

Planning Board Meeting Minutes
Town of Canterbury, NH
April 14, 2026 – 7:00 p.m. Meeting House

Members Present: Brendan O'Donnell (Chair), Janice DellaCroce, Joshua Gordon, Greg Meeh, Logan Snyder, Calvin Todd (Selectboard Rep)
Megan Portnoy (Vice-Chair) was not present at the beginning of the meeting and joined at 7:54 p.m.

Members Absent: Clifton Mathieu (Alternate)

Others Present: Steve Cochrane
Cheryl Andrew, Recording Secretary

Call to Order: Brendan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: Joshua said he had wanted more details to the minutes regarding the Cluster Ordinance discussion and had made notes from his review of the recording. However, he decided it was not necessary for his notes to be added to the minutes. Greg made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 31, 2026 meeting as written. Motion seconded by Janice. A vote was taken, all approved, motion carried.

New Business:

Brendan informed the Board of the upcoming Land Use Boards Meeting to be held at the Meetinghouse on Thursday April 23, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

Cluster Ordinance Work Session

Brendan provided examples of other towns' ordinances for Cluster Subdivisions stating that the subdivision should not have a negative impact on traffic and calling for the preservation of existing features such as brooks and wetlands, tree clusters, rock walls, etc. Canterbury currently has nothing in place, these stipulations can be adopted for either a subdivision or a cluster.

Defining Base Density

- Calculate Base Density accounting for the minimum lot acreage, frontage, Canterbury Rectangle and wetlands acreage. Base Density can be defined either as a whole with the developer dividing the acreage amongst all lots, or removing the wetlands acreage first and then calculating the number of buildable lots. The question of how the Board determines Baseline Density and the percentage of open space was raised. Options are that the developer present a fully completed plan showing the required minimums for lot size, frontage, wetlands acreage, etc., or that the Board allow the developer to divide the acreage into lots considering the additional acreage requirements for steep-slope wetlands. Logan suggested the calculations to determine if a cluster is possible should be simple. Brendan said he will run figures of the two calculation methods and present them at the next meeting.

At this time Steve Cochrane interrupted the discussion to ask if he was on the agenda for the meeting. He is requesting a re-zoning of his property off Exit 18 and was told to come to this meeting. As he was not on the agenda, Brendan took his contact information for the Land Use Administrator to set up a future meeting date for him. Mr. Cochrane left the meeting at 7:30 p.m. and the Cluster Subdivision discussion continued.

Incentives for Bonus Density

- Affordable Housing calculations. Percentage of median house prices may not work as prices fluctuate. Consider a percentage of the workforce median income. Accessibility, ADA compliance, single story, smaller square footage are conceptually easy to identify. A concern is how to enforce affordability requirements as a developer may postpone building these houses in favor of higher priced homes. There is a small tax incentive to develop lots as, once they have been recorded as buildable, the property taxes increase above undeveloped land. There might be the option to consider the affordable homes as the bonus lots, or offer a larger bonus if the entire cluster is the affordable homes. The Board has no control of the resale or refurbishing of the affordable homes.
 - Open Space. Greg noted the current regulation has no frontage nor minimum lot size requirements, which could put the houses very close to each other. Brendan noted the open and community spaces could address this concern. Percentage of open space could be divided in half to allow for a portion of the bonus per increment. For example a total allowed for 50% open space would grant a portion of the bonus for 25% open space. Open space is currently defined as undisturbed land. Shared space includes recreation and playground areas, garden areas, sidewalks and open fields.
 - Energy Efficiency and Environmental Standards. Additional bonus may be provided for solar energy and other environmental considerations. There are building codes pointing to increased energy efficiency that are not cost prohibitive.
 - Architectural Standards. Megan joined the meeting at 7:54 during this discussion. Brendan raised the question of whether this was a concern of the Board, the opinions were mixed. Photos of styles or a listing can be provided. Historic Districts must be considered, and a review of the Master Plan might show if this is an issue. This can also be reviewed in the Public Hearing.
 - Multi-unit Properties. Brendan noted Section 6.4A states there are not to be more than 6 units in an individual building and asked if this issue is better addressed through the Table of Uses. The question is whether to make this practical in the Ordinance or should it be removed. Logan suggested this limitation of units referred to conversion of historic buildings rather than new development. Brendan noted that other towns have pre-approved ADU plans which can fast-track these units because the plans are in place.
 - Shared Community Space. Includes sidewalks, garden areas, recreation areas, etc. There could be an additional bonus if trail networks and other community spaces allow broader public access. The distance to public roads should be considered. Parking for community space and individual units is a concern in regards to traffic flow, as are mail delivery and school bus pickup, as they relate to the public roads.
- Brendan will compile a list of these items for review at the next meeting.

Adjournment:

With no further business to discuss, Greg made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Logan seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all in favor, motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 28, 2026 - 7:00 p.m. at the Meeting House
Minutes submitted by: Cheryl Andrew, Recording Secretary