

# Planning Board Meeting Minutes

**Location:** Strafford Town Hall Conference Room

**Date & Time:** January 2, 2025 6:30PM

**Members Present:**

Phil Auger – Chairman  
Don Clifford  
Lynn Sweet – Selectman Representative

**Alternate Members Present:**

Donald Coker  
Susan Arnold  
Sue Higgins

**Others Present:**

Owen Corcoran, Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Regional Planner

The Chairman, Phil Auger, called the meeting to order at 6:30PM and recognized Board members Don Clifford, Lynn Sweet, Donald Coker, Susan Arnold, and Sue Higgins as present. He also recognized as present Owen Corcoran. He appointed Donald Coker and Sue Higgins as voting members.

**New Business**

**Case #25-001 – Major Subdivision by Cumulative Development: 2-lot subdivision, 172 Wild Goose Pond Road (Tax Map 1, Lot 2-4)**

The Chairman asked Joseph Berry of Berry Surveying and Engineering, representative for the applicant, to present the case. Mr. Berry indicated that the current lot is an “L” shaped lot of just under 42 acres. The applicant wants to subdivide the lot into a 5-acre lot (Lot 2-4) around an existing house with 548 feet of frontage on Wild Goose Pond Road and a 36-acre lot (Lot 2-4-1) with 238 feet of frontage on Wild Goose Pond Road with access from the existing driveway. A Conditional Use Permit would be required to reach the buildable area on Lot 2-4-1 due to disturbance of the 25-foot wetland buffer. An existing logging road culvert would be removed and relocated in order to center the driveway between two wetland areas. Test pits on both lots indicate an acceptable buildable area for both lots. Mr. Berry indicated the applicant is requesting a number of waivers to the Subdivision Plan Checklist as follows:

- To not show the tract boundaries for the entire property.
- To not show lot lines and all corner monuments identified for the entire property.
- To not show water courses, wetland delineation, and exposed ledge for the entire property
- To not show topographical contours, elevations, stonewalls, and cemeteries for the entire property.
- To not show setback lines for the entire property.

Mr. Berry stated that an intensive boundary survey on the front 18-acres has successfully tied into the existing plan of record, and further delineation of the remaining property would not result in a plan which would allow the Planning Board to make a more informed decision than what has already been provided.

Lynn Sweet made a motion to accept the application as presented, which was seconded by Donald Coker and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed. Lynn Sweet made a motion for continuance of the application to the February 6, 2025, 6:60PM

Planning Board meeting. Sue Higgins seconded the motion which was voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

**Preliminary Conceptual Consultation – Major Subdivision, Whig Hill Road, Tax map 4 Lot 1, Rebecca Whitcher Trust**

Chris Berry of Berry Surveying and Engineering, representative for the property owner, presented the proposal to subdivide the approximately 180-acre property into seven buildable lots with frontage on Aspen Drive, Whig Hill Road and a proposed dead-end street. The 7<sup>th</sup> lot would include the remaining acreage. The proposed design presents minimal wetlands impact, allows working around historic features of the property, and avoids disturbance of an existing cemetery on the site. The private dead-end street follows an existing road pathway.

The Board and the property owner discussed the following items, which are non-binding on either party:

- Private road built to Class V Standards and not to exceed 800 feet in length.
- Use of shared driveways.
- Stormwater containment area.
- No further development of the property.
- Possible deed restrictions.

**Other Business**

The Board reviewed the minutes of the December 5, 2024 Planning Board Meeting. Don Clifford made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Susan Arnold and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all Board members present who attended the December 5<sup>th</sup> Planning Board Meeting.

Strafford Subdivision Regulation. The Chairman confirmed with Owen Corcoran that the amendments to the Strafford Subdivision Regulation, Sections 2.3.9 and 2.5.5 had been entered in the Town records; however, the updated regulation had not been posted on the Town website.

Class VI and Private Roads. The Board attempted to finalize the draft policy; however, the proper version had not been made available to the Board members prior to the meeting. The review was tabled to the February meeting.

Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership (PREP) Grant. The Town can apply for a \$25,000 “no match” grant from PREP to help fund Natural Resource Inventory and/or Watershed Management Plan (WMP) development. The Selectmen have agreed to submit a Warrant Article to be used toward a watershed management plan that can match this or subsequent grants at the March Town meeting. A Bow Lake Watershed Management Plan for Bow Lake is required to apply for Federal funds to address and correct water quality issues. The major cost for WMP development is the involvement of an engineering firm to determine corrective measures that can be applied to sources of water that flow from roads, ditches culverts and other man-made alterations to natural water flowage.

Zoning Ordinances and Subdivision Regulations. The Board discussed separating Building Regulations from the Zoning Ordinances and Subdivision Regulations. They concluded that the current Building Regulations did not include all Town building guidance, and that the first step would be to consolidate all guidance in one document. It is also necessary to determine whether or not any changes to the regulation would require a Town Meeting vote and have the Zoning Board of Adjustments determine needed Zoning Ordinance updates. Lynn Sweet agreed to address this at the next Board of Selectmen meeting.

Preliminary Consultation. Don Clifford questioned the notification requirement for a Preliminary Consultation to be addressed by the Board. Owen Cocoran indicated that such notification must be no less than two days in advance of the scheduled meeting.

Tasker Hill Road Subdivision. Don Clifford asked for clarification on the limit of tree removal on the property. He would like Town Code Enforcement personnel to visit the property to determine if the location of the tree removal is proper. Lynn Sweet agreed to discuss this with the Code Enforcement Officer.

Evans Mountain Road. Don Clifford questioned whether or not Evans Mountain Rd., Class VI Road, had been upgraded to the requirements agreed upon by Eric Rowe and the Strafford Planning Board prior to opening the property for events such as weddings. Lynn Sweet agreed to discuss this with the Code Enforcement Officer.

There being no further business before the Board, Lynn Sweet made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Don Clifford. The Board voted unanimously in favor, and the meeting adjourned at 7:04PM.