

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Location: Strafford Town Hall Conference Room

Date & Time: January 8, 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

Others Present:

Jen Czysz, Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Executive Director
Robert Fletcher, Minutes Recorder

The Chair, 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 also recognized as present Jen Czysz and Robert Fletcher and appointed Donald Coker as a voting member to replace Don Clifford.

Continuing Business

Major Subdivision – David & Rebecca S. Lovely Revocable Living Trusts, 7-lot Conservation Development, Canaan Road and 20 Back Canaan Road (Tax Map 4, Lot 83-1)

The Chair noted that the Board just received the Altus Engineering review of the project along with responses from the Strafford Police and Fire Departments. The applicant did not have adequate time to review these submissions and asked for a continuance. The Chair also stated that an attorney is representing a group of abutters and that all information about the project must go through this attorney. Lynn Sweet made a motion to continue forward the application until the February 5, 2026, 6:30PM meeting at the Strafford Town Hall which was seconded by Charlie Moreno and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

New Business

Design Review – Sarah & Thomas Collins and the Blue Hills Foundation, Inc., proposed Conservation Development, Province Road/Evans Mountain Road (Tax Map 6, Lot 1)

The Chair recused himself and appointed Charlie Moreno as Acting Chair. The Acting Chair, heretofore referred to as “The Chair”, appointed Donald Coker as a voting member to replace Phil Auger. Susan Arnold, authorized as replacement for the Selectman Representative, replaced Lynn Sweet who also recused herself.

The Chair noted that the property being subdivided was previously subdivided and, as such, must be considered a major subdivision which requires a preliminary review and a design review prior to at least two separate presentations before the Planning Board. The Chair asked Daniel O’Lone, Berry Surveying & Engineering, representing the Collins’ and the Blue Hills Foundation, to present the case.

Mr. Berry reiterated the requirement for proceeding under design review as a major subdivision but that the conservation development is only a two-lot subdivision. The agreement between the Selectboard, the Collins Family and the Blue Hills Foundation, who will purchase the conserved area, allows the subdivision of the property with frontage only on the Class VI Evans Mountain Road. The approximately 216-acre parcel is to be divided into two lots; Lot 1 of approximately 42-acres that contains a current residence with access from Evans Mountain Road and Lot 1-1 of approximately 165-acres with frontage on Evans Mountain Road to be conserved and managed by a conservation group. The boundary line between the two lots will primarily follow an established stone wall and, although the property was surveyed in 1986, a new survey will be conducted. A wetland scientist will investigate the area of Lot 1 to determine if there is adequate buildable area to support the current structure. Some waivers to the required plan depictions will be requested.

Donald Coker questioned using the stone wall as a boundary which would create an irregularly shaped lot that generally is avoided if possible. Mr. Berry stated that the Collins' want to use the wall as much as possible. The Board and Mr. Coker agreed that would be the most desirable course of action. Susan Arnold confirmed that any further development of Lot 1, other than addition of an Accessory Dwelling Unit, would require Board approval.

The Chair opened the meeting for public comments at 6:48PM.

Erika Lavoie, 33 Caswell Road, asked for confirmation of public access to the conserved area and if there were any plans to make changes to the area with the residence. The Board indicated as stated before that any further development of Lot 1 would require Board approval.

Phil Auger, 47 Browns Pasture Road, who recused himself because he is on the Board of Directors of the land trust who will hold the easement for the conserved area, indicated that the conservation easement will remove the right to develop the property forever. The property will be open for passive recreation with limited use by motorized vehicles. The residential property bordering Evans Mountain Road, a Class VI roadway, cannot be further subdivided without an upgrade of the roadway to Town standards. He expressed a concern about the amount of Lot 1 acreage and if the Collins' family was aware of difficulty and expense of further development of the property. Mr. Berry indicated that he was not aware of any discussion if this with the Collins' but his response and opinion would be similar the Mr. Auger's.

Lisa Shurtleff, 1068 Province Road, questioned the reason for Evans Mountain Road being listed on the application and if it was because there were planned changes to the road. The Chair indicated that the road is a Class VI roadway which the town owns but does not maintain and has no plans to maintain or improve it. She also asked if there would be no access to the conserved area on Evans Mountain Road. Mr. Berry indicated that it would be limited to foot traffic unless one was able to use a motorized vehicle. Lynn Sweet mentioned ATVs, dirtbikes and 4x4 trucks as a possibility.

Phil Auger, 47 Browns Pasture Road, responded at the request of the Board. Property owners with frontage on a Class VI roadway have a right of access that allows them with town permission to make improvements to the roadway. Therefore, there may be changes to the roadway in the future.

Christine Trotter, 1040 Province Road, asked if the property owners could further subdivide Lot 1 if they upgraded Evans Mountain Road or used a shared driveway. The Chair indicated that subdivision would be possible if the roadway was upgraded to town specifications but it would most likely be cost prohibited. She confirmed that further subdivision would need to be brought before the Planning

Board for approval. The Chair noted that this conservation development is beneficial for all parties – Lot 1 owner, abutters, and town residents.

There being no further comments from the public, the Chair closed the meeting for public comments at 7:02PM. Donal Coker made a motion to close the Design Review which was seconded by Susan Arnold and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

Phil Auger resumed duties as Chair, Lynn Sweet as Selectman Representative, Susan as alternate member, and Donald Coker returned to voting member for Don Clifford.

Other Business

Public Hearing, January 6, 2026

The Chair recapped the changes to the Zoning and Land Use Ordinance Amendments as a result of the Public Hearing held on January 6, 2026 as follows:

Amendment 1 Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

- Article 1.4.1K, Paragraph 3h. Add sentence – “Applicants must have installed a New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services approved septic system prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.”
- Article 1.4.1K, Paragraph 3j. Replaced with – “The total living space of the accessory dwelling unit shall not exceed 750 square feet for a non-conforming lot and 950 square feet for a conforming lot and shall not exceed two bedrooms.”
- Article 1.14.26 & 27. Replace “principal dwelling unit” with “single family dwelling unit” in both definitions.

Amendment 2 In Home Child Care Facility.

- New Section 1.6. First paragraph following conditional use permit add “from the Planning Board”.

Public Hearing January 21, 2026

The Chair noted that a second public hearing to address changes to the proposed Zoning and Land Use Ordinance Amendments will be held on January 6, 2026 at 6:30PM. Mr. Auger will not be able to attend and Charlie Moreno has agreed to chair the hearing. Jen Czysz stated that she posted the completely revised Amendments on the town website.

Work Session and Meeting Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes of the December 3, 2025 Planning Board Work Session. Lynn Sweet made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Susan Arnold and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members present who attended the December 3rd Planning Board Work Session.

The Board reviewed the minutes of the December 4, 2025 Planning Board Meeting. Lynn Sweet made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Susan Arnold and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members present who attended the December 4th Planning Board Meeting.

The Board reviewed the minutes of the December 16, 2025 Planning Board Work Session. Charlie Moreno made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Terry Highland and

voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members present who attended the December 16th Planning Board Work Session.

General Public Comments on Meeting Agenda

Susan Arnold noted that the agenda, once again, did not indicate a time at the beginning of the meeting for general public comments not associated with agenda items.

There being no further business before the Board, Lynn Sweet made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Terry Highland. The Board voted unanimously in favor, and the meeting adjourned at 7:23PM.

Minutes Prepared by Robert Fletcher