

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Location: Strafford Town Hall Conference Room

Date & Time: February 19, 2025 6:30PM

Members Present:

Phil Auger – Chairman
Charlie Moreno – Vice Chairman
Terry Hyland
Lynn Sweet – Selectman Representative

Alternate Members Present:

Donald Coker
Susan Arnold

The Chairman, Phil Auger, called the meeting to order at 6:32PM and recognized Board members Charlie Moreno, Terry Hyland, Lynn Sweet, Donald Coker, and Susan Arnold as present. He appointed Donald Coker as a voting member.

Continuing 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 provide a brief overview of the case. He stated that the application was accepted as complete at the January 2025 Planning Board meeting. The applicant owns 36.9 acres at 172 Wild Goose Pond Road and proposes to create a five-acre lot (Lot 2-4) around an existing residence with use of the existing driveway, well, and septic system. The lot would have 547 feet of frontage on Wild Goose Pond Road and contains over two-acres of buildable area. Access to the remaining 31.9 acres (Lot 2-4-1) will be over an existing driveway that leads to an abutting parcel. A Conditional Use Permit is required to construct a driveway continuation that disturbs just under 1500 square feet of a 25-foot wetlands buffer; however, there is no wetland impact. The Conservation Commission has no issues with the buffer impact, and the Planning Board received a confirmation letter from the Commission to that effect. The driveway to the buildable area on Lot 2-4-1 will be 15 feet wide with 2-foot shoulders and an emergency vehicle turn-out approximately 400 feet from Wild Goose Pond Road.

Mr. Berry indicated the applicant is requesting five 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.

The Chairman asked if the Board had any questions. Donald Coker asked if there were any stonewalls or cemeteries on the property. Mr. Berry indicated that within the 22 acres surveyed there were two short stonewalls on the property boundary lines but there are no interior walls and no cemeteries. The Board addressed the regional impact of this proposal. Donald Coker made a motion that there was no regional impact associated with this proposal, which was seconded by Lynn Sweet and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

The Chairman confirmed with Mr. Berry that a portion of the property to be developed is in current use. He also addressed the need for blazing of property lines exceeding 500 feet in length. Mr. Berry indicated that the applicant would comply with this requirement.

The Chairman suggested that the waiver requests be grouped together for consideration, because they all are related to an area approved in a prior subdivision. The Board had no objection, and Lynn Sweet made a motion to approve the five requested waivers to the Subdivision Plan Checklist for reference information, general information, natural features, physical features, and setback lines as stated above. The motion was seconded by Charlie Moreno and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

The Chairman opened the meeting for public comment at 6:48PM, and there being none, closed the meeting for public comments at 6:48PM.

The Board addressed the need for a Conditional Use Permit. Charlie Moreno made a motion to approve the Conditional Use Permit regarding the access and construction of the driveway to Lot 2-4-1, which was seconded by Donald Coker and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

Charlie Moreno made a motion to approve the two-lot subdivision as presented with conditions of setting corner boundary markers and blazing property boundary lines as needed. The motion was seconded by Lynn Sweet and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

Other Business

An individual attending the meeting indicated he was interested in purchasing a residence in Strafford and wanted to know what he can and cannot do with a residential property. The Board suggested a visit to the Town Planning and the Building Inspectors' Offices and recommended review of the Town Zoning Regulations online. He should also speak with Owen Corcoran, Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Regional Planner.

The Board reviewed the minutes of the January 2, 2025 Planning Board Meeting. Lynn Sweet made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Donald Coker and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by Board members present who attended the January 2nd Planning Board Meeting.

Proposed Warrant Article. The Board reviewed a draft of the Warrant Article for funds to develop a Bow Lake Watershed Management Plan which will include a comprehensive septic system inventory, road drainage analysis and mitigation to correct issues that are negatively impacting water quality in a defined watershed area. Additional funds may be available through a grant from the Piscataqua Regional Estuaries Program. The Chairman appointed Susan Arnold as a voting member to replace Lynn Sweet. Susan Arnold made a motion to include the Warrant Article for consideration at the March 2025 Town Meeting, which was seconded by Charlie Moreno and voted upon verbally in the

affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed. Phil Auger will provide an explanation of the article at the March 2025 Town Meeting.

Right of Way Access vs Fee Ownership. Strafford has historically allowed buildings to be constructed on lots of record that are only accessible by right of ways to Class V or state highways, which may be a violation of RSA 674:41. The Board determined that proposals involving right of way access cannot be approved and are not able to be reviewed by the Zoning Board for a Variance. Applicants and engineering firms that are not aware of proposals that indicate use of right of ways to backland portions of the property will need to be advised of the law.

Class VI and Private Roads. The Board reviewed a copy of the amended Policy Regarding Construction on Class VI and Private Roads and concluded that it was not ready to be forwarded to the Selectmen.

Master Plan Committees. Charlie Moreno indicated that representatives from the committees will have an information table at the March 2025 Town Meeting to provide an opportunity for town residents to ask questions and obtain the latest Master Plan information.

There being no further business before the Board, Donald Coker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Lynn Sweet. The Board voted unanimously in favor, and the meeting adjourned at 7:43PM.