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**Stratham Planning Board Meeting Minutes**  
**May 20, 2026, 7:00 pm**  
**Stratham Municipal Center**

5 **Members Present:** Thomas House, Chair  
6 John Kunowski, Vice Chair  
7 Tedd Tramaloni, Ex-Officio Select Board Member  
8 Jay Fraprie, Regular Member  
9 Nate Allison, Alternate Member

11 **Members Absent:** Chris Zaremba, Regular Member

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

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

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

18 **2. Review and Approval of Minutes**

19 A. May 6, 2026, Planning Board meeting minutes

20 **Mr. Kunowski made a motion to approve the May 6th minutes as drafted. Mr. Fraprie**  
21 **seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

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23 Mr. House appointed Mr. Allison as a voting member for the meeting.

25 **3. Public Hearing (New Business)**

26 A. Viewpoint Sign & Awning (Applicant) and Haralampos Sidiropoulos Revocable Trust (Owner)  
27 request for a Site Plan Amendment for Dunkin Donuts signage located at 46 Portsmouth Avenue  
28 (Tax Map 9, Lot 114) in the Gateway Commercial Business Zoning District. The application was  
29 submitted by Viewpoint Sign & Awning. Requested Continuance.

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31 Ms. Price explained that the application was incomplete and they did not resubmit within a timely  
32 manner. Because abutters were notified, they requested a continuance to the June 3, 2026 meeting.  
33 Mr. Fraprie asked if they can meet the 15-day deadline. Ms. Price clarified that she received  
34 resubmitted plans and she has some questions for them to address before the June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

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36 **Mr. Kunowski made a motion to continue the sign review for the application at 46**  
37 **Portsmouth Avenue to the June 3, 2026 Planning Board meeting. Mr. Fraprie seconded the**  
38 **motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

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40 **4. Public Hearing (New Business)**

41 A. 217 Portsmouth Ave LLC (Applicant and Owner) request for a Route 33 Heritage District  
42 Application for revised architecture at an approved Condominium Subdivision located at 217  
43 Portsmouth Avenue, Tax Map 21, Lot 88 in Route 33 Legacy Highway Heritage Zoning District.  
44 The application was submitted by Emanuel Engineering, Inc. Request to withdraw.

46 Mr. House questioned how an application can be withdrawn that has not been presented to the  
47 Planning Board. Ms. Price explained that abutters were notified, so the application was included  
48 on the agenda. The Applicant requested on May 18<sup>th</sup> to withdraw the application. It was never  
49 opened to public comment, so Ms. Price wanted to ensure that if any members of the public came  
50 tonight, they would be aware that the application was withdrawn.

51  
52 The Board discussed the process for withdrawing an application that has not yet been presented to  
53 the Board in a public meeting or hearing. The Board requested that Ms. Price consult with Town  
54 Counsel to determine the appropriate process.

55  
56 **Mr. Kunowski made a motion to continue the potential application for 217 Portsmouth**  
57 **Avenue to the June 17, 2026 Planning Board meeting. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion.**  
58 **All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**  
59

60 **5. Public Hearing (Old Business):**

61 A. Continued from April 15, 2026:

62 Brendan Sheehan (Applicant and Owner) request for Subdivision, Conditional Use Permit, and  
63 Route 33 Heritage District applications for a proposed residential development at 210 Portsmouth  
64 Avenue (Tax Map 21, Lot 81) in the Route 33 Legacy Highway Heritage District and the Wetlands  
65 Conservation Overlay District. The project includes the construction of four duplexes (two-  
66 bedroom units), while retaining the existing duplex and barn. Conditional Use Permits are required  
67 for construction in wetland, wetland buffer, and/or wetland setback areas for a shared driveway, a  
68 dry hydrant to an existing pond, three of the duplexes, water supply well installation, and  
69 stormwater infrastructure. The applications were submitted by Beals Associates.

70  
71 Ms. Price announced actions for the Board tonight, including reviewing Town counsel's opinion  
72 on aspects of the project. The plans have been revised to remove the dry hydrant and its subsequent  
73 CUP application and to include paving the fire access road. Conservation Commission comments  
74 are included in the Board's packet. The Route 33 Heritage District application is also available for  
75 the Board's review. A letter in support of the project was also received for when the meeting is  
76 opened to the public.

77  
78 Mr. House asked the Applicant to present the project.

79  
80 Brett Allard, attorney with Shaughnessy Allard, spoke on behalf of the Applicant. He introduced  
81 the project team of Brendan Sheehan, owner; Sergio Bonilla, wetland scientist; and John Lorden,  
82 the project engineer. He addressed three questions that were sent to the town's attorney, but one  
83 regarding the dry hydrant is no longer applicable since the hydrant was removed. Two remaining  
84 questions are the issue of the condominium and how individual lot lines relate to condo projects,  
85 and the question of whether the septic systems need to be at least 100 feet from the existing pond  
86 or seek a variance from the Zoning Board. Mr. Allard stated that the Town's attorney supported  
87 the project's position with respect to the condominium form of development. The Town's attorney  
88 disagreed with the Applicant's position about the septic systems and gave an analysis on why he  
89 believes that the leach fields need to be at least 100 feet from the water body, or else get a variance.  
90 Mr. Allard stated the project team is working on revised plans to move the leach fields outside of  
91 that 100-foot buffer. He stated it won't be ideal, because some of the septic infrastructure will be  
92 underneath pavement for the access road, which is a little more complicated to get to than if it's  
93 under grass. He requested that the Board defer making any sort of administrative decision about  
94 the zoning question until revised plans are submitted that demonstrate zoning compliance. If the  
95 Board makes a decision tonight based on the current plan, that puts the Applicant on a clock to do  
96 an Administrative Appeal to the Zoning Board and to go for the variance. Mr. Allard stated he

97 thinks that can all be avoided if that discussion is tabled. As for the condominium lot line issue,  
98 that is fairly straightforward and probably ripe for the Board's input at this point tonight.  
99

100 Mr. Sheehan presented his project. He stated that the Conservation Commission had no problems  
101 with the CUP requests for the stormwater infrastructure and water supply wells. Regarding the  
102 CUP for the shared driveway, Mr. Sheehan stated that one intent of the zoning district is the  
103 creation of greater housing diversity and types, styles, and sizes, providing community members  
104 and new residents of all ages and income levels with accessible new housing. He stepped through  
105 each of the criteria and explained how he believes the project meets each criterion: that the area of  
106 the property proposed for development cannot be accessed without a wetlands crossing, that the  
107 amount of impact (287 square feet) is tiny in relation to the size of the property (484,172 square  
108 feet), and that the wetland is low quality and low value. Mr. Sheehan asked Mr. Bonilla to speak  
109 to that.  
110

111 Mr. Bonilla believes there was a miscommunication with the Conservation Commission when he  
112 presented to them. He explained that he said to the Conservation Commission that the project  
113 demonstrated avoidance of the higher quality wetlands associated with Jewett Hill Brook and  
114 others and that the area of impact is a low quality, low functioning, historically disturbed emergent  
115 wetland system. It has low plant diversity and collects water for a little while. Mr. Bonilla said that  
116 he saw a comment letter from the Conservation Commission that the project is directly impacting  
117 a high-quality wetland, and he corrected for the record that when he mentioned the high-quality  
118 wetland, those are in the back of the property and are being completely avoided for this project.  
119

120 Mr. Sheehan continued with the criteria justification for the driveway. He stated that the  
121 construction of power lines is not applicable and that everything will be run under the driveway  
122 underground and there is no feasible alternative route.  
123

124 Mr. Sheehan explained his criteria justification for the duplexes in the wetland setback. He stated  
125 that two of the duplexes could be sited closer together, but he wants to provide the residents with  
126 space to live and enjoy the land. There are site constraints with the lot being narrow and long and  
127 the chosen location is the best for the duplexes. He provided examples of tenant applications that  
128 he has received which he believes directly align to the Master Plan of high-income earners that  
129 can't afford million-dollar homes in Stratham.  
130

131 Mr. Sheehan read a comment letter from Ryan Hopkins, a Stratham resident, in favor of the project  
132 that was submitted to Ms. Price and is part of the record. That concluded his presentation.  
133

134 Mr. Bonilla reiterated that he wants his letter from March 2026 relative to the functioning of the  
135 wetland put into the record.  
136

137 Ms. Price presented an email from the Town's legal counsel dated May 17, 2026, which provides  
138 an opinion on the proposed location of the septic system within 100 feet of a wetland. Mr.  
139 Kunowski stated that the Applicant stated tonight that he will return with a new plan that eliminates  
140 the septic system within 100 feet of water bodies. Mr. Kunowski asked for confirmation. Someone  
141 from the project team confirmed the changes will be made.  
142

143 Ms. Price continued with the legal counsel's opinion on the completeness of the application and  
144 lot lines. Mr. Kunowski asked Ms. Price if she agrees with the Applicant's comments tonight so  
145 that is not an open issue any longer. Ms. Price replied that the zoning they applied under is the  
146 2025 zoning and they meet that criteria for zoning. Mr. House stated that Town counsel agrees  
147 with the applicant.

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Ms. Price announced that the Heritage District application should be reviewed next and described the application materials. Of particular importance is the Applicant's request to use vinyl siding. Ms. Price stated that the Board should make it clear tonight what siding material is approved. If the Board prefers to see revised plans with the siding material depicted, the Board does not have to take action tonight on that. Mr. House and Mr. Sheehan discussed updates to the architectural plans, and it was decided that the Board would wait for revised architectural plans to be submitted.

Mr. Tramaloni asked where the septic system will be relocated to. Mr. Sheehan described it as being moved west under pavement.

Mr. House announced that the Route 33 Heritage District Advisory Committee and the Heritage Commission voted in favor of recommending that the Planning Board approve or move the application forward. He asked for a motion to approve or not approve.

Mr. Fraprie asked what the size of the units is. Mr. Sheehan replied two-bedroom, two and a half baths, and about 1,900 square feet, including the garages.

Mr. Allison asked if there are basements. Mr. Sheehan replied there are finished, full basements.

Ms. Price asked the Board if they wanted to wait to review the revised drawings before voting on the application. The Board agreed to wait. Mr. House tabled the motion on this application.

Mr. House asked if any members of the public wanted to speak to the septic system locations.

Jason Reimers with BCM Environmental and Land Law spoke on behalf of his client, Barker's Farm, who is an abutter, and introduced Edie Barker and Forrest Barker. He stated that all three septic systems are required to be 100 feet away from waterbodies, and all three are currently proposed within 100 feet of a waterbody, and described the waterbody locations. He urged the Board to not act on any of the CUP applications until new plans are submitted. Mr. House replied that the Board tabled that review until revised plans are submitted.

Mr. House requested that Mr. Sheehan read through the criteria justification for the CUP for the driveway. Mr. Sheehan did so. Mr. House asked for comments from the Board.

Mr. Fraprie stated that he agrees there is no other access, but he sees that the Conservation Commission voted against it. He doesn't see what else they can do given the property, if they are going to develop.

Mr. House asked about the necessity of a variance vs. a CUP. Ms. Price explained that the Ordinance allows for a CUP for the driveway and that the Applicant has a choice. Mr. Allard, the Applicant's attorney, spoke to this. He stated that a variance is a request to do something that the zoning ordinance prohibits. A conditional use permit is an innovative land use control that is specifically allowed by right and encouraged, so long as you check those boxes and meet those criteria. Both require approval, but sort of a fundamental distinction between the underlying purpose. Mr. Sheehan added that the proposed use is encouraged by this zoning district.

Mr. Kunowski stated that he does not disagree with Mr. Sheehan on the need for that type of housing, but that there seems to be a reason why this lot hasn't been developed to date. He believes that the reason is that a large portion of the lot is unbuildable wetlands, and regardless of the quality of the wetland, he believes a wetland is a wetland and struggles with approving the application.

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Mr. Allison commented that regarding construction staging, he believes the wetland impact will be greater than what is shown on the plans. He requested that the Town's consulting engineer review the plans to determine if construction is possible the way it is shown. Mr. Allison added that he can go through any subdivision and show examples of where there were woods, and there is nothing remaining within 25 feet of the foundation. Mr. Sheehan replied that most of the space to be developed is already open. There is only about a quarter of an acre of wooded area that will be impacted. The construction style will be modular housing, so the houses will be built in four boxes, and a crane will set up on the driveway. After the foundation is excavated and the concrete walls are set, the house will be picked up by the crane and dropped onto the foundation. The house will be sided, roofed, and windows will be in; it will be a finished home aside from the stick-built garages and mudrooms. He stated there will be some stick-built areas where there will be further impact to the buffer, but for the most part they were very mindful of the criteria and found a way to make as small of an impact as possible. Mr. Allison responded that he didn't mean to imply his comment was directed at woods, but that on a wooded lot, the extent of disturbance is easier to see as opposed to a field. He thinks that the act of constructing a foundation will be more significant than is shown on the plans. Mr. Allard responded that they could prepare a construction means and methods analysis that would address how and where the construction will happen and what the impacts are going to be. Mr. Allison agreed and added that when a plan shows that something is a limit, that should be staked by a licensed surveyor prior to any construction taking place.

Mr. House asked if anyone in the audience wanted to speak to this CUP application.

Mr. Reimers agreed that there appears to be more buffer impacts for staging and construction, and he raised that in a comment letter submitted last month. He presented a photograph to the Board that was taken today from the edge of the Barker's Farm irrigation pond, and it showed the water and wetlands associated with the pond going right up to the property line. Mr. Reimers stated that the picture shows a wetland full of water, which is critical to the Barker's farming business operations. He does not know which wetland the Applicant stated is low quality, but for Barker's Farm, the wetland is high quality and of extremely high importance and functionality to Barker's Farm. He reminded the Board that the Barker family, the Town (which has an executory interest in the conservation easements), and the Southeast Land Trust have a lot invested in the vitality of Barker's Farm. It is an asset to the Town that should not be jeopardized, so the Applicant can maximize development of this property. Mr. Reimers stated that not only does the Applicant propose a septic system within 100 feet of that pond, but the Applicant proposes to put a road in along the pond. The road will have salt, oil, other contaminants, and some of this will inevitably run off the roadway into the pond. The roadway has impacts to both the 25-foot no-disturbance buffer and the 25-foot to 75-foot wetlands buffer, as well as the wetland itself. While the Planning Board may allow a road within the no-disturbance buffer and the wetlands buffer, he read aloud Section 11.2.3 of the Zoning Ordinance and reiterated that the 25-foot buffer does not allow anything but tree maintenance in the no-disturbance buffer and that strict protection of the wetland is important when the Board applies the Conditional Use Permit criteria. He stated that if the Board cannot make factual findings to support each and every criteria, the CUP must be denied. Mr. Reimers does not believe the Applicant satisfies the first and last criteria. Regarding the criterion that the proposed construction is essential to the productive use of land not within the Wetlands Conservation District, Mr. Reimers stated that the site is capable of being productively used without any new impacts to the wetland, the no-disturbance buffer, or the wetlands buffer. Today the site supports a five-bedroom duplex, and the Applicant has shown that it is also possible to install a second duplex without wetland or wetland buffer impacts. There are other uses of the property that the Applicant could pursue, aside from these duplexes shown on this plan. He continued with the final criterion that economic advantage alone is not a reason for the proposed

250 development. Mr. Reimers does not believe the CUP applications explain how this criterion is met.  
251 The property has long been used productively and continues to be used. He stated that they heard  
252 tonight that new tenants have moved in, and new tenants are moving in next week. Tenant demand  
253 is driving this economic development. The only reason for this increased proposed development  
254 is economic advantage. There are no public safety reasons, public benefit, or any other reasons that  
255 justify this development, except that the Applicant wants to increase the economic yield of the  
256 property. Mr. Reimers thinks this is obvious, and the reason that the Applicant gives no other  
257 reasons is that there are no other reasons. Mr. Reimers quoted from the application that “the  
258 purpose of the requested relief is not to maximize yield, but rather to improve site functionality  
259 and design quality”. He asserted that those are still economic reasons to make the increased  
260 development more palatable for the Board, more desirable for the Applicant, or more desirable for  
261 future tenants or condo owners. But this site functionality and design quality still fall under the  
262 category of economic advantage. The whole proposal is about economic advantage. Mr. Reimers  
263 does not fault the Applicant for wanting increased economic gain, but that's not what a conditional  
264 use permit is for. The Applicant states in the application “this approach represents a lower impact  
265 alternative compared to more intensive site disturbance scenarios”. However, under the CUP  
266 criteria, the standard is not whether this is a less intensive development than the Applicant's prior  
267 proposals or other proposals they can make. The standard is whether this current proposal is  
268 necessary for the productive use of the property, which it is not, and whether this proposal is solely  
269 for economic gain, and the conditional use applications fail for these reasons. Not only do these  
270 economic reasons not qualify for a conditional use permit, the reasons why these requirements  
271 exist is squarely on display here, where the increased economic development will not only impact  
272 wetlands and their buffers, but will be adjacent to an important irrigation pond that supports one  
273 of the last remaining farms in Stratham; that the public has deemed important through the use of  
274 conservation easements, so for these reasons the Planning Board cannot lawfully grant these  
275 conditional use permit applications, because they don't satisfy all five criteria, like a variance,  
276 every single criterion has to be satisfied, otherwise it would be a legal error. The conditional use  
277 permit exists to provide a safety valve for when the zoning ordinance will prohibit development of  
278 a property, but it's not a vehicle for the increased development of an already developed property.  
279 Mr. Reimers stated he agrees that increased housing is generally encouraged by the Master Plan;  
280 it is not any increased housing anywhere. It has to be, in this case, in a way and in a place that  
281 satisfies every criterion of the conditional use permit.  
282

283 Mark Mordecai, 19 Crockett’s Way and President of the Hills at Crockett Farm Homeowner’s  
284 Association, spoke. He stated that the Association agreed with the Conservation Commission’s  
285 recommendation to not fill in wetlands and to not put structures in setback areas. The HOA has  
286 difficulty imagining what the impact could be on the wetland system running from the Barker’s  
287 Farm through the Applicant’s property to the Crockett Farm property. He stated that the wetlands  
288 are not discrete pieces, that they are a system that are fed maybe with springs going into the Barker  
289 Farm pond and running down and across this property. Mr. Mordecai stated that a lot of  
290 development that is proposed (filling in wetlands and impermeable surfaces and structures in the  
291 setback zones) is going to impact how that water flows, and the HOA does not know what the  
292 consequences of that are. He explained the HOA is concerned because the Crockett Farm  
293 development, when founded, included that the land would be agricultural land in perpetuity and  
294 the HOA currently leases their fields to the Barkers, who have been farming it religiously. The  
295 HOA is concerned that anything that impacts that flow is going to have a negative effect on how  
296 that water flows through the property. The other thing that the HOA is concerned about is the  
297 impact of septic systems on that property. He stated there are questions about setbacks from  
298 wetlands, but there are also setbacks from property lines, and how those septic tanks are going to  
299 be maintained, and what the impact may be on the agricultural land that abuts it. That is a serious  
300 issue, particularly if the flow of wetlands gets diverted in a number of different ways. Mr. Mordecai

301 added that there is in a recent drawing, a well radius is impacting the Crockett Farm land and  
302 Barker Farm land. He stated that the HOA is not interested in having any impact at all on their  
303 land, and if that means that the land can't be farmed and fertilized because it is in the radius of the  
304 well, that's an impact, and one can't impose that on an abutting property. In summary, he stated  
305 that the HOA is very concerned about septic, about wells and the impact on the agricultural use,  
306 and are particularly concerned about the wetland. Mr. Mordecai added that all of Stratham enjoy  
307 the trails that pass through the property and the owner has said that he intends to keep those trails  
308 open. Mr. Mordecai stated there is nothing in this application or the Board's draft approval that is  
309 delineating these trails that have historic significance and are used for farm equipment to reach the  
310 HOA's property, and that people bicycle and hike and do all the stuff they do in Stratham. There's  
311 no indication in this approval set where you would make sure that that was maintained. He stated  
312 that because somebody says they are going to do it doesn't necessarily solve the problem, as far as  
313 public access is concerned. There's lots of public access through Hills of Crockett Farm's land,  
314 and the HOA maintains that land and maintains a parking lot for people to come through that land.  
315 He said it goes in several different places across this property and is a critical element for Stratham.  
316 When Crockett Farm was in development, it was codified in the application and in the HOA's  
317 Declaration to make certain there would be sufficient public access to support the cluster  
318 development. He stated that it is critical that the Board take that into consideration as well. Mr.  
319 Mordecai ended with a concern that the development is adding four new structures and there is a  
320 lot of other land and he wonders about additional future development. He asked what is the  
321 limitation in terms of the structures that the door is being opened to in terms of allowing this  
322 particular application without limitation.

323  
324 Mr. Bonilla stated that the wetland system that Mr. Mordecai showed is located to the north, and  
325 the low-quality wetland that they are proposing to impact is a smaller system, topographically  
326 separate. He acknowledged the other wetland system and buffer zone impacts for which Mr.  
327 Bonilla prepared the buffer enhancement plan to offset those impacts. The plan includes wildlife  
328 structures, plantings, and nest boxes to try to catalyze that local ecology and improve the food  
329 chain dynamics in the context of the Applicant's request for the buffer impacts to the system  
330 associated with the Barker Farm property.

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332 Mr. Sheehan added that all drainage from roadways will be kept and treated on his lot. Mr. House  
333 asked how salt and oils from cars will be addressed. John Lorden of Beals and Associates explained  
334 that the road will be superelevated so that it slopes away from the Barkers. The Applicant's  
335 property will capture all of the water and contaminants.

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337 Mr. House asked if there are snow storage areas shown on the plans. Mr. Lorden replied no, but  
338 they have discussed those in the past. Mr. House stated the Board will need to see snow storage  
339 areas.

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341 Mr. Allison asked if there are any curbs on the road. Mr. Lorden replied that there are some  
342 locations where they are trying to capture it, so that they are treating that water from the driveway.  
343 Mr. Allison stated that a lot of that might be clarified as the project goes into further engineering.  
344 Looking at the profile of the road, it appears that there is a continuous grade toward Route 33 from  
345 the back of the property. There is an infiltration basin in the back, but it does not look to Mr.  
346 Allison that it catches that much drainage area. There is another structure where the existing culvert  
347 is that Mr. Allison assumes would be curbed with a break in the curb, and that would go into the  
348 initial basin and sediment forebay. Mr. Allison asked if that is correct. Mr. Lorden replied yes,  
349 that's correct. Mr. Allison asked where the next place that runoff is caught from the driveway. Mr.  
350 Lorden replied portions of that will run down the driveway into the swale along Route 33. Mr.

351 Allison stated that water will be untreated. Mr. Sheehan replied that there is a giant swale along all  
352 properties on Route 33. Mr. Allison replied that it is not really onsite.

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354 Mr. Allard addressed comments from the first abutter on the productive use of land and economic  
355 advantage criteria. He clarified that the first criterion is that the proposed construction is essential  
356 to the productive use of land not within the wetland conservation district (and stressed not). That  
357 criterion does not read that once a property is improved a little bit, one has a productive use and  
358 now one cannot get a CUP; it's about productive use of land not within the Wetland Conservation  
359 District, notwithstanding whether the property is already improved or not, or already being  
360 partially productively used, or not. If you were to extend that logic to its reasonable conclusion,  
361 you could have a property that's 1000 acres, and if you have a duplex in the front and you need the  
362 CUP to get to the other 999 acres; well, there is already have a productive use, you already have a  
363 duplex, so that's really extending the terms of that CUP beyond its logical conclusion. This project  
364 needs this Conditional Use Permit to have a productive use of a large swath of open vacant upland  
365 from the back that's perfectly suitable for this development. On the economic advantage criterion,  
366 Mr. Allard described that 'economic advantage alone' does not mean that any time there is an  
367 economic advantage to the landowner, the Board cannot grant the CUP. If that was the case, good  
368 luck ever getting another house built in Town that would require a CUP. It would effectively morph  
369 the CUP criteria, which is supposed to be an allowed and encouraged use, to a complete  
370 prohibition, because any time the owner was going to make even a single penny, it would wipe out  
371 the ability of the Board to grant the CUP. Mr. Allard stated that economic advantage alone is not  
372 the reason for the request. They have presented numerous other reasons for the request; one of  
373 them has to do with the productive use of the upland and the other has to do with the public benefit.  
374 The addition of eight housing units to the town's housing stock at a time when the town and the  
375 state crucially need it. It is a great opportunity for the Town to do its part to combat that housing  
376 crisis and to attract new folks (the missing middle, like Mr. Sheehan said) to the community that  
377 perfectly aligns with the Master Plan and the needs of the town and the needs of the Seacoast in  
378 southern New Hampshire. Mr. Allard stated that just because this proposal could be economically  
379 advantageous to the owner does not mean that the Board can't grant approval.

380  
381 Mr. House asked for a presentation on the differences between Sheet 12 and Sheet 6. Mr. Lorden  
382 explained that the sheets are the wetlands impact plan and the buffer enhancement plan. The project  
383 team hired Mr. Bonilla to work with him on the buffer enhancement plan.

384  
385 Mr. Allison asked what the proposed fire protection is. Mr. Lorden replied there will be sprinklers  
386 in the buildings. Mr. Allison stated that there was a meeting with the fire department, who said  
387 they did not like ponds because of the long-term maintenance and preferred an on-site fire cistern  
388 over sprinklers. Mr. Lorden asked Ms. Price to comment on that. Ms. Price replied that minutes  
389 from the Technical Review Committee are in the Planning Board's packet. In general, the Fire  
390 Department prefers cisterns. When this project started, the proposal was for a fire pond, and  
391 sprinklers were the alternative. The Fire Department cannot require sprinklers, but it seemed like  
392 a better option than the pond. Ms. Price added that the Fire Department would probably prefer a  
393 cistern, but they said they were fine with the alternative.

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395 Mr. House asked how wide the shared driveway is. Mr. Lorden replied 20 feet. Mr. House asked  
396 if the driveway could be moved further south to reduce wetland buffer impacts. Mr. Sheehan  
397 replied by describing the impact area and the buffer enhancement plan. Mr. Lorden added the  
398 location shown is the smallest amount of impact that would be disturbed, and moving it south  
399 would impact the irrigation lawn. Mr. Sheehan believes that the existing grading of the driveway  
400 created the small wetland pocket that will be crossed.

401

402 Mr. House asked what the driveway culvert is for. Mr. Lorden replied to hydraulically connect the  
403 farm property to the north to the subject property's wetland to the south. Mr. Sheehan and Mr.  
404 Bonilla provided additional information related to the wetlands and proposed crossing in that area.  
405 Mr. Bonilla stated that with improved stormwater management and the implementation of his  
406 buffer enhancement plan, he believes that invasive species will be better managed and the new  
407 plantings will kickstart the natural moth and butterfly species and wildlife that might be associated  
408 with the onsite pond and other wetlands.

409  
410 Mr. House asked Mr. Sheehan to present justification of the wetlands setback criteria in Section  
411 11.6 of the ordinance with respect to the driveway. Mr. Sheehan read aloud from the application.  
412 There were no comments from the Board, and Mr. House invited the public to speak.

413  
414 Mr. Reimers stated that wetlands are wetlands and that Mr. Lorden used the word wetland system  
415 with regard to the way the water moves through the property. Mr. Reimers stated that the buffers  
416 protect wetlands, and this proposal would pave those buffers and is an incremental impact to  
417 wetlands.

418  
419 Mr. House asked if there is any way to relocate the driveway. Mr. Lorden replied they will explore  
420 that. Mr. House added that he is very concerned with the crossing at the front as it is very close to  
421 someone's water that they use on a daily basis to run their business, their farm. Mr. Sheehan agreed  
422 to move the driveway out of the 25-foot buffer impact to the north side of the property.

423  
424 Mr. Fraprie asked the Applicant if he would be willing to make a condition that there be no further  
425 development beyond this point on the property. Mr. Sheehan asked if he means for just the  
426 driveway CUP or for all of the CUPs. Mr. Fraprie replied for the whole project. Mr. House paused  
427 that discussion so that they could discuss just the CUPs because the Board needs to review the  
428 CUPs before they can accept the subdivision application as complete. Mr. House asked if there  
429 were any more public comments.

430  
431 Mr. Reimers pointed out that there still are a lot of buffer impacts, and if the Board were to approve  
432 the CUP, they must find that it meets all five criteria.

433  
434 Mr. House called for a motion. Ms. Price asked the Board if they would like to conduct a site walk  
435 before making a decision on the CUP. The Board agreed to conduct a site walk first.

436  
437 Mr. Allison prefers to see revised plans with the new road location before voting on the CUP, as  
438 the move is just theoretical at this point.

439  
440 The Board set up a site walk for Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 6:00 pm.

441  
442 Mr. House initiated the discussion on the Conditional Use Permit applications for the duplex  
443 construction in the wetland setback. Mr. Sheehan read aloud from the application the criteria  
444 justification. Mr. House asked for comments from the Board.

445 Mr. Allison commented that he would like to see alternate layouts that will not impact anything.  
446 He recalls the project team stating that there were layouts that might not have as great of an impact,  
447 but the team felt the submittal was the best.

448  
449 Mr. Kunowski commented that assuming the road is feasible and doable, then he is probably okay  
450 with the locations of duplexes two, three, and four, but he has an issue with duplex one being  
451 completely in the setback. Mr. Fraprie and Mr. Tramaloni agreed. Mr. House added that in the  
452 Applicant's commentary it was said there is minimal impact for duplexes two and four, but in Mr.

453 House's opinion, the impact from duplex one is huge. Mr. Sheehan addressed alternative layouts  
454 by explaining that other layouts were presented to the Board at previous meetings and he needs to  
455 balance comments from other groups such as NHDOT and the Route 33 Heritage District Advisory  
456 Committee.

457  
458 Mr. House asked for comments from the public.

459  
460 Mr. Reimers stated that putting the duplex in the buffer is clearly for economic advantage. It does  
461 not need to be there, and the language of that criterion is clear. Any desire by the public for more  
462 housing doesn't override that criterion. Almost any proposed development can be described as  
463 having some kind of public benefit or public interest, but that doesn't override what that criterion  
464 says.

465  
466 Mr. Allard countered Mr. Reimers by reiterating his prior comments with respect to economic  
467 advantage stands. That there can be economic benefit to the owner without the Board having to  
468 shoot it down anytime there's an economic advantage.

469  
470 Mr. Sheehan commented that there are a lot of opinions on how this site layout is accomplished to  
471 maximize the town's value and obviously provide a site design and layout that best works for the  
472 people who are going to live there. He believes that although that duplex sits within the setback,  
473 he could spin it and attempt to put it close to where the barn is, but he heard from the Route 33  
474 Heritage District that the barn is of value to the town, and that's within the guidelines that he's  
475 been following. Regarding knocking down the barn to construct a duplex, that is a possibility that  
476 he is not looking to do, but he would have the option to do that if that building wasn't there; you  
477 could put a duplex there, as an example, or we could shift the barn over to where duplex one is.  
478 Those are examples of other iterations of this design, but he is trying to follow the character of the  
479 historic corridor as best as he can.

480  
481 Mr. House asked why duplex one couldn't be moved closer to the other duplexes. Mr. Sheehan  
482 replied that then the houses would be stacked right next to each other without providing ample  
483 yard space for the residents.

484  
485 Mr. House asked for additional Board comments.

486  
487 Mr. Tramaloni asked for confirmation that the CUP application could not be modified to remove  
488 duplex one if it was already submitted. Ms. Price replied correct, and the Applicant can decide if  
489 they want to refile if the Board wants to give the Applicant the opportunity before making a  
490 decision.

491  
492 Mr. House asked the project team if they want to withdraw the CUP application for the duplexes.

493  
494 Mr. Tramaloni asked if the issue with using the area that is currently the barn for duplex one is  
495 because of the wishes of the Heritage Committee. Mr. Sheehan replied correct. He thinks it is a  
496 great location for another duplex. Mr. Tramaloni commented that if duplex one was moved then  
497 there would be a lovely open area between that duplex and the others with a pond that would be  
498 attractive. Mr. Sheehan agreed. Mr. Tramaloni asked if a variance would allow that. Mr. Fraprie  
499 replied that the comments from the committee are that they are trying to maintain a historical nature  
500 and visibility to that whole area. Mr. Tramaloni asked Mr. Sheehan if duplex one could be made  
501 to look like the barn. Mr. Sheehan described that the barn is falling down, with one Lally column  
502 holding it up. Mr. Fraprie stated he is not suggesting it be converted.

503

504 Mr. House said that there are plans to relocate the barn. Mr. Sheehan replied that the plan was to  
505 relocate it. He planned to make it structurally sound so it could be a working barn, but an alternative  
506 is to swap the barn and duplex one location.

507  
508 Mr. Allison asked if the barn could be left in place and move duplex one to where the proposed  
509 barn location is. Mr. Sheehan replied he would probably still move the barn and he has spoken  
510 with some professionals on how to move the barn and the barn is in the wetland buffer currently.  
511 Mr. Fraprie reiterated that converting the barn to a duplex that looks like the existing barn seems  
512 to solve problems.

513  
514 Mr. House asked for a motion from the Board.

515  
516 **Mr. Kunowski stated that, in its current form, he has no alternative but to make a motion to**  
517 **deny the conditional use permit for Section 11.6 of the Stratham Zoning Ordinance for**  
518 **structures one, two, and four within the 50-foot wetland setback by the following findings of**  
519 **fact: 1) The complete placement of duplex unit one within the setback is significant**  
520 **disturbance, clearly the construction and the digging of a foundation for duplex unit one**  
521 **within the wetland would create significant disturbance and impact. 2) That the restoration**  
522 **of the site as nearly as possible certainly would not be met in terms of the original grading**  
523 **condition. 3) The Board explored alternatives with the Applicant, but currently that is not**  
524 **something that seems viable, and the economic advantage of maintaining this one duplex in**  
525 **the overall plan doesn't seem reasonable.**

526  
527 Mr. Allard asked if the motion is for all three duplexes. The Board explained that the application  
528 was submitted as a single application for all, and the option was suggested earlier to withdraw the  
529 application and resubmit it. Mr. Allard asked if the application could be continued until after the  
530 site walk and after the project team has an opportunity to make changes and file a revised plan.

531  
532 Mr. Allard requested that the motion be withdrawn. Mr. Kunowski withdrew his motion pending  
533 further work on the application by the Applicant.

534  
535 **Mr. Kunowski made a motion to continue discussion of this application to include a site walk**  
536 **on May 28 beginning at 6:00 pm and continue the public hearing to the June 3<sup>rd</sup> Planning**  
537 **Board meeting where we further discuss the remaining conditional use permit applications**  
538 **and/or the findings of the site walk. Mr. Fraprie seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and**  
539 **the motion passed.**

540  
541 Mr. Kunowski asked the Barkers if the Board can have permission to walk on the Barkers' land as  
542 well. Edie Barker replied yes.

543  
544 Some members of the Applicant's team are not available on June 3<sup>rd</sup> and requested that the motion  
545 for continuance be amended to June 17<sup>th</sup>.

546  
547 **Mr. Kunowski amended his motion to continue the public hearing to June 17<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Fraprie**  
548 **seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

549  
550 **6. Public Hearing (New Business)**  
551 **A. Zoning Ordinance Technical Corrections**  
552 Ms. Price announced this is a public hearing to implement technical corrections to the Zoning  
553 Ordinance as allowed in Section 21.2 of the Ordinance.

554

555 **Mr. Kunowski made a motion to open the hearing to the public. Mr. Fraprie seconded the**  
556 **motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.** Mr. House noted for the record there were  
557 no members of the public present. **Mr. Kunowski made a motion to close the public meeting.**  
558 **Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

559  
560 **Mr. Kunowski made a motion to accept the zoning ordinance technical corrections as**  
561 **presented at the May 2026 Planning Board meeting. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion.**  
562 **All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

563

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

565 A. Piscataqua Region Environmental Planning Assessment Grant Program Discussion

566 Ms. Price tabled this topic for a future meeting.

567

568 **8. Adjourn**

569 **Mr. Kunowski made a motion to adjourn at 9:52 pm. Mr. Fraprie seconded the motion. All voted**  
570 **in favor, and the motion passed.**

571

572 *Respectfully submitted by Susan Connors*