

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Location: Strafford Town Hall Conference Room

Date & Time: April 2, 2026 6:30PM

Members Present:

Phil Auger – Chair
Charlie Moreno – Vice-Chair
Terry Hyland
Don Clifford
Steve Leighton – Selectman Representative

Alternate Members Present:

Donald Coker
Susan Arnold

Others Present:

Jen Cysz, Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Executive Director

The Chair, Phil Auger, called the meeting to order at 6:31PM and recognized Board members Charlie Moreno, Terry Hyland, Don Clifford, Steve Leighton, Donald Coker, and Susan Arnold as present. He also recognized as present Jen Cysz.

General Public Comment

The Chair asked the public attendees if there were any comments or questions that were unrelated to the items on the agenda.

John McGoldrick, Old Ridge Road, noted that he was not notified of the March 5, 2026 Planning Board meeting to address the subdivision at 193 Old Ridge Road property that he abuts. He is not challenging the Board’s decision nor is he asking for the application to be reopened. He became a resident of Strafford in 2023 and needs to understand the notification process; 1) is the town required to notify him of survey activity on his property, and 2) what does the town or the Planning Board do to ensure all abutters are notified. The Chair indicated that the survey of property is a private matter with the land owner and the survey company should notify abutters if it is necessary to enter adjoining properties. He also indicated that it is a legal requirement for the town to notify abutters via certified mail and the town receives a list of abutters. Mr. McGoldrick indicated he would follow up with Liz Evans to determine if an attempt had been made to notify him but would like the Planning Board to be more involved in confirming abutter notification. He also questioned the calculation of minimum buildable area for the Old Ridge Road subdivision and the requirements to be met if a driveway was needed to access an adjoining lot. Mr. McGoldrick was satisfied with the information provided by the Board.

Continuing Business

Major Subdivision by Cumulative Impact – Sarah & Thomas Collins and the Blue Hills Foundation, Inc., 2-Lot Conservation Development, Province Road and Evans Mountain Road (Tax Map 6, Lot 1)

The Chair appointed Susan Arnold as a voting member, recused himself, and asked Vice-Chair, Charlie Moreno, to preside as the Chair. Mr. Moreno indicated that the applicant previously presented the proposed subdivision separately under Preliminary Review and Design Review and, due to cumulative

impact of prior subdivision, the application must be considered as a major subdivision which requires two separate hearings before the Planning Board. The second hearing will be held on Wednesday, April 8, 2026, at 6:30PM. The Chair asked the applicant to present the proposal.

Daniel O'Lone, Berry Surveying & Engineering, representing the Collins' and the Blue Hills Foundation indicated that the Collins' own a single lot of approximately 213 acres located on Province Road (a Class V roadway) and Evans Mountain Road (a Class VI roadway). They propose the subdivision of this lot (Lot 1) into a 36-acre lot (Lot 1) which will contain their current residence and a 177-acre lot (Lot 1-1) which will be purchased by the Blue Hills Foundation and have a conservation easement placed on it held by Bear-Paw Regional Greenways. The boundary line between the two lots will primarily follow an established stone wall. A full boundary survey of the parcel has been completed. However, wetland, ledge outcroppings and interior stone walls have not been identified because it was not felt to be necessary. Wetland areas around the current residence were delineated by Peter Benjamin, a certified wetland scientist, and are sufficient to meet zoning requirements for the presence of the residential structure. There is also a NHDES approved septic system on Lot 1 which was installed in 1996. The lot abuts three separate permanently conserved properties which are not owned by the Blue Hills Foundation. Therefore, a lot line revision is not an appropriate division of the parcel.

The Chair asked the Board for comments or concerns. Steve Leighton confirmed with Mr. O'Lone that the abutting conserved areas were not owned by the Blue Hills Foundation. The Chair noted that Evans Mountain Road is an old historic, unmaintained lane. He confirmed with Mr. O'Lone that the frontage for the proposed new Lot 1 on Province Road was approximately 120 feet. Jen Czysz stated that the original Lot 1 is a preexisting non-conforming lot and that it will be compliant as long as it does not become more non-conforming. Mr. O'Lone confirmed that the new Lot 1 would not be more non-conforming and that the proposed Lot 1-1 frontage on Evans Mountain Road meets the access only regulatory requirements. The Chair called for a motion to accept the plan as complete which was so moved by Steve Leighton, seconded by Don Clifford, and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

The Board considered the regional impact of the proposed subdivision. Don Clifford made a motion that the subdivision does not present a regional impact which was seconded by Susan Arnold and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

The Chair asked Mr. O'Lone to state the Collins' intentions for use of the new Lot 1. Mr. O'Lone indicated that the Collins plan to live in the current residence for the rest of their lives and have no current plans for any use or development of the lot. Jen Czysz clarified that for a conservation subdivision the Board needs to address future use of a large parcel that is not conserved to identify possible future subdivision. The Chair asked Mr. O'Lone to provide a yield plan for the entire parcel at the meeting on April 8, 2026. He also stated that a conservation development must place into conservation at least 40 percent of the buildable area of the entire lot. The plan should contain notes to specify permitted uses of the conserved area, which would also be specified in the conservation easement, and that parking for access to the conserved area is not permitted on Evans Mountain Road. There also may be a need to establish an escrow account to cover town expenses for the subdivision. It was noted that the plan needs to refer to the conserved area as Lot 1-1.

Mr. O'Lone presented the waiver requests as follows:

1. Natural features. Requirement to show water courses, exposed ledge, or wetland delineation and for test pits and perc tests behind the area shown as limit of wetland delineation. These features are depicted only for Lot 1, the residential area and a NHDES approved septic system exists and is functioning properly.
2. Physical features. Requirement to show all stone walls on the lot. Stone walls are shown for either existing or proposed boundary lines.
3. Setback lines. Requirement to show building and setback lines. The structure located on the lot is existing and no change will take place to increase or decrease any encroachment into a setback line.

Susan Arnold noted that Board is allowed to modify subdivision requirements when considering a conservation development if it enhances the advantage of setting aside the conserved area.

The Chair opened the meeting for public comments at 7:11PM.

Phil Auger, 47 Browns Pasture Road, who recused himself because he is on the Board of Directors of Bear-Paw Regional Greenways who will hold the conservation easement, stated that he did not recall the Planning Board requiring allowed uses of conserved areas to be placed on the subdivision plans in the past and conservation easements in New Hampshire only deal with restrictions. The Chair suggested a note on the plan referencing the conservation easement document. Mr. Auger questioned the restriction on parking for access to the conserved area. Jen Cysz stated that this is a new lot on a Class VI roadway that does not meet frontage requirements and the parking restriction would mitigate the need for a zoning variance. Mr. Auger noted that the Blue Hills Foundation has a right to access the conserved area and if it chooses to improve Evans Mountain Road and create a parking area on the conserved land the suggested parking restriction might be an issue. Jen Cysz indicated that a road upgrade would be required. The Board and Mr. Auger, at the suggestion of Susan Arnold, agreed that a note indicating a level of upgrade for management access would be acceptable.

There being no further comments from the public, the Chair closed the meeting for public comments at 7:17PM.

The Board had no further questions or comments and the Chair asked for a motion for a continuance. Don Clifford made a motion to continue the major subdivision review forward to the April 8, 2026 Planning Board meeting at 6:30PM 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 and Susan Arnold returned to alternate member status.

New Business

Boundary Adjustment – Warren A. Buzzell, 730 Second Crown Point Road and First Crown Point Road, 193 Old Ridge Road (Tax Map 19, Lots 42 and 42-2).

Terry Hyland recused himself. The Chair appointed Donald Coker as a voting member and asked the applicant to present the case.

Ray Bisson of Stonewall Surveying, representing the Buzzells, stated that the applicant is proposing a lot line adjustment to transfer approximately 21-acres from Lot 42 (currently 47+ acres) with frontage

on First Crown Point Road to Lot 42-2 (currently 5+ acres) with frontage on Second Crown Point Road. This will make each lot approximately 26-acres in size.

The Board considered the regional impact of the proposal. Don Clifford made a motion that the lot line adjustment does not present a regional impact which was seconded by Charlie Moreno and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

At the request of the Chair, Mr. Brisson presented the waiver requests as follows:

1. Requirement to provide test pit and soil information. Steve Leighton made a motion to grant the waiver which was seconded by Donald Coker and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.
2. Requirement to show wetland delineation on the plan for the entire parcel. Steve Leighton made a motion to grant the waiver which was seconded by Donald Coker and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

The Chair noted that the new boundary line needed to be blazed to the extent possible. The Board determined that the plan was complete and Steve Leighton made a motion to accept the plan as complete which was seconded by Donald Coker and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

Charlie Moreno noted that the new lot line needed to be more obviously depicted on the plan and Mr. Brisson agreed to make the change to the plan.

The Chair opened the meeting for public comments at 7:37PM, and there being none, closed meeting for public comment at 7:37PM.

The Board had no further questions or comments and the Chair asked for a motion to approve the plan which was moved by Steve Leighton and seconded by Donald Coker. Jen Czysz noted that Findings of Fact need to be stated as part of a motion for approval of an application and she provided them as follows:

1. The proposal is for a boundary line adjustment and there is no new construction proposed at this time.
2. The application was accepted as complete by the Planning Board.
3. A public hearing was conducted.
4. The application was determined to not have a regional impact.
5. The proposal is compliant with zoning ordinances.
6. The application meets the requirements of the Strafford subdivision regulations for a lot line adjustment.

The above Findings of Fact were included in the motion and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

Terry Highland resumed duties as voting member and Donald Coker returned to alternate member status.

Preliminary Conceptual Consultation – 2-Lot Subdivision, 426 Second Crown Point Road (Tax Map 20, Lot 10)

Erin Sturgess of Preservation Timber Framing owns Lot 10 which contains an old structure on a 4.2-acre parcel. The structure is being restored and upgraded. The subdivision will provide an additional building lot. Mr. Sturgess is proposing two options; Option 1 would create two lots, one being 2.7-acres and a second lot encompassing 1.5-acres; Option 2 would create two lots of approximately equal size at 2.1-acres. The Board identified several areas of concern to meet subdivision and zoning requirements.

- Structure setback requirements.
- Minimum lot size.
- Buildable area requirement.

Other Business

Election of Planning Board officers. Terry Hyland made a motion to elect Phil Auger as Chair and Charlie Moreno as Vice-Chair which was seconded by Don Clifford and voted upon verbally by Don Clifford, Terry Hyland and Steve Leighton. The motion passed.

Non-public session. Charlie Moreno made a motion to enter a non-public session which was seconded by Don Clifford and by roll-call vote Don Clifford, Charlie Moreno, Terry Hyland and Steve Leighton voted in the affirmative to enter a non-public session. Don Clifford made a motion to end the non-public session which was seconded by Steve Leighton and by roll-call vote Don Clifford, Charlie Moreno, Terry Hyland and Steve Leighton voted in the affirmative to end the non-public session. Don Clifford made a motion to seal the record of the non-public session which was seconded by Charlie Moreno and by roll-call vote Don Clifford, Charlie Moreno, Terry Hyland and Steve Leighton voted in the affirmative to seal the record of the non-public session.

The Board tabled review of the minutes of the March 5, 2026 Planning Board Meeting until the April 8, 2026 meeting.

There being no further business before the Board, Don Clifford made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Charlie Moreno. The Board voted unanimously in favor, and the meeting adjourned at 8:53PM.

Minutes Prepared by Robert Fletcher