

**Planning Board Meeting**  
**6:00 p.m. September 23, 2025 at the Town Hall/Meeting House**

**Members Present:** Brendan O'Donnell (Chair), Rich Marcou (Vice-Chair), Greg Meeh, Logan Snyder, Megan Portnoy, Joshua Gordon, Scott Doherty (Selectboard Rep)

**Members Absent:** Hillary Nelson (Alternate), Clifton Mathieu (Alternate)

**Others Present:** Kal McKay (Admin Assistant), Beth Blair (Selectboard), Calvin Todd (Selectboard)

**Public Community Engagement Session**

The session convened at 6:05 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Mike Tardiff and Matt Monahan (CNHRPC), George Reagan (NH Housing), Kent Ruesswick, Ken Stern (Conservation Commission), and Kevin Bragg (HDC) attended.

George spoke about his experience with NH Housing and the history/causes of the housing crisis. Low vacancy, high cost of materials, and the zoning reaction to overbuilding in the 80s are among the contributing factors.

Joshua asked if the recent NH legislative changes have caused a flood of ADUs. He feels like there are many new ones in Canterbury but hasn't confirmed that with the Building Inspector. George said that he hasn't seen a huge surge in ADUs. Even without zoning blocking it, the cost to built detached ADUs is high and the availability of loans for 2<sup>nd</sup> structures is low. There is also a data collection issue, many towns do not track if building permits are for ADUs or not.

Megan asked if limiting short-term rentals like Airbnbs would help the low vacancy issue. George talked about how this is a prevalent issue in tourist areas and many towns have regulations for it. NH Housing did a study to determine if the Airbnb owners were locals or absent investors. Many were found to be owned by homeowners trying to make ends meet. Distinguishing between short-term rentals and ADUs is important, some towns were equating the two and hurting housing by banning both.

There are no prohibitions at the state-level for short-term housing, so towns may regulate as they please. In Canterbury, short-term rentals are allowed as long as the principle use of the lot is a single family home. Some towns limit overnight parking for short-term rentals to prevent partying.

There was discussion about the state legislature's efforts to change the minimum lot size and frontage requirements that towns could impose. Those bills did not go forward this year. As far as George knew, there were no infrastructure/fiscal impact studies done at the state level about that idea.

NH Housing recently did a school enrollment study. They found that mixed use added some of the highest value and did not significantly increase the number of students. Single family residences had the highest numbers of children.

There was debate about if smaller lots would really result in smaller homes and if smaller homes would actually solve affordability issues. It was agreed that developers will do whatever makes them the most money, finding a way to make the housing you want to see be the most profitable option is key. Larger setbacks and density bonuses for smaller units could help. George recommended looking at the City of Dover's ordinances.

There was also discussion about how families and seniors are competing for smaller housing. Megan suggested trying to incentivize single-level housing too.

Ken Stern brought up that public infrastructure is needed to create affordable housing. Without public water/sewer, single-family homes in Canterbury will never be affordable. George acknowledged this issue and said with septic innovations, lot sizes can be smaller now.

Kevin discussed the idea of going the other direction for affordability. Having large farmstead type housing that could be multiple units and allow families to grow and contract over time would be affordable, maintain the aesthetics of Canterbury, and be attractive for a variety of family types.

The farmstead alternative in the Zoning Ordinance does encourage this type of development, but did not mandate it. Currently the only leverage the Planning Board has with developers is a density bonus. Some towns have design standards, but that gets into the issue of owners having the right to do what they want with their property.

Kent discussed how the zoning districts may need adjustment to allow more to be done with land zoned as Agricultural. He and Calvin debated the useability of that land.

The listening session was closed at 6:52 p.m.

### **Call to Order**

The Planning Board moved to the Meeting House to begin their regular meeting.

The Planning Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Beryl Boisvert and Roy Glines attended.

### **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Rich pointed out that on line 159 of the 9/9 minutes, Megan did not say she was getting her well tested, so that sentence should be struck. Megan agreed.

Rich made a motion to approve the public minutes as amended for the Planning Board meeting on September 9, 2025. Greg seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

### **114 West Road Hearing**

This hearing was continued from the Planning Board meeting on August 26, 2025.

The applicant delivered the new plans to the office at 4 p.m. and requested the hearing continue to the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting in October. This would give the Board time to review the new plans and for the engineering study to be completed through CNHRPC.

Logan moved to continue the hearing for 114 West Road to October 14<sup>th</sup>. Greg seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

Roy Glines spoke about his concerns regarding the 114 West Road application. There are a lot of details that haven't been worked out yet, including parking, and he is confused about why the Board hasn't addressed those questions yet. The Board explained the application review process and that some of his concerns have already been discussed. Mr. Glines was invited to attend the hearing continuation on 10/14 to speak more about his concerns since it wouldn't be fair to the applicants to have this discussion after the hearing was closed.

### **Commercial Solar**

A resident approached Joshua Gordon about the problems with getting commercial solar in Canterbury. Currently the Zoning Ordinance allows it by Special Exception in the Commercial and Industrial zones, but it is only possible to install in places with 3-phase power (Exit 18 to the Center and up Hackleboro Road to Hackleboro Orchard, and Rt 106). So there are almost no places where it is both allowable and feasible. Since commercial solar can be installed with screws in the ground rather than concrete footings, it could be considered temporary and revertible to agriculture.

The Board discussed the different options for handling this including an overlay. The simplest option would be to modify the table of uses to allow it in more districts.

### **Tiny Homes Definition**

Regarding the discussion the Board had on 9/9/25, Joshua said that he has read ordinances on mobile home parks and concluded that those are pseudo-condos since they own the ground collectively and each person owns a unit. He doesn't think those address what people want to do with tiny homes.

### **Land Development Regulation Checklists**

Rich went through the latest draft of the checklists and found a lot of errors that need correcting. He, Greg, and Matt are going to work on it to sort it out before bringing it back to the whole Board.

### **Adjournment**

Joshua made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. Logan seconded.

Megan asked if the Board was willing to consider refining the cluster and farmstead ordinances. Brendan said the Board could certainly look at it, but not until the 114 West Road application is resolved.

The Board voted on the motion to adjourn. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

Next Meeting: 2025 October 14, 7:00 p.m. at the Meeting House

Minutes submitted by Kathleen McKay, Administrative Assistant