



**Stratham Planning Board
AGENDA
March 16, 2022
Stratham Municipal Center
Hutton Room
Time: 7:00 PM**

The public may also access this meeting at the date and time above using this conference call information. Please dial **1-800-764-1559** and input **4438** when prompted for a user pin/code. Please follow the Chair's instructions delivered at the meeting in order to register comments during the public meeting.

If at any time during the meeting you have difficulty hearing the proceedings, please e-mail mconnors@strathamnh.gov.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

2. Approval of Minutes:

- a. February 2, 2022
- b. March 2, 2022 Minutes

3. Public Meeting:

- a. Special Event Permit Discussion
- b. Design Review Phase of Site Plan Review
- c. Planning Board Composition
- d. Updates regarding Route 33 Heritage District, Sign Ordinance, Housing Discussion, NHDES Coastal Program Grant, and May 4 Planning Board Meeting
- e. Miscellaneous Planning Issues

4. Adjournment

Full text of the agenda and related information can be found on file with the Stratham Planning Department and posted on the Town website at <https://www.strathamnh.gov/planning-board>. All interested persons may be heard. Persons needing special accommodations and/or those interested in viewing the application materials should contact the Stratham Planning Department at (603) 772-7391 ext. 180.



Stratham Planning Board Meeting Minutes
March 2, 2022
Stratham Municipal Center
Time: 7:00 pm

Member Present: Tom House, Chair
Mike Houghton, Selectmen's Representative
Pamela Hollasch, Member (via phone)
Joe Anderson, Alternate Member

Members Absent: David Canada, Vice Chair
Chris Zaremba, Alternate Member

Staff Present: Mark Connors, Town Planner

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Mr. House called the meeting to order and took roll call.

2. Approval of Minutes

a. February 2, 2022

Mr. House announced that the February 2, 2022 Minutes would be provided for review and approval at the March 16, 2022 Planning Board meeting.

3. Public Meeting:

a. Special Event Permit Discussion

Mr. House asked Mr. Connors to discuss this item. Mr. Connors said that there is a property owner in the Town Center District who would like to host a series of Art Shows in the Spring and Summer. This was discussed among Town Staff and while it is agreed that it would be a beneficial event for the Town, there is not a permit program for such events. It would be helpful for the Police Chief and others to review the plans for larger special events to ensure that there is safe vehicular access to the site and that sanitary requirements are accounted for. Mr. Connors said that a draft application form is included in the Planning Board packets. Mr. Connors explained that he used the Outdoor Dining Permit application as a starting out point and tailored the application to apply to Special Events. The intent is not to create a burdensome new application process but something that could be approved by staff on an administrative level. Similar to the Outdoor Dining Program, a Special Event Permit would be reviewed and

41 approved by the Town Planner, Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer, Police Chief,
42 and Fire Chief. Mr. Anderson said that he had reservations about starting a new process that
43 would apply to events like weddings and block parties. Mr. Anderson also said it was likely
44 that applications would not be submitted at least two weeks before the event. Mr. Connors said
45 the program could be tailored so that it only applied to commercial events and that personal
46 events were exempt.

47
48 Mr. Houghton said he felt the permit process should be similar to what the Town requires for
49 Yard Sales. Mr. Houghton said he believed the Town requires a permit for Yard Sales. The
50 Special Event Permit could be expanded to account for other larger events. We should not
51 reinvent the wheel, he said. He agreed with Mr. Anderson that the application process should
52 be straight-forward and that family events and such activities should be exempt and not require
53 a permit. Mr. Connors said he would look into the permit requirements associated with yard
54 sales. Ms. Hollasch discussed potential hypothetical events and whether or not such events
55 would require a permit under the program. She said that she did not believe that personal social
56 gatherings should be regulated by the Town. Mr. Connors said it was very clear from the
57 discussion that personal/family events should not be regulated or permitted by the Town. He
58 would tailor the language so that a permit program does not apply to those types of events. Mr.
59 Connors said he was in favor of the idea for art shows in the Town Center and was trying to
60 come up with a more formalized process that would be simple for the applicant, but it would
61 not be unusual for the Town to get calls the next day complaining about certain aspects of an
62 event. It would be helpful for the Town to have the contact information for the event organizer
63 to communicate with on the day of the event.

64
65 Mr. Houghton noted that Portsmouth Avenue is a state road so there would be limited Town
66 involvement for events along Portsmouth Avenue in the Town Center. Mr. Connors said that is
67 true but the Police Department still patrols the road and Police and Fire might need to respond
68 if there are any issues. It would be helpful for the Town Departments to be aware of these
69 events in advance and to discuss traffic flow and details if necessary. Mr. House said that
70 traffic and safety/security issues are legitimate concerns for large events and could understand
71 the need for a permit program if it was not overly bureaucratic. Mr. Houghton agreed. Mr.
72 Anderson said that the Town of West Newbury, Mass. has a similar program and Stratham
73 could consult their regulations. Mr. Connors said he will look into modifying the permit
74 program based on the Board discussion and return to the Board to discuss this further at the
75 March 16, 2022 meeting.

76
77 **b. NHDES Coastal Program Grant**
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79 Mr. House noted that the Rockingham Regional Planning Commission sent a letter offering to
80 implement the town's Source Water Protection Plan recommendations with proposed new zoning
81 language and/or amendments to the Site Plan or Subdivision Regulations. The RPC would
82 implement grant funding from the NH Department of Environmental Services to assist the Town
83 with this. Mr. Connors said this would be a good opportunity for the Board to ensure that the
84 Source Water Protection Plan is implemented. This is an especially salient with all the recent
85 discussion in Stratham regarding the PFAS contamination of private wells in the Town Center.

86 Mr. Anderson said he agreed that this would be a good opportunity. The Board discussed the
87 general time commitment of the effort and ways that the Regional Planning Commission would
88 assist staff and the Board. Mr. Connors noted that there were many recommendations in the plan,
89 so the Board would likely have to narrow down what represents the highest priorities for the
90 Town. Mr Anderson noted that this is something many of the Homeowner and Condominium
91 Associations would be interested in as many of them in Stratham must maintain community well
92 and or septic systems. Some of these communities have to address well contamination issues and
93 it can be expensive and time-consuming commitment. Mr. Anderson said that there were many
94 recommendations in the plan and it would be helpful to send it out to the Board so that they
95 could narrow down which recommendations are most important and deserve immediate
96 attention.

97
98 **c. Governor's Housing Grant Program**
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100 Mr. Connors said that Governor Sununu recently announced that a significant share of the State's
101 America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money would be allocated to housing. Mr. Connors said
102 Governor Sununu believes that Towns and Cities in New Hampshire regulate housing too
103 stringently and that current zoning does not allow for the types of new housing to support the
104 economy. The Governor, and many others, believe the state's lack of housing is preventing
105 employers from growing their workforces and impeding the growth of the economy. The
106 Governor has set aside \$100 million to support housing initiatives, including \$60 million of
107 which which would go to benefit communities. A total of \$5 million would be set aside to
108 support amendments to municipal zoning ordinances to encourage more housing. The application
109 process has not started but Mr. Connors thought the board should have this on the radar to see if
110 there are certain areas the planning board is interested in pursuing. He would like the Town to
111 take advantage of these funds as much as possible. Mr. Connors shared the list with the board.
112 Mr. Houghton would like greater outreach to the community to determine the community's
113 wants and needs. He said that as a business owner, the lack of affordable or workforce housing is
114 a huge issue that affects all employers. We cannot expect people to commute one hour or more to
115 get to work. The entire Seacoast Region housing market is pricing out a significant share of the
116 population. Mr. House asked the board if they would like a meeting with Workforce Housing
117 Coalition of the Greater Seacoast to gain a better understanding of the values and answer any
118 questions the board has. The Planning Board agreed that would be helpful.
119

120 **d. Updates regarding Town Meeting & Town Election, Stratham Open Space Plan, NHDOT**
121 **Ten Year Plan, Planning Board Handbook**
122

123 Mr. Anderson questioned if there was any feedback regarding zoning articles at the Voter
124 Information Night. Mr. Connors stated there were four to five questions; what incentives will
125 be given for Route 33 residents to invest in their properties, a question regarding eliminating
126 pork chop lots, questions regarding the process, but none of the questions or comments were
127 adversarial. He noted that several Pheasant Run residents would like the speed limit reduced on
128 Route 33 and he has notified NHDOT but it is a state issue. Mr. Connors stated if Mr. Anderson
129 was elected to the Select Board a Planning Board member would need to be found as a
130 replacement as only one Select Board designee can serve on the Board.
131

132 Mr. Connors explained the Stratham Open Space Plan project will be coming up which is
133 funded through the CIP and will start up this year. The Conservation Commission and Planning
134 Board will have a public event to describe what public space plan is and to get the community's
135 recommendation on what they would like the board to focus on.

136
137 Mr. Houghton stated all boards and commissions should get together to discuss the Open Space
138 Plan prior to a larger event designed for the general public. The Board Mr. Connors explained
139 the Rockingham Country Age Friendly Survey is headed up by a subcommittee in which
140 Allison Knab and Chris Zaremba serve on. The survey itself was finalized yesterday and the
141 town will be promoting it as much as possible to receive feedback from the community on how
142 age friendly the town is. he survey focuses on six towns and has some questions regarding
143 Stratham. Ms. Hollasch recommended the "older adult" verbiage on the website be changed to
144 receive larger feedback.

145
146 Mr. Connors noted that one of Mr. House's priorities is to develop a Planning Board Handbook.
147 Through some research Mr. Connors dug up the 2005 version of the Planning Board Handbook
148 which has not been updated in many years. But it is helpful to have as we can use this as a
149 starting point. Mr. Connors stated the board can use the current Planning Board Handbook as a
150 starting point to update a new one. Mr. House said this would be a good project for the current
151 Planning Board.

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153 e. Miscellaneous Planning Issues

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155 **4. Adjournment**

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157 Mr. Anderson made a motion to adjourn at 8:10 pm. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion. Motion
158 carried unanimously.

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167 *Note(s):*

- 168 1. *Materials related to the above meeting are available for review at the Municipal Center during normal business hours.*
- 169 *For more information, contact the Stratham Planning Office at 603-772-7391 ext. 147.*
- 170 2. *The Planning Board reserves the right to take item, out of order and to discuss and/or vote on items that are not listed*
- 171 *on the agenda.*



TOWN OF STRATHAM

Incorporated 1716

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Town Clerk/Tax Collector 603-772-4741

Select Board/Administration/Assessing 603-772-7391

Code Enforcement/Building Inspections/Planning 603-772-7391

Fax (All Offices) 603-775-0517

TO: Planning Board Members
FROM: Mark Connors, Town Planner
FOR: March 2, 2022, Updated for March 16, 2022
RE: **Special Event Permit Program**

Many towns and cities provide a permit process for Special Events or larger events on private property where it would be helpful for the Town to be aware of the event in advance and to coordinate any necessary traffic controls, parking requirements, or other crowd controls and to ensure that the events operate within the applicable Town Ordinances. This has been discussed in Stratham but never formalized.

A property owner is interested in hosting Art Shows in the Town Center and this has brought this issue to the fore and highlighted the need for a permit process. Based on the discussion at the previous March 2, 2022 Board meeting, staff has revised the permit to exempt agricultural events and events of a personal nature, including family gatherings, weddings, block parties, and similar events. The program would be limited to events where commercial transactions are conducted outdoors or in temporary structures where at least 50 patrons are anticipated. The intent is not to create a burdensome process, but to make relevant Town Departments aware of such events and provide an opportunity for them to place reasonable conditions on such events. If there are issues associated with a particular event, it would also be helpful for the Town to have the contact information of the event organizer on file to communicate with.

At the most recent meeting, there was some discussion about the process for Yard Sales in Stratham. The Town enacted a restriction limiting yard sales in Stratham to no more than three on individual properties. This was enacted in response to a property owner who very frequently held such events. The Town does not require a permit for yard sales but does enforce the three-event annual maximum if an issue arises. The intent of the Special Event Permit program is not to further regulate typical yard sales, however larger events where several property owners team up to hold a large single event would likely fall under the program.

Attached is a proposed permit application in draft form. Similar to the Town's Outdoor Dining Permit program, this permit would allow for the Department Heads of the Police, Fire, Planning, and Building Departments to issue a Special Event Permit for a fee of \$25 for a single event and \$50 for 2-4 events. As currently drafted, a maximum of four event could be hosted under a single permit and a maximum of three permit could be issued in a calendar year for the same property. If a property owner wants to host more than 12 events in a year, it would require Planning Board approval.

The Site Plan Regulations would need to be updated to account for the Special Event Permit and some draft language is included below for the Board's consideration. The Planning Board

could require Special Event permits be approved by the Planning Board, but it would be more efficient for smaller, less frequent events to be approved on an administrative level.

PROPOSED ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE TO THE SITE PLAN REGULATIONS:

3.6 Special Events

Special events occurring outdoors or in temporary structures in which commercial transactions are conducted and more than 50 patrons are anticipated, including tent sales, farmers markets, art shows or like events require approval of a Special Event Permit. Events directly associated with an agricultural use or events of a personal nature, in which no commercial transactions are conducted, are exempt and do not require approval of a Special Event Permit. Special Events shall be conducted within the spirit and intent of the applicable zoning district.

A single Special Event shall not exceed 12 hours in duration and shall not occur between the hours of 10 pm to 7 am. For properties located in the Residential/Agricultural, Manufactured Housing and Retirement Planned Community zoning districts, no more than 4 (four) Special Events shall be held within a calendar year. For all other zoning districts, no more than twelve special events may be held on a single property within a calendar year.

Applicants should submit a completed Special Event Permit to the Stratham Planning Department a minimum of 14 days in advance of the date of the event, however the Town may accept applications submitted later at the discretion of the Town Planner. Special Event Permits may be issued after approval of the Town Planner, Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer, Police Chief and Fire Chief. The Town may impose reasonable conditions on a Special Event Permit to ensure safe access, site circulation, adequate sanitation, and reduced impacts to abutting property owner.



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Fax (All Offices) 603-775-0517

SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION 2022

A Special Event Permit is required for events where commercial transactions will be conducted outdoors or in temporary structures where 50 or more persons are anticipated. Events directly associated with an agricultural use or events of a personal nature, in which no commercial transactions are conducted, are exempt and do not require a Special Event Permit.

A Special Event Permit application must be submitted to the Stratham Planning Department a minimum of 14 days before the date of the first event.

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT (INDIVIDUAL) RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EVENT:

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____ PHONE: _____

ALTERNATE PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

ALTERNATE CONTACT NAME & PHONE NUMBER: _____

IF THIS EVENT WILL BE SPONSORED BY A BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION, PLEASE COMPLETE THE SECTION BELOW:

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____ PHONE: _____

LOCATION OF THE EVENT: _____

Note: If the applicant is not the property owner, the property owner must provide signed authorization on Page 2.

ZONING DISTRICT: _____ MAP NO.: _____ LOT NO.: _____

Proposed 2022 Dates of Special Event (*Note: No more than four events may be held under one Special Event permit. A maximum of three Special Event Permits may be issued within one calendar year.*)

Date 1: _____ Event Start and End Times: _____

Date 2: _____ Event Start and End Times: _____

Date 3: _____ Event Start and End Times: _____

Date 4: _____ Event Start and End Times: _____

Description of proposed Special Event:

Estimated number of attendees: _____ Maximum Capacity (at one time): _____

Will ready-to-eat food be served at the Special Event? YES NO

Will amplified sound be used at the event? YES NO If yes, please describe the sound amplification equipment proposed for the event: _____

Please describe proposed parking and traffic control plans for the event:

Will a tent be used at the event: YES NO If yes, provide tent dimensions: _____

Note: Approval of a tent permit may be required from the Stratham Building Department.

SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT FEE:

A fee of \$25 (for a single event) or \$50 (for two to four events) is due to the Town of Stratham at the time the completed application is submitted.

SITE PLAN REQUIREMENT:

A Special Event Permit is not complete without a site plan or plot plan submitted with the application which clearly depicts where the event will be held on the property, as well as the location for parking (including total number of parking spaces), traffic circulation, and the location of tents, seating, sanitary facilities and sound equipment.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE:

My signature below indicates my certification that the information included in this application is true to the best of my knowledge. It also indicates my permission for Town Staff to inspect the property if necessary prior to the event. Further, my signature indicates my understanding to that the Town may revoke this Special Event Permit if I do not operate the events in accordance with applicable Town Ordinances and state law or if unresolved complaints are levied to the Town regarding the event. If approved, I pledge to operate the event within the confines of any conditions set forth by the Town of Stratham.

Signature

Date

PROPERTY OWNER'S SIGNATURE (if different from the applicant):

My signature below indicates my permission to hold Special Event(s) consistent with the information included in this application at my property. My signature provides permission for Town Staff to inspect the property if necessary prior to the event.

Signature

Date



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Fax (All Offices) 603-775-0517

TO: Planning Board Members
FROM: Mark Connors, Town Planner
FOR: March 16, 2022
RE: **Design Review Phase for Large Site Plans or Subdivisions**

There are at least two parcels in Stratham where relatively large site plans or subdivisions are anticipated. The applicant for one has inquired about submitting a Design Review application. Design Review is an intermediate phase - between Preliminary Review and the application for Final Site Plan or Subdivision approval - where the abutters are notified in advance by certified mail and more advanced engineered plans are presented to the Planning Board for review. The intent is for the Board to communicate with the applicant any supplementary materials or plans that it believes necessary to complete its review and provide other comments to improve or amend the plans. It's also helpful to notify abutters in advance so they have an extended period to provide their comments and potentially interact more with the applicant. The Board does not make a formal approval or denial of an application during this phase but can simply vote to close the Design Review phase when it feels the process has been completed to its satisfaction.

The Planning Board has discussed this briefly previously and agreed it would be a helpful tool but the Site Plan and Subdivision Regulations would need to be modified to account for and an application form formalized. Staff will present draft language for the Regulations at the meeting for the Board to review. Below is the language from the State RSAs relating to the Design Review Application Phase:

676:4 Board's Procedures on Plats. –

676:4.II(b) Design review phase. The board or its designee may engage in nonbinding discussions with the applicant beyond conceptual and general discussions which involve more specific design and engineering details; provided, however, that the design review phase may proceed only after identification of and notice to abutters, holders of conservation, preservation, or agricultural preservation restrictions, and the general public as required by subparagraph I(d). The board may establish reasonable rules of procedure relating to the design review process, including submission requirements. At a public meeting, the board may determine that the design review process of an application has ended and shall inform the applicant in writing within 10 days of such determination. Statements made by planning board members shall not be the basis for disqualifying said members or invalidating any action taken.



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Fax (All Offices) 603-775-0517

TO: Planning Board Members
FROM: Mark Connors, Town Planner
FOR: March 16, 2022
RE: **Route 33 Heritage District**

The Route 33 Heritage District passed overwhelmingly at the Town Election on March 8, 2022. The updated zoning requires the Planning Board to appoint a designee to the Route 33 Heritage District Advisory Committee within 120 days of the passage of the Ordinance. The Select Board and Heritage Commission are also afforded the opportunity to make their own appointments. The Planning Board's appointee could be a member of the Planning Board or it could be anyone else, so long as he or she is a resident of Stratham. The Ordinance encourages, but does not require, that at least one member of the Advisory Committee be a resident of the District.

The Board does have some time to address this, but it would be helpful for the Board to discuss how it would like to approach the appointment issue and if Town Staff should actively recruit for applicants. As far as a time commitment, there will be some initial work up-front to adopt guidelines and other introductory frameworks, however it should not be a very large time commitment moving forward.