



**Stratham Planning Board Meeting Minutes**  
**December 17, 2025**  
**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, Ex-Officio Select Board Member

**Staff Present:** Vanessa Price, Director of Planning and Building

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

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

**2. Approval of Minutes**

A. December 3, 2025, Planning Board meeting minutes

**Mr. Kunowski made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 5, 2025 as amended. Mr. Zaremba seconded the motion.** Mr. Zaremba commented that his name is mistakenly listed as present. **All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

**3. Public Hearing:**

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

Mr. Allison recused himself.

Ms. Price explained that the application is a Design Review that included abutter notification. The plans were resubmitted to address the revised Wetlands Conservation District ordinance. A conditional use permit is needed for the multi-family units in accordance with Section 5.7 of the zoning ordinance. The plans as presented tonight would need to go back before the Zoning Board of Adjustment for relief from dimensional requirements for the lots to meet the Special Commercial Zoning District without utilities and possibly for wetland buffer encroachment. Conditional use permits and/or variances may be needed for each lot depending on final building location. The Shoreland Protection District Overlay applies to this project. The Applicant will need

to go before the Exeter Planning Board, the Exeter-Squamscott River Local Advisory Committee, and the Stratham Conservation Commission. Initial concerns from the Conservation Commission are with wetland buffer encroachment, that the open space is primarily wetlands and not real open space, and that there is no access to the river for public use other than those in the HOA. The Conservation Commission also requested that signage be installed designating wetland areas. The Stratham Fire Inspector commented that there is not an adequate water supply for fire protection on the plan set. Ms. Price continued stating that a variance was granted for single-family home use on the lots. On November 18, 2024, there was an agreement to settle litigation over the proposed development between the Select Board and the applicant. The agreement includes a commitment to promote housing alternatives within the development that at least 20% of housing units be either a joined array or townhouse style unit, where the units share a common wall, or multi-family units with a minimum of three residential units per building. Additionally of the previously mentioned 20%, at least 60% will be units with a minimum of three residential units in each building. The agreement also states that should the Planning Board not grant conditional approval for the duplex and multi-family units, the plans may be modified to permit all single-family units.

Mr. House asked if this project will be designated as Regional Impact. Ms. Price replied that she anticipates so since it is near Exeter, but that the Planning Board must determine that. The other Planning Board members agreed it will be Regional Impact.

Mr. House invited the Applicant to speak.

Joe Coronati of Jones and Beach Engineers and Mike Garrepy of Garrepy Group represented the Applicant.

Mr. Coronati stated that the goal tonight is to present the Board with what is planned for the property. There have been many iterations, and they have tried unsuccessfully to get utilities from the Town of Exeter. The development will be serviced by onsite water supply and septic systems. The proposal includes 20 individual lots that meet the Special Commercial zoning. He questioned Ms. Price's earlier comments about needing ZBA approval for the lots. Ms. Price replied that the plan that was presented to the Conservation Commission might not meet front setbacks for all lots. Mr. Coronati replied he will address that later, but that the lots meet the frontage and lot size requirements. The parcels have a lot of wetlands both tidal and freshwater along with some uplands that will make up open space common areas that will be maintained by the HOA. Two parcels are set aside for community septic systems that is part of the settlement agreement. Wetlands permits will be required for the project including a sizable box culvert or bridge over Parkman Brook. All lots will have individual wells and a variation of housing including townhouses and single-family homes in a joined array. Mr. Coronati's understanding is that joined array homes do not have to have an attached wall between them which is why they are proposed as single-family style homes. He requested clarification from the Board on that. A 60-foot right of way is proposed and with a 60-foot front setback, that would cause the driveways to be 80 feet long. Reducing the front setback to 40 feet and the right of way to 40 feet is what the project team would like to discuss with the Planning Board and potentially the Zoning Board. That would allow the homes to be moved closer to the road and farther from wetlands in the rear. With the road being private, there will be no maintenance responsibilities for the Town. He believes the 60-foot front setback seems to be related to commercial uses. He presumes that fire cisterns will be added within 1,000 feet of all homes and added that there are fire hydrants owned by the Town of Exeter on Stoneybrook Drive. This development of 22 townhomes and 28 single-family homes is smaller than what was presented to the Planning Board previously, which was 65 to 70 units. There is an existing house on the property that over hangs a pond and they would like to work with NHDES to build a more

conforming home in place of the existing home. Mr. Coronati stated that he anticipates that NHDES would require that the waterway be opened up. He explained the existing construction of a dam with sluice gates that are partially in disrepair. He stated the Parkman Brook crossing will likely be an open bottom, wider span structure. Mr. Coronati described the project as a subdivision but with some site plan elements and would like to know what applications the Board would want for this project. He asked for comments from the Board and offered to repeat his questions.

Mr. Canada asked if the plan submitted a yield plan is. Mr. Coronati replied no, this is a conventional subdivision and that the Special Commercial District allows multiple units per lot.

Mr. House asked how long is the first branch off the main road with the hammerhead. Mr. Coronati replied it is 634 feet.

Mr. House stated that the first lot will be a tough one to work on. He disclosed that he worked on this project years ago with a different developer, but is comfortable staying on the Board for this project. He encouraged the project team to look carefully at siting a new home on that first lot as there is no way to get the proper distance from wetlands. Mr. Garrepy stated that if they need to go to the Zoning Board for the front setbacks mentioned previously, then he assumes they would seek relief for Lot 1 at the same time. They need to speak with NHDES and Gove Environmental before making plans for that lot. Mr. Coronati added that he believes that technically they could rebuild the house in the current location, but that is not the goal and that constructing up to the edge of the wetland is an improvement over that. Mr. Canada asked how long the house has been abandoned. Ms. Price will need to look into that.

Mr. Coronati stated that for this design review they laid out a plan that is in conformance with the settlement agreement and the current regulations. They did not include cisterns and public access at this stage as they didn't want to spend a lot of time on final design without Planning Board input.

Mr. Coronati is seeking a straw poll from the Board on the design that shows townhouses instead of duplexes and that if a conditional use permit were not granted, then they would change the project to all single-family homes. They are attempting to create a diversity of housing stock in conformance with the settlement agreement.

Mr. Canada asked why do they want this configuration vs. single-family homes. Mr. Coronati replied that they prefer single-family homes but the agreement with Select Board was that they present a variety of housing types. Mr. Canada asked why did the Select Board request that. Mr. Coronati does not know and can only speculate that they wanted it for different price ranges and suggested the Select Board answer that.

Mr. Canada asked how many single-family homes would there be if it was all single-family. Mr. Coronati replied that the existing single lots would stay single and the multi-family lots would be converted to multiple detached single family units on each lot with a total number to be determined later.

Mr. Kunowski questioned if a conventional subdivision must have one house per lot. Mr. Coronati replied that the Special Commercial District allows multiple buildings on a lot. Mr. House added that single-family and duplex units are regulated under the International Residential Code for building but more than two residential units per lot becomes commercial and is a different building code.

145 Mr. Kunowski asked if the total number of units on lot 5 conforms to what is allowed. Mr. Coronati  
146 replied that he believes eight is the maximum allowed under the ordinance. Mr. House asked if  
147 that includes the lot coverage limitation. Mr. Coronati replied that is a good point and they haven't  
148 looked that closely yet, but they can modify the lot lines during a more detailed review. Ms. Price  
149 added that she looked into the application aspect of the different housing types and it was  
150 determined that this is a conventional subdivision and the multiple single-family homes on a single  
151 lot can be reviewed as array homes like in the cluster subdivision section and the multi-family  
152 homes will need a site plan application as well as a subdivision application. She added that the  
153 ordinance requires that a percentage of multi-family housing be classified as workforce housing.  
154

155 Mr. Coronati asked if multi-family applications are needed for each lot or just for the overall  
156 project. Ms. Price replied that it would be for the overall project – a subdivision, site plan,  
157 conditional use permit for multi-family, and conditional use permit for wetlands crossings.  
158 Additionally, if any structures are proposed within the wetlands setback, at the time of building  
159 permit application submittal, each parcel will need a conditional use permit or a variance,  
160 whichever is applicable. Mr. Coronati replied that he believes Lot 1 is the only lot that will need  
161 relief. All other structures will be proposed outside of the wetland buffer and building setback with  
162 only minor grading for yards in the setback.  
163

164 Mr. Zaremba asked if lots 2, 3, 4, and 5 are the ones designed to satisfy the Select Board agreement.  
165 Mr. Garrepy replied yes, primarily along with the joined array lots. Mr. Zaremba asked if,  
166 hypothetically, the Board did not approve multi-family, would those lots change to single-family  
167 and would they keep the joined arrays. Mr. Coronati replied yes and there would probably be  
168 multiple singles on lots 2, 3, 4, and 5 as well.  
169

170 Mr. Zaremba commented that he agrees with Mr. Kunowski that it is confusing to cite the cluster  
171 subdivision design of array housing in a development that is not a cluster subdivision; that is  
172 doesn't seem to comply. Mr. Garrepy replied that they are treating them as single-family that are  
173 allowed per the variance.  
174

175 Mr. Canada asked how big the townhouses will be. Mr. Garrepy replied he thinks those are 24 by  
176 40 which is subject to change, but not getting much smaller than that. Mr. Coronati added that the  
177 plans show 24 by 36 with an eight-foot deck off the back. Mr. Canada asked if they are two  
178 bedrooms. Mr. Coronati replied two or three bedrooms and three floors including a two-car garage  
179 on the bottom. Mr. House commented that they need to watch the building height restriction.  
180

181 Mr. Coronati showed a public access trail to the river and discussed a possible future location for  
182 a pump station to Exeter sewer accessed under the Squamscott River. Mr. Garrepy noted that they  
183 will provide the connection easement to the Town of Stratham as it is good planning and they tried  
184 three times to get agreement from Exeter for water and sewer, but were unsuccessful.  
185

186 Ms. Price asked if all the houses are planned to be located in Stratham. Mr. Coronati replied yes.  
187 She noted that some lots might have rear yards in Exeter and if there are accessory structures, they  
188 might have different restrictions than Stratham.  
189

190 Mr. House asked if the private road will be built to town standards. Mr. Coronati replied yes.  
191

192 Mr. Kunowski asked for confirmation that because this is a conventional subdivision that the open  
193 space on the parcel is not used to calculate density or the number of lots. Ms. Price replied that is

correct. Mr. Garrepy added that they could incorporate all the open space into the lots, but they think it is better stewardship of the open space to have it as part of the common land.

Mr. Canada asked if the variance application was for 59 single-family dwellings, then how can they propose duplexes. Mr. Garrepy replied that when they were before the Zoning Board, they were clear that they were not seeking any density relief. They were there to get the use approved by way of the variance. At that time, they were not sure if water and sewer could be available from Exeter. That density number may have been a lot larger than what they are talking about now. Mr. Canada stated that he is having a hard time reconciling a project that is not all single-family as that is what the Zoning Board granted. Mr. Garrepy replied that the Zoning Board granted the use of single-family but did not restrict the property to only that use. Mr. Canada is not satisfied with that response and believes the applicant is mixing and matching the zoning.

Mr. Zaremba asked if single-family was granted by right. Mr. Garrepy replied correct. Mr. Zaremba asked if a conditional use permit is required for single-family use. Ms. Price replied no, the Zoning Board permitted single-family dwelling units in a district where the use is not permitted. She verified that array homes are included in that decision. Mr. Garrepy added that they would have proposed all single-family homes if it had not been appealed by the Select Board and through the negotiations with the Select Board, they agreed to do a mix. The Select Board is aware that the Planning Board has the authority to not grant conditional use permits and if that is the case, they will change the project to all single-family homes.

Ms. Price stated that the variance expires in two weeks. Mr. Garrepy replied that they are exercising it right now. Ms. Price will check on that. Mr. Garrepy agreed that counsel should be consulted and wondered if the clock stopped during the time spent working with the Select Board through the appeal process. Mr. Canada noted that it has been over a year since the agreement.

Mr. House asked for final comments.

Mr. Kunowski commented that the project seems like a lot of units on the property. He knows it has gone through a lot of discussion, and it may ultimately be determined by septic rules and things like that.

Mr. Zaremba would like to see public access to open space, and he would like someone (e.g. town engineer) to look at the sewer and water access and how it could serve the town in the future. He also commented that the dimensional square required in Section 4.3(i) of the ordinance applies.

**Mr. Zaremba made a motion to open the meeting to the public. Mr. Kunowski seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.** There were no comments from the public.

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

Mr. Coronati asked if the Board would be concerned with the project proposing a waiver for roadway width. Ms. Price clarified based on this design because if the design changes, then the Board might feel differently. Mr. House replied that police and fire will need to respond. Mr. Coronati replied that the pavement, traveled way will not be narrower. Mr. House replied that the pavement is his main concern because it is a long way in and safety vehicles need to be able to get around each other. He would not be in favor of minimizing the width of the drive itself. Mr. Kunowski is confused by the question because the settlement agreement states it must be a private

road in perpetuity and there was a comment earlier about something happening in the future that it became a town road. Mr. Garrepy clarified that Mr. Coronati's earlier statement was to use that as a reason to not accept the road if residents asked. Mr. Kunowski stated that he is leaning towards it should conform to normal road standards. Mr. House explained that the road itself will be constructed to road standards, and they are asking to minimize the right-of-way width beyond the pavement. Based on that, Mr. Kunowski does not feel strongly one way or the other in a private road setting. Mr. Zaremba commented that even though the town won't maintain it, someone will take care of the road, and he doesn't understand that just because the town isn't taking care of the road, that the right-of-way can be reduced. Mr. Garrepy explained that a 60-foot right-of-way is found more in a city environment where there is more room for utilities and sidewalks on both sides of the road and wider travel lanes. In this type of application, they have constructed 40 and sometimes 30-foot right of ways because the roads are narrower and the grading and drainage can be located within that 40 feet. Basically, towns or cities require larger right of ways if there is more need for infrastructure to be inside that right-of-way. Mr. Coronati added an example of tree removal in the right of way and stated that this will be more like a condominium where an association will handle all maintenance in the right-of-way. Mr. House asked if this will be a condominium. Mr. Coronati replied on some lots there will be condominiums, but there will be an HOA that will take care of everything. Mr. House noted that he thought the settlement agreement mentioned condominiums. Mr. Coronati replied that all units will be sold individually and some as condos. The maintenance will be common maintenance similar to Rollins Hill where there is a private road off the end of a public road. Mr. Zaremba stated he is not fully convinced, but he will look at a waiver. Mr. Coronati stated that the Conservation Commission strongly supported the reduction in the right-of-way and front setbacks. Mr. Canada stated that generally speaking he thinks the Board is allowing too many variations on zoning, but they make a good argument to keep construction further away from the wetlands, so he'd probably be inclined to support it.

Mr. Canada asked if sound barriers will be installed. Mr. Garrepy replied if anything it would be trees. Mr. Canada does not think that is sufficient for sound. Mr. Garrepy replied it does a bit for sound and DOT is not putting up a sound wall and Mr. Garrepy is fine with that. Mr. Canada asked if the developer is willing to put one up. Mr. Garrepy replied we are not. Mr. Canada stated that he thinks sound is very important for the people that will be their customers, but also the town's residents. He added that the Conservation Commission commented on that and suggested that some decibel readings would be helpful.

Mr. House commented that a traffic study should be done. Mr. Coronati replied one has been completed, and one benefit is that all the residents will have access to the lights at McDonald's. Mr. House asked them to find out how wide the pavement is on Stoneybrook.

Mr. Zaremba asked if they have spoken with any of the residential abutters. Mr. Garrepy replied that it has been a while since they spoke with the abutter in Stratham and they seemed supportive of a residential project when they spoke. He thinks the Exeter residents weren't thrilled that something was going to happen. Mr. Coronati replied that he recalls during the preliminary consultation that many residents spoke that they were happy it wasn't a big commercial development with trucks and dumpsters and access on weekends.

Mr. Garrepy will follow up with Ms. Price on a ZBA extension.

Ms. Price suggested that the Applicant review Section 5.1 of the Ordinance for Lot 1 as they may have to ask for a Special Exception.

Mr. Kunowski asked if they have taken soil samples to review for density and conforming with those requirements. Mr. Garrepy replied they did a first round of test pits and will complete another round at some point.

**Mr. Zaremba made a motion to close the Design Review. Mr. Kunowski seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed.**

Mr. Allison rejoined the Board at 8:30 pm.

#### B. Proposed 2026 Zoning Amendments.

Mr. House stated for the record that this is a public hearing, but no members of the public are present.

Ms. Price explained the changes in this revision of the amendments since the last meeting. They include corrections to Section 3.10.2 that have erroneous references and a requirement for a State of New Hampshire Inventory Form for historic structures, and structure footprint limitations in the Route 33 Heritage District. The Board provided comments to the language regarding footprint limitations.

Ms. Price presented a proposed amendment to allow the Planning Board to set the application fee for a Conditional Use Permit for Residential Open Space Cluster Subdivisions instead of the Select Board. The Board rejected that proposal.

Ms. Price presented a definition of historic structure. The Board agreed.

**Mr. Zaremba made a motion to continue the public hearing to January 7, 2026. Mr. Canada seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

The Board left the amendments open to the public.

### 6. Miscellaneous

#### A. Planning Board Rules of Procedure update discussion.

Ms. Price presented draft Rules of Procedure for the Board to review for a future public hearing. The current rules were drafted in 2005 and have not been updated since then. The Board will review the draft for a future meeting.

### 7. Adjournment

**Mr. Canada made a motion to adjourn at 9:01 pm. Mr. Zaremba seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

*Respectfully submitted by Susan Connors*