

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 22, 2025

6:30 PM

**Council Chambers,
City Hall**

Members Present:

Harold Farrington, Chair
Roberta Mastrogiovanni, Vice Chair
Mayor Jay V. Kahn
Councilor Michael Remy
Sarah Vezzani
Armando Rangel
Michael Hoefer, Alternate
Stephon Mehu, Alternate

Staff Present:

Evan Clements, Planner
Megan Fortson, Planner

Members Not Present:

Kenneth Kost
Ryan Clancy
Tammy Adams, Alternate
Joseph Cocivera, Alternate

1) Call to Order – Roll Call

Chair Farrington called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and roll call was taken. Mr. Hoefer and Mr. Mehu were invited to join the meeting as voting members.

2) Minutes of Previous Meeting – November 24, 2025

A motion was made by Mayor Kahn that the Planning Board approve the November 24, 2025, meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilor Remy and was unanimously approved.

3) Adoption of the 2026 Meeting Schedule

A motion was made by Mayor Kahn to approve the 2026 meeting schedule. The motion was seconded by Councilor Remy and was unanimously approved.

4) Final Vote on Conditional Approvals

Chair Farrington stated as a matter of practice, the Board will now issue a final vote on all conditionally approved plans after all of the “conditions precedent” have been met. This final vote will be the final approval and will start the 30-day appeal clock. The Chair asked whether there were any items ready for final approval. Mr. Clements stated there were no items ready for

final approval for tonight but there are applications coming before the Board tonight that may be ready for final approval.

5) Boundary Line Adjustment:

- a. PB-2025-30 – 91 & 105 Maple Ave – Boundary Line Adjustment – Applicant Huntley Survey & Design, on behalf of owners Cedarcrest and the 1st Baptist Church of Keene, proposes to transfer ~7.5-ac from the ~21.5-ac lot at 105 Maple Ave (TMP# 227-017- 000) to the ~6.7-ac lot at 91 Maple Ave (TMP# 227-018-000). The 105 Maple Ave property is in the Low-Density District, and 91 Maple Ave is in the Conservation & Low Density Districts.**

i. Board Determination of Completeness

Planner, Megan Fortson, stated the applicant has requested exemptions from submitting all technical reports. After reviewing these requests, Planning Staff have made the preliminary determination that granting the requested exemptions would have no bearing on the merits of the application and recommend that the Board accept the application as complete.

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni to accept this Application as complete. The motion was seconded by Mayor Kahn and was unanimously approved.

ii. Public Hearing

Mr. Russ Huntley of Huntley Survey and Design addressed the Board and stated this item is in reference to a boundary line adjustment between the First Baptist Church and Cedarcrest. The church proposes selling 7.5 acres of land to Cedarcrest, and the land is located at the southeastern end of their property along with a strip for access. There are no changes in the frontage. He noted to where the wetlands are located on the property. This concluded his comments.

Staff comments were next. Planner, Megan Fortson, stated the Cedarcrest parcel is mostly located within the Industrial Park District, soon to be the Medium Density District. The rear portion is located within the Low Density District. The First Baptist Church is located entirely within the Low Density District. The acreage of the Cedarcrest site that is going to be within the Low Density District is going to be increasing and the amount of land in the Conservation District is not proposed to be changed.

Both sites are currently developed. The First Baptist Church site is developed with the existing church and a outbuildings. There are also telecommunications facilities located at the rear of the site. The Cedarcrest site is built out with their main campus building and some outbuildings, as well as an outdoor seating area. The rear portion of the site is going to eventually be developed with the proposed solar array.

Staff made the preliminary determination that the proposed Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA) does not have any regional impact, but this is something the Board will need to discuss as part of their deliberation.

Ms. Fortson went on to say that there were no departmental comments. She next reviewed the applicable standards.

Both lots will comply with the lot size requirements in the Low Density District prior to and following the BLA. Low density requires a minimum of a 10,000 square foot lot size. Following the BLA, the Church is going to have a parcel that is about 14 acres in size and Cedarcrest will be about 14.2 acres in size. She noted to the area of wetlands on the rear portion of the Church site. Ms. Fortson stated it does show the 30-foot surface water buffer that has to be maintained from this area in the Low Density District. However, there is no development proposed as part of this application. The applicant has added a note to the plan stating that if there is any development in the future, it will need to comply with all local, state and federal regulations in terms of development near the wetland. The standard appears to be met.

For monumentation, the project narrative states that, if approved, there will be new lot monuments installed. Ms. Fortson noted this is standard with Planning Board applications. Staff recommend that a subsequent condition of approval related to the inspection of lot monuments be included.

There are no special flood hazard areas present on any of the parcels.

There is adequate fire protection and water supply provided from Maple Avenue.

There are no changes proposed to utilities.

There are no changes proposed to site access.

Ms. Fortson stated this is a straightforward application. She explained in the agenda packet, there was a motion with four precedent conditions of approval that were recommended. This applicant has met most of these conditions. They have submitted plans with owners' signatures. They have submitted recording fees and have also submitted paper copies of the plans. The only condition Staff recommend is the lot monument inspection. Therefore, Staff recommend that the Board grant final approval at this meeting.

Councilor Remy asked what the dirt area is in the middle of the lot on the border of what is being conveyed. Mr. Huntley stated it looked like an old gravel pit.

Mayor Kahn asked if this adjustment is going to be creating more wetlands at the rear of the site in the future. Ms. Fortson stated, since there is no development proposed as part of the application, Staff is strictly reviewing the change in the proposed lot sizes. If there were to be any development on that portion of the site, the applicant would have to comply with the Surface Water Protection Ordinance and any other federal or state regulations that would come into play. Mr. Huntley added he can also confirm that this is just a land transfer at the moment and can't really speak to anything else.

The Chair asked for public comment. With no public comment, the Chair closed the public hearing.

iii. Board Discussion and Action

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni that the Planning Board issue final approval for PB-2025-30 as shown on the plan identified as boundary line adjustment prepared by Huntley Survey and Design PLLC at a scale of 1 inch = 100 feet on November 12, 2025 and last revised on December 5, 2025 with the following condition subsequent to final approval:

1. Prior to recording the final subdivision plat, the new lot monuments shall be inspected by the Public Works Director or in lieu of this, security shall be submitted to cover the cost of this inspection.

The motion was seconded by Mayor Kahn.

Mayor Kahn stated there is no regional impact from this application. The Chair felt this was a straightforward application and did not see a reason not to move forward.

The motion for final approval carried on a unanimous vote.

6) Public Hearings:

- a. **31 Robbins Rd (TMP# 558-019-000) – Appeal of Street Access Permit Decision – Applicant and owner Karin Royce is appealing a decision of the City Engineer to deny a request for an exception from Sect. 23.5.4.A.8 of the Land Development Code regarding allowed driveway width. The parcel is 0.41-ac in size and is in the Low Density District.**

i. Board Determination of Completeness

Planner, Evan Clements, stated the applicant has not requested any exemptions from submittal items as part of this application. Planning Staff recommend that the Planning Board accept the application as complete.

A motion was made by Mayor Kahn to accept this Application as complete. The motion was seconded by Roberta Mastrogiovanni and was unanimously approved.

The petitioner was not present at the meeting.

A motion was made by Mayor Kahn that the Planning Board continue this application to the January 26, 2026, meeting at 6:30 pm in Council Chambers. The motion was seconded by Stephon Mehu and was unanimously approved.

- b. **PB-2025-31 – 62 Maple Ave – Cheshire Medical Center 2-lot Subdivision – Applicant Huntley Survey & Design, on behalf of owner Cheshire Medical Center, proposes to subdivide the ~50-ac lot located at 62 Maple Ave (TMP# 227-006-000) into two lots ~1.3-ac and ~48.6-ac in size. The parcel is in the Industrial Park District.**

i. Board Determination of Completeness

Planner, Megan Fortson, stated the applicant has requested exemptions from submitting all technical reports. After reviewing this request, Planning Staff have made the preliminary determination that granting the requested exemptions would have no bearing on the merits of the application and recommend that the Board accept the application as complete.

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni to accept this application as complete. The motion was seconded by Mayor Kahn and was unanimously approved.

ii. Public Hearing

Mr. Russ Huntley began by referring to a plan showing the existing conditions survey, which was performed a few years ago and indicates wetlands and 100- and 500-year floodplain topography. He noted the northwestern end of the property and a small portion to the south are all undeveloped areas.

Mr. Huntley stated the applicant's proposal is to subdivide the lot to create a 1.28-acre parcel. The current zoning is Industrial Park, but there is a proposal before City Council to change this zoning to the Medium Density District. This plan represents the zoning requirements of Medium Density. All setbacks meet the Medium Density requirement. Mr. Huntley stated the new 1.2-acre parcel does not have any wetlands on it and is not within the flood zone. He stated he does not know the reason for the subdivision, and he cannot comment on the future use of what might happen on this property. It is a flat grass area and is developable. All monuments have been set. Fire protection and water supply exist within Maple Avenue. There is access onto the property. This concluded Mr. Huntley's comments.

Councilor Remy noted the zoning change to Medium Density was approved by Council last week.

Staff comments were next. Ms. Fortson began by stating, as Mr. Huntley had mentioned, this parcel, along with four other parcels along Maple Avenue, were part of a recent ordinance application to rezone from the Industrial Park to Medium Density District, along with two parcels across Route 9 that were rezoned from Industrial Park to Low Density. This parcel complies with zoning requirements because the zoning has been changed.

She went on to say that parent parcel is 50-acres in size, and the proposal is to carve off a one and a quarter-acre section of the parcel. The smaller parcel is proposed to be gifted to the City. Cheshire Medical Center has a program with the City, the Pilot program, which includes payment in lieu of taxes. There is no decision on what the future development of this parcel is going to be; today's proposal is to change the lot lines to create a new developable lot.

In terms of regional impact, Staff have made the preliminary determination that they believe there is no regional impact.

In terms of departmental comments, the only comment was that the zoning map amendment would need to be passed in order for this proposal to comply with the zoning requirements, which has been addressed.

Ms. Fortson next reviewed the applicable Subdivision Regulations:

Section 20.2.1 of the Land Development Code states that any new lots have to comply with all the zoning dimensional requirements of the underlying district. The larger lot is going to have 631.9 feet of frontage along Maple Avenue, and the 1.25-acre portion will have 189 feet of frontage along Maple Avenue, complying with required zoning dimensions in the Medium Density District.

In terms of the land, the site is a relatively flat piece of land. Portions of the 48-acre parcel have special flood hazard areas and wetlands, but there is no development proposed as part of this application. None of the site features exist on the proposed lot. The standard appears to be met.

The new lot is along a City street that has access to City water and sewer.

There is no potential for scattered or premature development.

The lot monuments are set but they will need to be inspected by the City Engineer's office. This item is included as a recommended subsequent condition of approval.

Traffic and access management would be handled as part of any future potential development on the lot.

Ms. Fortson stated Staff recommend final approval, with the only condition being the completion of a lot monument inspection prior to recording the plan.

The Chair asked for public comment, and with no comments from the public, the Chair closed the public hearing.

iii. Board Discussion and Action

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni that the Planning Board issue final approval for PB-2025-31 as shown on the plan identified as "Two Lot Subdivision Plan" prepared by Huntley Survey & Design, PLLC at a scale of 1 inch = 50 feet on November 14, 2025 and last revised on December 3, 2025 with the following condition subsequent to final approval:

1. Prior to recording the final subdivision plat, the new lot monuments shall be inspected by the Public Works Director, or in lieu of this, a security shall be submitted to cover the cost of this inspection.

The motion was seconded by Mayor Kahn.

Ms. Vezzani stated she agrees with Staff that there is no regional impact, and this seems to be a straightforward subdivision of land.

The motion for final approval carried on a unanimous vote.

- c. PB-2025-28 – 98 Peg Shop Rd – 2-lot Subdivision – Applicant DiBernardo Associates, on behalf of owners Mitchell & Erika Greenwald, proposes to subdivide the ~33-ac lot located at 98 Peg Shop Rd (TMP# 232-022-000) into two lots ~28-ac and ~5-ac in size. The property is in the Rural District.**

i. Board Determination of Completeness

Planner, Evan Clements, stated the applicant has not requested any exemptions from submittal items as part of this application. Planning Staff recommend that the Planning Board accept the application as complete.

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni to accept this application as complete. The motion was seconded by Mayor Kahn and was unanimously approved.

ii. Public Hearing

Mr. Joe DiBernardo of DiBernardo Associates addressed the Board, representing Mitchell and Erica Greenwald. Mr. DiBernardo stated this proposal is a two-lot subdivision located off Peg Shop Road. He noted this property is located in the Rural District, which has a minimum lot size requirement of two acres. The minimum width at the building site is 200 feet and 50-foot building setbacks on all sides. He indicated that the parcel that is being subdivided is to the east of the developed portion of the lot. The lot currently consists of 5.0 acres with 200.05 feet of road frontage. At the building site 200 feet of width is being maintained. Test pits have been completed and wetlands have been delineated. The five-acre lot to the north is being subdivided.

Mr. DiBernardo noted there is a national grid easement on the west side of the property with a 250-foot-wide easement that runs through the property. This concluded the petitioner's comments.

Staff comments were next. Mr. Clements addressed the Board and stated the proposed subdivision would create a new five-acre residential building lot with approximately 200 feet of frontage on a Class V road. In the Rural District, there is a 50 feet of frontage requirement with a minimum lot size of two acres.

The proposed new lot will be larger than the minimum required size and have greater than the minimum required amount of frontage. This standard appears to be met.

With reference to the character for the land for subdivision, the applicant has stated in their narrative that the proposed lot is suitable for development and will not propose a danger due to hazardous conditions. Due to the characteristics of the site, development is likely to occur closer to Peg Shop Road rather than closer to the rear of the site. This standard appears to be met.

The applicant proposes to create a single building lot on a City maintained Class V road in an existing Rural Residential Neighborhood.

In regard to scattered or premature development, the standard appears to be met.

The development potential for the lot could include a single-family home with an accessory dwelling unit and is unlikely to create any hardship for City services. This standard appears to be met.

Preservation of Existing Features: The applicant states in their narrative that the proposed lot design takes existing features into consideration by requiring development to be located closer to

the road than the rear of the lot. Steep slopes and wetlands located to the rear of the lot will not be able to be impacted by development due to the lot narrowing to the north. This will ensure these natural features are maintained. This standard has been met.

Monumentation: The applicant proposes to install 5/8" diameter iron rods at all points shown on the plan. These monuments have been installed and inspected by the City Engineer. This standard has been met.

Special Flood Hazard Area: Not applicable.

Fire Protection and Water Supply: The applicant states that the proposed subdivision has frontage on a class V road that will allow for reasonable access for emergency vehicle access. This standard has been met.

Utilities: The proposed lot is located within the Rural District outside of municipal water and sewer. Private well and septic will be required for the development of this lot. As the applicant mentioned, test pits have been completed that prove suitability for a septic system to be sited on this property. This standard also appears to be met.

In closing, Mr. Clements stated Staff recommend that the Board consider this application for final approval this evening. One condition precedent includes recording fees in the amount of \$51 be supplied to the City to record the mylars.

Councilor Remy noted there was one e-mail with concerns that was received, but those concerns seem to be with potential future development and not with the actual application for the subdivision and asked for clarification. Mr. Clements agreed the concerns were more focused on land disturbance, drainage, etc., and added those concerns will be evaluated at the time of the building permit for that single-family residence.

Chair Farrington asked whether this property currently has any screening. Mr. Clements stated he believes there is some existing vegetation on the site. He further stated single-family residence is not subject to the Board's site development standards, so additional screening won't be required.

The Chair asked for public comment.

Mr. Mitchell Greenwald of 98 Peg Shop Road stated his intention for this subdivision request is to create another housing lot to for a housing opportunity in Keene. He felt in the Rural District the minimum lot size should be five acres not two acres. Mr. Greenwald also stated in their deed, when they sell this property, it would have a restriction for no further subdivision. He stated there is ample screening between his property and the new lot.

iii. Board Discussion and Action

A motion was made by Robert Mastrogiovanni that the Planning Board issue final approval for PB-2025-28 as shown on the plan set identified as plan showing subdivision of property of Mitchell H Greenwald Revocable Trust, Erica Greenwald Revocable Trust prepared by

DiBernardo Associates LLC at 1 inch - 100 feet on September 24, 2025 and last revised on December 3rd, 2025, with the following conditions subsequent:

1. The submittal of a check in the amount of \$51 made out to the City of Keene to cover recording fees.

The motion was seconded by Armando Rangel.

With respect to regional impact, Mayor Kahn stated this is a very lightly traveled road with little connectivity to other roads and felt there is minimal impact on the neighborhood, the City and region.

The Chair asked about the waivers as part of completeness and asked whether they needed to be voted on. Mr. Clements stated he used the wrong term, they were not waivers but were exceptions from submittal requirements.

Mr. Hoefer reiterated this is intended to be a one-resident lot and no further subdivisions will be allowed when the deed passes, according to the applicant, and he finds no reason not to move forward with this approval tonight.

The motion made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni carried on a unanimous vote.

- d. PB-2025-29 – 454 Elm St – Cottage Court CUP, Surface Water Protection CUP, & Major Site Plan – Applicant Fieldstone Land Consultants PLLC, on behalf of owners Paul Chester & Gail Marie Dubriske, proposes to redevelop the property at 454 Elm St (TMP# 521-004-000) into a Cottage Court Development with 18 single-family dwellings. A surface water protection CUP is requested for ~1,435-sf of impact within the 30-foot wetland buffer. The parcel is ~2.3 ac in size and is in the Low-Density District.**

Ms. Vezzani was recused from this application.

i. Board Determination of Completeness

Planner, Evan Clements, stated the applicant has requested an exemption from a traffic analysis, soil analysis, historic evaluation and screening analysis. After reviewing these requests, Planning Staff recommend that the Board grant the requested exemptions and accept the application as complete.

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni to accept this Application as complete. The motion was seconded by Stephon Mehu and was unanimously approved.

ii. Public Hearing

Mr. John Noonan of Fieldstone Land Consultants addressed the Board on behalf of the applicants. Mr. Noonan stated this is a Cottage Court Development proposal with 18 single-family residential homes. The Cottage Court regulations call for no more than 900 square feet in footprint and no more than 1,250 square feet of overall average gross area. He stated their calculations end up with just under both of those thresholds.

He noted that after the Planning Board site visit and the Conservation Commission meeting last Monday, the CUP application for Surface Water Protection was amended. Initially, the request was for a full reduction from a 30-foot buffer down to a 10-foot buffer. This has been revised to a request only for the impact area. The areas that are not impacted would remain as the 30-foot buffer. Any change that is done on the Site Plan in the future would require the applicant to come back before the Board. The approval being requested is just for the impacted area of 1,435 square feet. This impacted area in the southwest corner of the lot is for storm water management. There are large trees in this area that will be removed but won't be replanted because of the stormwater management in this area. He indicated that the Conservation Commission has asked for some plantings in this area. The applicant is looking at some pollinator friendly seed mix and plants such a silky dogwood, which absorb a lot of water. The Commission also asked for trees along the front of the site; subsequently, a revised landscaping plan was submitted last week following that meeting.

Mr. Noonan went on to say the overall concept of the plan is that these 18 homes are condominium units. Each home would have a limited common area around it. There will be a homeowners association that would maintain the road, the stormwater management systems, and utilities. The main run of water and sewer would be municipally owned. The applicant extended water and sewer off Elm Street into the units, which would be protected by an easement granted to the City of Keene where they would own water and sewer infrastructure on the site.

There would be a 20-foot-wide main driveway, which will be built to City street standards. There will be asphalt Cape Cod, berm-style curbing. There will be individual driveways. The shortest driveway is 18 feet on two of the homes and the others would be longer. Each driveway will be able to accommodate one car parked in the driveway, and each home has a garage.

Mr. Noonan went on to say that there are three types of homes styles that could be chosen from. These were submitted with floor plan layouts to verify that the applicant met the cottage court square footage requirements. A mix between a Cape Cod style home with a garage, a Cape Cod style home with a garage on the first floor, and a ranch style home has been proposed.

The applicant has submitted a Major Site Plan, existing conditions plan and condominium plan. The condominium plan is sent to the Attorney General's office to be reviewed and then recorded, which will call out all easements to the City, what the limited common areas are for each home, and the square footage of each home.

The applicant has also submitted the utility plan, profile, grading and drainage plan, and stormwater management plan. Mr. Noonan called attention to where stormwater management is located. Currently, at the front of the site, there is a large stormwater management area, which was constructed by the City of Keene. The applicant is going to utilize the existing stormwater management area and make it larger on each side of the driveway. Water will be collected in catch basins on site, directed into storm water ponds and tied back into the municipal stormwater system utilizing an outlet structure. At the rear of the site, there is a level spreader, which collects water from the last unit and the last driveway. Overall, there will be a reduction in the 2,10, 25, and 50-year storm events as submitted in the stormwater management report.

Mr. Noonan next referred to the revised landscaping plan. Initially, there were only plantings along the frontage. Now, there are street trees added throughout the street area. There was already some existing screening around the transformer. The applicant has also added plantings along the wetland impact buffer area, including silky dogwoods and a pollinator friendly mix. This concluded Mr. Noonan's presentation.

Chair Farrington asked if all stormwater from the site will end up in Elm Street. Mr. Noonan answered in the affirmative. He continued by stating about 95% of stormwater will end up in Elm Street but a small portion will end up in the stormwater management system.

Mr. Noonan stated the surveyor also noticed, when they removed the manhole covers, that there is a substantial amount of sediment in the catch basins and culverts. He stated stormwater and flooding has been mentioned, when they did other projects in the abutting area, and felt the existing system needs to be maintained in tying into those infrastructure projects. There is a catch basin that the applicant is going to be tying into, and he will be recommending that those pipes are flushed and cleaned out, as well as that the catch basins are cleaned out. Mr. Noonan felt this will help with the stormwater issues.

Mayor Kahn asked about the elevations along the street where the catch basins are being proposed. He stated the lower point of the elevations is to the south of Timberlane Drive and asked for clarification about the flow to the catch basins. Mr. Noonan stated that currently, everything drains from the north to south and then ultimately drains along the curb line. Next, stormwater is picked up by the municipal catch basins in Elm Street. He noted to where the stormwater from the property is going to be directed, which would be into the larger catch basin.

Ms. Mastrogiovanni asked about the sedimentation that already exists. She asked where sediment is coming from and whether this will create more sedimentation. Mr. Noonan stated sediment is probably coming from sanding streets during the winter. He stated the City, for the most part, vacuums out a lot of the catch basins and flushes the pipes in the downtown area, but certain areas are not always addressed. In the future, there won't be a large, 12-inch pipe going directly into that catch basin; rather, it will be an outlet structure, which has a pump in it. This project's Homeowner's Association will also receive an inspection maintenance manual, which gets recorded as part of the Attorney General's Office review of the proposal. This means the HOA has to follow that manual and annually clean out the basins and pipes. Hence, there will be much more maintenance in the future.

Mr. Clements asked Mr. Noonan to describe the current condition of the lot, how the water flows currently, and how this project is going to change this water flow.

Mr. Noonan explained that currently, the high point of the site is to the south of the existing home. The water drains from that high point towards Elm Street, towards Route 9, towards the wetland, and towards the abutting property. From the applicant's proposed conditions, the high point will get lowered, and everything will be pitched down towards Elm Street. Hence, more water is being captured from the high point, and less water is coming back to the rear portion of the property. It is being captured along the rear portion of the homes to the west. All the grading is pitching towards the proposed road and captured into the catch basins. The stormwater

management report that was submitted and reviewed by the City Engineer outlines the existing conditions compared to the proposed conditions.

Chair Farrington asked if the interior road would be a public road. Mr. Noonan answered in the negative—the interior road will be owned by the HOA. The only thing that will be owned by the City would be the water and sewer infrastructure. Within the condominium plan, there would be an easement plan following the installed water and sewer infrastructure.

Staff comments were next. Mr. Clements stated the subject property is a 2.3-acre lot located on Elm Street, directly adjacent to Route 9, and across from the entrance of Timberlane Drive. The property is proposed to be developed on the site of a historic single-family residence once owned by an Abenaki Family, the Sadoques, and is located about 650 feet northwest of Fuller School. The rear portion of the lot, which was formerly part of the right of way of Franklin Pierce Highway, Route 9 is forested and contains a small area of wetland and historic stone walls delineate portions of the rear property boundaries.

The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing house and redevelop the property into a Cottage Court condominium development with 18 single-family dwellings. A Surface Water Protection Conditional Use Permit is requested for approximately 1,400 square feet of impact to the 30-foot wetland buffer.

The application was referred to the Conservation Commission for review and recommendation, and a memo of the Conservation Commission's findings is included in the Board's packet.

Mr. Clements stated Staff have made a preliminary evaluation that this project does not appear to have the potential for regional impact, but Board will need to make a final determination on that.

Surface Water Protection Standards – There is an estimated 1,435 square feet of impact to the 30-foot buffer. The applicant has noted the intent is to maximize the development of the site under the Cottage Court Overlay and is reducing grading within the 30-foot buffer only to what is absolutely necessary to achieve the proposed development.

The applicant has stated in their narrative, there are no direct impacts to the surface water system with this proposal. At the time, detailed information related to the condition of the surface water was not submitted. However, based on the New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan, the site is not located within a Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 habitat area. As discussed at the site visit with the Conservation Commission, the wetland most likely was created when the Franklin Pierce Highway was installed in the 70s and then subsequent run-off from that impervious surface is what created this wetland.

Mr. Clements stated at the time the Staff Report was drafted, there was a potential to reduce the surface water buffer from 30 feet to 10 feet. However, the applicant is no longer seeking that request, they are only seeking approval for the 1,400 square feet of proposed impact to the buffer itself.

In regard to the Cottage Court standards, the applicant proposes three-unit types. Types one and two are proposed to be 1,365 square feet of gross floor area and type three is proposed to be 895

square feet of gross floor area. The development site-wide average of all units is 1,248 square feet of gross floor area. All three building types have a footprint of 895 square feet. It appears that this standard has been met.

Parking – Each dwelling unit is required to have a minimum of one parking space. Each dwelling is proposed to have a garage space as well as an additional space in the driveway. It appears that this standard has been met.

Building Separation – The applicant has stated that the two closest buildings in the development are 10 feet apart. Mr. Clements noted the project would meet all required building and fire codes when it comes to actual building permits and site development. This standard has been met.

Driveways – The individual unit driveways are proposed to be approximately 9 feet wide and 18 feet long. Turnarounds have been provided throughout the site. This standard appears to be met.

Mr. Clements indicated that there are no true roads being proposed with this application. A private driveway is proposed. This driveway is going to be 20 feet wide in most locations, except for a bump out to 28 feet wide to accommodate a shared mailbox area near the entrance to the site to accommodate turnaround for Postal Service and residents checking their mailboxes.

The common drive is proposed to be constructed to City standards and will use Cape Cod style curbing as was described. Hammerheads are proposed to facilitate navigation of larger emergency vehicles and a truck turning plan was submitted and reviewed by the City Engineer, showing that a City fire truck and a delivery truck were able to safely navigate through the site. That standard appears to be met.

Screening – The applicant states, in their narrative, that a vegetative buffer is proposed along the frontage of the development. There is also existing vegetation along the northern property line, which will be maintained. There is an existing fence along the southern property line, which will also be maintained. Since this development is single-family dwellings, in a neighborhood with a predominantly single-family development pattern, additional screening due to an increased intensity of use that is required in the Cottage Court ordinance is not required for this particular project. It appears that the standard has been met.

Drainage – Mr. Clements stated Drainage has been reviewed by the City Engineer, in addition to everything Mr. Noonan just presented. This standard appears to be met.

Sediment and Erosion Control – A stabilized construction entrance, silt fencing catch basins, silt socks, and any other additional erosion control measures will be utilized during construction. Slopes will be permanently stabilized with vegetation, stone rip rap, stone check dams and erosion control matting, as needed. This standard appears to be met.

Snow Storage and Removal – The applicant states that the snow will be stored on site along the driveway and adjacent to the residential drives. Snow storage areas are identified on the plan adjacent to the main entrance, which is next to Unit 1, and along the end of the driveway, which is adjacent to Unit 13. That standard appears to be met.

Landscaping – The landscaping plan shows the installation of a selection of shrubs and trees along Elm Street. The narrative also notes that future owners of the individual condos will be able to install their own landscaping. The proposed landscaping includes nine rhododendrons, six dogwood shrubs, eight winterberry shrubs, Hawthorne trees, and one Maple tree. In addition, after consultation with the Conservation Commission, additional plantings are proposed as shown on the revised landscaping plan but not enumerated in the Staff Report. That standard has been met.

Lighting – The plan shows the installation of full cut-off wall mounted light fixtures on each garage of each unit. The proposed lights will have a color temperature of 3000 Kelvin and a color rendering index of 90 Kelvin. The development does not propose any driveway or parking lot lighting, so this standard is met.

Water and Sewer – Water and sewer will be municipal with new infrastructure installed by the developer and then taken over by the City once operational.

Traffic and Access Management – A single street access point is proposed near the center of the frontage, north of the Timberlane Drive intersection. The main driveway will be a 20-foot-wide driveway and is approximately 300 feet long and ends in a 50-foot-long hammerhead. Turn around additional driveway spurs are proposed to provide access to individual units with turnaround space to allow vehicles to orient in an appropriate direction so they can leave safely. The ITE traffic manual trip generation estimate was supplied by the applicant. The units are considered to be single-family dwellings with an estimated weekday AM peak hour of 14 vehicle trips in an estimated weekday PM hour of 18 vehicle trips for the whole project. The estimated trip generation falls below the threshold of 50 peak hour trips, or 100 trips per day, which would require a full traffic study. The applicant, based on this information, has stated that the development is not expected to diminish the capacity or the safety of Elm Street. It appears that this standard has been met.

Filling and Excavation – The applicant states, in their narrative, that the development will require both filling and excavation on different portions of the site. Material on site will be utilized whenever possible. Additional select material will need to be brought on site and stockpiled as needed. A truck route plan is not required for this project. The site has direct access from Court Street via Elm Street. This standard appears to be met.

Surface Waters and Wetlands – The proposal is only for the impact of the buffer, not the reduction. The Board will need to decide whether to grant the Conditional Use Permit.

Hazardous and Toxic Materials – The applicant states that there will be no hazardous or toxic materials associated with the site. This standard has been met.

Noise – The proposed development will generate an amount of noise which is typical with a residential development. That standard appears to be met.

Architectural and Visual Appearance - The applicant states in their narrative that the units are proposed to be two- and three-bedroom single family residential dwellings of various heights ranging from 32 1/2 feet to just under 22 feet. The colors will be “neutral tones that fit in the

surrounding neighborhood.” The applicant further states that the homes are designed to fit into the cottage style and include two-story cape drive under garage capes and one-story ranches. All units are mostly typical in a New England vernacular style. Mr. Clements stated the Board will need to determine whether the Cottage Court architectural guidelines have been adequately followed with this application in regard to the visual appearance of the proposed dwellings. This concluded Staff comments. Mr. Clements next reviewed the motion outlined in the Board packet.

Mayor Kahn asked for clarification regarding the historic features of this property. Mr. Clements stated the Sadoques family has reached out to the Board through Staff and were notified of the situation. He indicated he did forward Ms. Haywood's e-mail address to Mr. Noonan, explaining to him that the Sadoques family would like to be in contact with the property owner to talk about the future of that house. Mr. Clements added the City does have a demolition review Committee and a demolition delay ordinance in place if this property would be subject to that. If and when the home is slated to be demolished, the demolition permit is required to be submitted, the Demolition Review Committee is then activated, which is a subsection of the Heritage Commission. That entity will go out, document the property, do an initial evaluation to gauge the historical significance of the property. If they deem it to be of historical significance, they can delay the demolition for 30 days to perform additional review of the property and also bring the owner to the table to discuss potential alternatives to demolishing the property. At the end of those 30 days, the demolition permit is issued or is withdrawn by the applicant. The City cannot in totality prevent the demolition; the City can attempt to negotiate on the behalf of the historical resource. He added there is a fair amount of information on this property already at the Historical Society.

The Mayor asked whether this necessitates any further comment from the Board if relative to the execution of documentation. Mr. Clements answered in the negative and stated this is included in the City Ordinance and would be handled outside of the Board’s action today and there is no need to set a condition of approval for this issue. The Mayor referred to the letter from the Conservation Commission and asked whether those concerns have been addressed adequately. Mr. Clements stated he felt they had been addressed adequately. He referred to the issue with buffer reduction, and it clearly states extraordinary measures need to be proposed to warrant the buffer reduction and that would have to be for the entire property.

The Conservation Commission is very hesitant to use that particular mechanism. A site-specific impact to the buffer that is designed and any additional change or increase to that proposed impact would require coming back to the Board for further review. Mr. Clements felt this is a more appropriate and targeted amount of relief as opposed to a blanket reduction, which may lead to future impacts that the City would not be aware of. He stated he also agrees with and appreciates the applicant’s swift response to accommodate the native plantings and the additional landscaping that is proposed to accommodate the Conservation Commission’s concerns, especially the proposed trees.

The Mayor stated the letter he forward to the Community Development Department came from the descendants of the last Native American family residing in Keene. The reason to raise questions about the historic significance of that home relates to the connection to this house; the

house that they occupied from some time in the 1800s to 1993 when Mr. Dubriske acquired the property. The Chair agreed this issue needs some attention. Mr. Hoefer felt staff had addressed this concern; the Board should move forward with the decision, and the other processes will take over and address any issue that needs to be addressed.

Chair Farrington referred to Page 68, Figure 3 and asked if all three different types of houses would be the same footprint. Mr. Clements answered in the affirmative. The Chair asked if the two-story house would be much deeper. Mr. Clements stated he believed so and added the calculations don't include the garages; the footprint calculation does not include garages and porches.

The Chair asked for public comment next.

Mr. Gary Butell of 280 Elm Street addressed the Board. Mr. Butell stated he had concerns about the additional traffic that would be generated by the proposal; 18 units with each unit having two vehicles per unit. He felt the figure given for the daily trips seem extremely low. He felt a traffic study might be necessary as the intersection with Court Street is dangerous during certain times of the day and could also cause issues outside of Fuller School and eventually have impact in front of his house where speed is already an issue. The Chair asked Mr. Noonan for his response. Mr. Noonan clarified it is estimated the AM peak hour is calculated to be 14 trips with 18 PM peak hour trips. He explained if there are 36 extra vehicles from this proposal, it is not expected everyone would come home at the same time, it is spread out and the 18 trips are based on that. The Chair asked if Mr. Noonan had a number for a daily volume. Mr. Noonan stated they did not include a total daily number but in talking to the traffic engineer, he said it was under 100. The peak hour is 50 vehicles as a trigger for a full traffic report and 100 trips daily trips for a traffic study and this proposal came in at less than 100. He added the development on Timberland Drive had more units than this proposal (36 units), which did trigger a traffic study and there was no disruption for traffic with that proposal.

Ms. Sarah Vezzani of 464 Elm Street addressed the Board and stated she had submitted a letter of concern. Ms. Vezzani noted this development would create around 80,000 square feet of additional impervious surface and stated she understands this does not require an NHDES Alteration of Terrain Permit, but this change, in conjunction with other development in the area, would affect properties in the area.

Ms. Vezzani continued with reference to the wetland buffer reduction, and stated this issue was sort-of addressed but she did not agree with the extraordinary mitigation portion. She indicated extraordinary to her would be much more important than the additional house referred to during the site visit.

Screening and Neighborhood Character – Ms. Vezzani stated the proximity of the new buildings to existing residences and the adequacy of screening measures are of great concern to her. In Section 102-14:72, it refers to effective screening to preserve neighborhood character and privacy. She noted the terms “condo” and single-family were used interchangeably here tonight, which is of concern. Are they referring to the same single-family home she lives in or are we

talking about condos in which a person doesn't own the land around them. She did not feel these two terms were the same.

Ms. Vezzani stated drainage and stormwater is of great concern to her. This issue is not only about this development but would also compound as other development happens. Ms. Vezzani stated two years ago, she had a tremendous amount of water in her basement, an issue she had not experienced since owning her property in 2007. The City nor her contractor could figure out what was causing this and the only answer she got from everyone was "something has changed." She stated, if development keeps happening around her, this problem will intensify.

Ms. Vezzani stated she agrees with the Mr. Butell regarding traffic; this, again, exemplifies that compounding development makes traffic unsafe. When you make this type of development in small measures, the problem intensifies as time goes on.

Ms. Vezzani stated that, unknown to her, she has been taking care of (seeding, tick repellent, mowing, etc.) property, which she now believes she does not own. Eighteen months ago, she was informed by text (shy of 20-year eminent domain) not to mow the field this year, as there needs to be clear separation. Ms. Vezzani stated she agrees she does not own this land, but the ambiguity around it is an issue for her. How did we get from creating two homes to now 18 condos or single-family homes.

Mr. Chris Dubriske of 153 Jordan Road addressed the Board next. Mr. Dubriske noted the City has invested a lot of money in developing the Cottage Court Development to ease the burden of housing in the area and would like to see this approved to encourage more housing in the City.

With no further comment, the Chair closed the public hearing.

iii. Board Discussion and Action

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni that the Planning Board approve PB-2025-29 as shown on the plan set identified as "Elmside Cottage Court Housing" prepared by Fieldstone Land Consultants, PLLC at 1 inch = 30 feet on November 14, 2025 and last revised on December 16, 2025 with the following conditions:

1. Prior to final approval and signature of the plans by the Planning Board Chair, the following conditions shall be met:
 - a. Owner's signature appears on the title page, condo site plan, and master site plan.
 - b. Submittal of five (5) full sized paper copies of the plan set, including elevations, and a digital copy of the final plan set.
 - c. Submittal of a security in a form and amount acceptable to the Community Development Director to cover the cost of landscaping, sediment and erosion control measures, and "as built" plans.
 - d. Submittal of draft written documentation of the required utility easements and any other necessary legal instruments required for this application, which shall be subject to review by the City Attorney.
2. Subsequent to final approval and signature of the final plans by the Planning Board Chair, the following conditions shall be met:

- a. Prior to the commencement of site work, the Community Development Department shall be notified when all erosion control measures have been installed, and the 30 ft surface water buffer is flagged by a surveyor licensed in the state of NH.
- b. Community Development staff shall inspect the erosion control measures and wetland flagging to ensure compliance with the approved plans and all City of Keene regulations.
- c. Submittal of recorded utility easements and any other legal instruments necessary for this application to the Community Development Department.
- d. The applicant shall obtain final acceptance of the new utilities from the Keene City Council following the completion of all infrastructure construction.
- e. Following the initial installation of plantings, the Community Development Department shall be contacted to perform an initial landscaping inspection to ensure compliance with the approved landscaping plan and all City of Keene regulations.
- f. One year after the installation of landscaping, the Community Development Department should be contacted to perform a final landscaping inspection to ensure that all plantings are in good health.

The motion was seconded by Stephon Mehu.

Councilor Remy stated, with reference to the terminology for condos, condos don't have to be attached, there can be detached condos. He asked if it is a legal entity that has shared maintenance requirements. With respect to drainage, the Councilor stated both the City Engineer and the applicant's engineer have stated what is being proposed would improve the flow of water off the property. The traffic study has met the Board's requirements and did not feel this proposal has regional impact, and this a good example of the Cottage Court Overlay. He agreed that a change to a neighborhood can always be challenging to abutters. He stated he will be requesting a roll call vote and if someone is voting "No" to indicate why they are voting "No," so the applicant has a way to address the concern for the next meeting.

Mr. Hoefer stated he agrees with everything Councilor Remy just stated and felt this was a good use of the Cottage Court Overlay approach and felt this development addresses the housing shortage. He also stated the architecture fits in with the neighborhood.

Mr. Mehu stated he appreciates how this project supports the first pillar of the updated Master Plan and felt this addresses the "missing-middle housing."

Mayor Kahn stated he, too, appreciates this development addressing the housing issues in the region. He stated what he is hearing from abutters is that the compounding impact is not being studied and felt this is something this Board and City should consider. Eighteen additional units here, with the potential of 36 cars, and there are 36 units on the other opposite side of this site; If both of those get built, that is never going to get evaluated as a combined development it will only be evaluated as a singular development. The Mayor stated he did not know how to reconcile

that with this request. He added the next time the City sees a request on this street, the City is going to have to have a more critical eye for traffic impact.

Mr. Rangel stated he, too, wanted to address the compounding effect. He noted this development might not rise to the need to require a traffic study, but when you combine it with the other development, the Board does not know what the impact is going to be.

With respect to the wetland buffer, the applicant is only requesting a minimum impact but felt one less house would completely wipe away that need.

Chair Farrington referred to pages 105, 109, and 113 of the packet, which refer to elevations of each of the styles, but felt it was a hard to gauge visual appearance based on those renderings. He asked whether a possible color rendering could be required as a condition of approval. Mr. Clements stated the architectural guidelines are open-ended and can be vague. The City usually does not regulate color and style of single-family homes. However, some condominium association documents dictate exterior features and wasn't sure if the applicant has got to that level yet. He added the architectural guidelines encourage natural materials, structural expression, thicker walls, clear massing, simpler designs, repetitive architectural features, etc. He agreed the elevations don't call out features, but one of the conditions of approval is for submittal of new plans, including elevations. If that information is available, that may be provided; however, the applicant won't necessarily come back and have that conversation with the Board, unless the Board would like to continue this application to collect that information. He referred this issue to Mr. Noonan.

Mr. Noonan stated, in the past, he has had other applications where he has submitted more detailed drawings when there is a condition to provide them. He stated he would like to see a vote to move forward with this item as a condition that those architectural details are provided as part of their final submission. Mr. Clements stated the question is whether the Board is requiring a compliance hearing to evaluate these renderings. Precedent condition does not give the Board the opportunity weigh in on them. The Chair stated there have been other Cottage Court applications that have had color renderings provided to the Board for its review. Mr. Clements stated going forward, Staff can make sure this information is provided.

Mr. Hoefler stated, based on the architectural guidelines before him, having color renderings will not help him with his decision tonight, but the renderings could be something that could be required for future applications.

Mr. Clements asked if the Board was comfortable with the buffer impact and with the Conditional Use Permit the applicant is proposing. Councilor Remy stated the drainage system they are proposing is helpful.

On a 6–1 roll call vote, the motion carried. Armando Rangel voted in opposition.

7) Staff Updates

Ms. Fortson stated, when the Board adopted the changes to their Rules of Procedure for Site Plan Review Thresholds last month, Staff failed to have those members sign the Certificate of

Adoption. She asked those who were present to sign the certificate. The members who need to sign the certificate are Harold Farrington, Michael Remy, Armando Rangel and Michael Hoefer. The members not present today who also need to sign are Ryan Clancy, Kenneth Kost, and Joseph Cocivera.

8) New Business

Ms. Vezzani stated she would be resigning from the Board, effective tonight. The Chair thanked her for her service on the Board. The Mayor thanked Ms. Vezzani as well.

Chair Farrington stated Southwest Regional Planning Commission conducts quarterly citizen planning roundtables. He stated the last meeting was held in October and focused on solar and it was about creating a template for solar ordinances. Town of Fitzwilliam indicated they will be creating a workforce housing ordinance and felt the City should be looking at this issue as well. He also referred to a Housing and Social Policy Department at St. Anslem College and the number 1 issue identified is minimum lot size. The City of Lebanon indicated that they have constructed 2,000 multi-family dwellings in the last decade. Monadnock Housing Alliance is hiring a full-time staff position. The legislative session is looking at 100 new Bills, and the NH House has established a Housing Committee.

Ms. Fortson stated she is the staff liaison for the Energy and Climate Committee who voted today that the Council amend the Code or Ordinances to include C-Pacer as a voluntary funding option. This will address energy efficiency projects.

9) Upcoming Dates of Interest

- Joint Committee of the Planning Board and PLD – January 12, 6:30 PM
- Planning Board Steering Committee – January 13, 12:00 PM
- Planning Board Site Visit – January 21, 8:00 AM – To Be Confirmed
- Planning Board Meeting –January 26, 6:30 PM

10) Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Farrington adjourned the meeting at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Emily Duseau, Planning Technician