



**Stratham Planning Board Meeting Minutes
August 19, 2026, 7:00 pm
Stratham Municipal Center**

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

Staff Present: Vanessa Price, Director of Building and Planning

Call to Order and Roll Call

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

Review and Approval of Minutes

Planning Board Minutes from August 5, 2026.

Mr. Kunowski made a motion to accept the Planning Board minutes from the Planning Board meeting of August 5, 2026, as written. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Planning Board Minutes from August 11, 2026.

Mr. Kunowski made a motion to accept the Planning Board minutes from the Planning Board meeting of August 11, 2026, as written. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Public Hearing (New Business):

Red Barn Property LLC (Applicant and Owner) requests approval of a Conditional Use Permit for wetland setback disturbance associated with the relocation of an existing barn into a designated wetland setback area. The subject property is located at 210 Portsmouth Avenue (Tax Map 21, Lot 81) in the Route 33 Legacy Highway Heritage Zoning District and the Wetlands Conservation Overlay District.

Public Hearing (Old Business): Continued from June 17, 2026:

Red Barn Property LLC (Applicant and Owner) requests approval of a major subdivision, Route 33 Heritage District application, and Conditional Use Permits required for Wetlands Conservation District and Wetlands Setback disturbances, construction in wetland, wetland no-disturbance buffer, and wetland setback areas for a shared driveway, well installation, barn, and stormwater infrastructure. The location is 210 Portsmouth Avenue (Tax Map 21, Lot 81) in the Route 33 Legacy Highway Heritage Zoning District and the Wetlands Conservation Overlay District. The applications were submitted by Beals Associates. The Board considered agenda items for Red Barn Property, LLC. together. Mr. House noted for the record that there was a large attendance of the public to speak on the application. He stated that the applicant

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requested continuing this project to September 16th for all applications, as the applicant has received the third-party engineering reviews and the applicant is reviewing that documentation now to revise their documents as needed. Mr. House noted that the Board is not going to be talking to this project tonight.

Mr. Kunowski made a motion to continue the application for 210 Portsmouth Avenue to the September 16th, 2026 Planning Board meeting. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Mr. House noted for the record that the Board and the Planning & Building Department have received a lot of public emails for the project, and they will be part of the case file record. He addressed the public in attendance that there would be public comment at the September 16, 2026, Planning Board meeting.

PUBLIC MEETING (NEW BUSINESS): Request to Consider Zoning Change for Five Parcels

Ms. Price introduced the property owners and explained that they were seeking preliminary Planning Board input regarding a potential rezoning of their properties. The Scamman-Fernholz Family Revocable Trust owns five parcels identified as Tax Map 9, Lots 18, 19, 111, 112, and 113, and requested the Board's input regarding the potential rezoning of these properties. Ms. Price advised the Board to consider the applicable zoning district requirements and limitations associated with any rezoning. She explained that rezoning the parcels into the Gateway Commercial Business District (GCBD) may involve additional considerations under the 2026 Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Kirk Scamman and Susan Fernholz are the owners of all the parcels. Mr. Scamman presented to the Board that, in their letter, they are requesting that the planning board consider rezoning parcels, which are split zoning by those arbitrary 800-foot lines. Mr. Scamman explained that their properties have commercial-based gateway district and residential zoning, and it makes it more challenging to do anything with the properties. He expressed that he is before the Board this evening to discuss whether they can get them changed into one zone so that it's easier to plan for the future.

Mr. Kunowski states that there should be an economic analysis to determine what would be more beneficial to the town, for commercial or residential use. In his opinion, he is struggling to make a case to make it all Gateway, based on where it is today. He stated that he could see making it all Residential/Agricultural. Mr. Fraprie stated in his opinion, he would go with what the predominance of the land is, and he believes the town's trying to create a narrow band for the district. He explained to expand it that far seems to be against what the zone was originally designed to do, and a small percentage of the land is in the gateway versus the residential agriculture. He stated that his initial impression it seems like that would be the wrong way to go.

Mr. Allison noted that a portion of Lot 113 located within the GCBD, near Frying Pan Lane, has already been developed and suggested that it may be reasonable to retain that portion within the GCBD. He discussed the possibility of establishing a property line that generally corresponds with the existing GCBD boundary, which could allow the portion of Lot 113 currently within the GCBD to be further developed under GCBD standards while retaining the remainder of the parcel within the Agricultural Residential zoning district for lower-density residential development. Additionally, Mr. Allison questioned whether existing natural features, including a pond or wetland area, could affect the suitability or logical extent of any proposed rezoning. He expressed support for considering whether all of Tax Map 9, Lot 18 should remain within, or be rezoned to, the Agricultural Residential District, noting that the parcel is currently undeveloped. Mr. Allison acknowledged that the parcel configuration and access may complicate such a change and raised concerns about creating a landlocked portion of the property, and in his opinion did not envision the entirety of Lot 18 being developed for commercial purposes.

Mr. Fraprie expressed an additional concern regarding the surrounding zoning pattern, noting that some nearby residential properties are located adjacent to or intermixed with commercially zoned properties. Mr. House discussed the historical planning and access considerations associated with the GCBD, noting that a roadway had previously been contemplated through the district to extend to Frying Pan Lane. He

noted that Lot 18 is currently landlocked and would likely require access through Lot 19 or another connection to Frying Pan Lane. He also observed that portions of Lot 18 contain wetlands, which may limit its development potential. Mr. House expressed support for considering Lots 18 and 19 for inclusion within the GCBD, noting that Lot 19 is already substantially within the district and that access to Lot 18 would likely need to occur through commercially zoned property. However, Mr. House did not support including Lots 111 and 112, noting that they are currently residential in character and are not presently within the GCBD. Regarding Lot 113, he noted that only a relatively small portion of the parcel is currently within the GCBD and that development has already occurred within that portion with adequate access. HE suggested that an alternative could be to establish a separate lot corresponding generally with the existing GCBD portion of Lot 113, allowing that area to remain available for commercial development while retaining the remainder of the property for residential use. Mr. House asked the Board to open to public comment.

Mr. Fraprie made a motion to open to public comment. Mr. Kunowski seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Roger Stevenson, 22 Stephen Drive, provided historical context regarding the development of the Gateway District, noting that its boundaries and regulations were developed through an extensive planning process spanning several years. He also discussed the prior work of the Land Protection Committee with property owners interested in land conservation. Mr. Stevenson explained that, as a general policy at the time, commercially zoned property was typically not considered for conservation unless it was adjacent to existing conservation land. This approach was not established by statute but was used as a general guideline to preserve land intended for commercial development while identifying appropriate opportunities for conservation. As an example, he referenced prior discussions with the Conservation Commission regarding the Scamman Home and Garden property, noting that approximately six and one-half acres were considered for potential conservation because the property was adjacent to existing conservation land. The member provided this background for the Board's consideration when evaluating the current rezoning request.

Mr. House noted that there are a lot of red-tailed hawks around lot 113.

Jeremy Ricks, Doe Run Lane, expressed concern that the agenda item did not provide sufficient detail regarding the property owners, parcels, or nature of the proposed zoning change.

Mr. Fraprie made a motion to close public comment. Mr. Kunowski seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Mr. Fraprie asked if they needed to take a vote on action.

Ms. Price stated no vote. Ms. Price explained that the property owners requested an opportunity to obtain preliminary input from the Planning Board regarding its interest in pursuing a potential zoning amendment. When the owners met with staff, Ms. Price advised them that the matter would be discussed at a public meeting for preliminary input and would not constitute a formal public hearing.

Ms. Price further explained that a petitioned zoning amendment is another available process. If the Board wished to consider or support moving forward with a zoning amendment, the proposed amendment would be subject to the applicable public hearing and notice requirements as part of the formal zoning amendment process.

Mr. Allison noted that, in previous zoning amendments involving properties closer to the traffic circles, district boundaries had been adjusted to better correspond with existing property lines. He suggested that a similar approach could be considered for the subject properties. Regarding Lot 113, the member discussed the possibility of subdividing the parcel generally along the existing GCBD boundary, approximately 800 feet from Portsmouth Avenue, thereby creating separate commercial and residential portions. Mr. Allison also indicated that the proposed approach for Lot 18 could be reasonable but emphasized the importance of

protecting nearby residential properties from potential future commercial impacts. He suggested that a permanent easement or similar restriction could be considered to prevent commercial development within the rear portion of the property adjacent to the residential neighborhood. Mr. Allison also discussed the depth and configuration of nearby lots and noted that the existing residences are generally located closer to Frying Pan Lane, providing some separation from Lot 18 and potential future development.

Mr. House addressed the Board. He discussed in his summary of the discussion, stating that Lots 18 and 19 appeared to be reasonable candidates for potential rezoning to the GCBD, noting that development of portions of Lot 18 may already be constrained by wetlands. He indicated that Lots 111 and 112 should remain residential and that Lot 113 should retain its existing zoning configuration because only a relatively small portion of the parcel is currently within the GCBD. Mr. House expressed the view that the Board may be receptive to considering a rezoning of Lots 18 and 19, but not the remaining three parcels.

Mr. Scamman stated that they had hoped the Planning Board would prepare and sponsor the proposed zoning amendment. They indicated that, if necessary, they could pursue a petitioned zoning amendment but were uncertain about the process and timing.

Ms. Price explained that if the Planning Board does not choose to include the proposed rezoning as part of its zoning amendments, the property owners may pursue a petitioned zoning amendment. She noted that the petition requires signatures from at least 25 registered voters and must be submitted within the statutory filing period before the annual Town Meeting. The petition would be submitted through the appropriate Town offices, with the Town Clerk responsible for verifying the signatures.

Mr. Tramaloni stated that it was around a January timeframe.

Ms. Price clarified that, if the property owners pursue a petitioned zoning amendment, they would be responsible for preparing the proposed amendment. She noted that, regardless of whether the amendment is initiated by the Planning Board or through a citizen petition, all applicable public hearing and abutter notification requirements would be followed.

Mr. Tramaloni asked Mr. Scamman that, under ideal circumstances, they would like the Planning Board to write a warrant article to change the zoning for 18 and 19. Mr. Scamman said he would agree to what the Planning Board was willing to decide. Mr. Tramaloni stated his opinion that it seemed reasonable.

Ms. Price stated that the potential rezoning of Lots 18 and 19 could be discussed at a future Planning Board zoning amendment work session. She noted that the Board would first be meeting with the Conservation Commission and Heritage Commission regarding other proposed zoning amendments. Due to the anticipated September meeting schedule, she expected the rezoning discussion would likely return to the Board at a meeting in October.

The Board summarized its direction to staff to prepare a draft zoning amendment for future consideration that would propose rezoning Tax Map 9, Lots 18 and 19 to the Gateway Commercial Business District (GCBD). The backup information would be provided in the voter guide.

PUBLIC HEARING (OLD BUSINESS): Continued from August 5, 2026: Amended Site Plan Regulations

Ms. Price addressed the Board that Cordell had to look over the amended site plan regulations, and due to an upcoming heavy caseload in September, she asked for the Board to consider continuing the Public Hearing for October 7, 2026.

Mr. Kunowski made a motion to continue the amended site plan regulations public hearing to the October 7, 2026 Planning Board meeting. Mr. Tramaloni seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Allison submitted his resignation as an alternate member of the Planning Board. The Board thanked Mr. Allison for his service and expressed its desire for him to remain on the Board. Mr. Allison thanked the

200 Board but stated that he had decided to conclude his tenure.

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202 **ADJOURN**

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204 **Mr. Tramaloni made a motion to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. Mr. Kunowski seconded the motion. All voted**
205 **in favor, and the motion passed.**

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207 *Minutes respectfully submitted by Vanessa Price*