a staff memo on Impact Fees and asked the Board to review it
669 for the next meeting. The memo includes a study prepared by the Rockingham Planning
670 Commission, and if the Board is interested, a representative from RPC could attend a Planning
671 Board meeting and answer questions.
672

673 B. Appeal of Winnicutt Road Subdivision
674

675 Ms. Price updated the Board that abutters for the Winnicutt Road Subdivision filed an appeal with
676 the ZBA on the Planning Board's decision.
677

678 **6. Adjournment**
679

680 **Mr. Canada made a motion to adjourn at 9:50 pm. Mr. Zaremba seconded the motion. All voted**
681 **in favor, and the motion passed.**
682

683 *Respectfully submitted by Susan Connors*