

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Monday, January 26, 2026

6:30 PM

**Council Chambers,
City Hall**

Members Present:

Harold Farrington
Roberta Mastrogiovanni
Michael Hoefler
Kenneth Kost
Councilor Molly Ellis
Stephon Mehu, Alternate (Voting)
Joseph Cocivera, Alternate (Voting)

Staff Present:

Paul Andrus, Community Development Director
Mari Brunner, Senior Planner
Megan Fortson, Planner

Members Not Present:

Mayor Jay V. Kahn
Andrew Madison
Tammy Adams, Alternate

1) Call to Order – Roll Call

Chair Farrington called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and a roll call was taken. The Chair invited Stephon Mehu and Joseph Cocivera to join the meeting as voting members.

2) Election of Chair, Vice Chair, & Steering Committee

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni to nominate Harold Farrington as Chair of the Board. The motion was seconded by Kenneth Kost and was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Harold Farrington to nominate Roberta Mastrogiovanni as Vice-Chair of the Board. The motion was seconded by Stephon Mehu and was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Harold Farrington to nominate Kenneth Kost as the third member of the Steering Committee. The motion was seconded by Stephon Mehu and was unanimously approved.

3) Minutes of Previous Meeting – December 22, 2025

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni that the Planning Board approve the December 22, 2025 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Kenneth Kost.

Chair Farrington offered the following corrections:

Line 264 – change the word from “sited” to “cited.”

Line 455 and 456 – the bump out should read as 28 feet.

Line 505 – typographic error: an should be “and.”

Line 620 and 621 – note to staff from Minute Taker needs to be deleted.

The amended motion carried on a unanimous vote.

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.

Ms. Brunner stated there are three items ready for final approval.

The first one is PB-2025-01, which was a 2-lot subdivision for Keene State College at 238-260 Main Street. This application had the standard conditions of approval: Owner’s signature appears on the plan; Inspection of lot monuments; Submittal of four full size copies and two mylar copies of the final plans; Submittal of fees to cover the cost of recording. All of those conditions have been met.

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni that the Planning Board issue final site plan approval for PB-2025-01. The motion was seconded by Kenneth Kost and carried on a unanimous vote.

The second application is PB-2025-18, Major Site Plan and change of use for a Charitable Gaming Facility at 109-147 Key Road. The conditions of approval for this application include: Owner’s signature shall appear on the plan; Submittal of security for landscaping in a form and amount acceptable to the City Engineer; Submittal of five full-size paper copies and one digital copy of the final plan. All of those conditions have been met.

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni that the Planning Board issue final site plan approval for PB-2025-18. The motion was seconded by Kenneth Kost and carried on a unanimous vote.

The third application is PB-2024-23, which is a Major Site Plan and Surface Water Conditional Use Permit for the Cheshire County Shooting Sports Education Foundation Shooting Range at 19 Verry Brook Road. Ms. Brunner noted there were several conditions of approval including: Owner’s signature on the plans; Submittal of one paper copy and one digital copy; Submittal of security to cover the cost of landscaping and sediment/erosion control; Submittal of an approved

Alteration of Terrain Permit; Inclusion on the plan set of the pollinator friendly seed mix to stabilize the berm. All of these conditions have been met, except for the submittal of the approved Alteration of Terrain (AOT) Permit. Ms. Brunner stated as per State Statute, the Board cannot hold up approval based on that and recommended making that a condition subsequent.

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni that the Planning Board issue final Site Plan approval for PB-2024-23 with a condition subsequent for the submittal of the approved AOT Permit. The motion was seconded by Stephon Mehu and carried on a unanimous vote.

5) **Continued Public Hearing:**

- A) **31 Robbins Rd – 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) Public Hearing

Ms. Karin Royce and Mr. Tim Royce of 31 Robbins Road addressed the Board. Ms. Royce explained that they had installed a driveway, because their two teenage drivers were parking on the side of the road. They hired a paving company who paved the area. She stated they were not aware that a permit was needed until after the work was done. She indicated the neighbors were pleased with the installation as it keeps the cars off of the road. Ms. Royce stated this is a very low traffic area and felt it was safer to have their cars parked on the side lot than to have them parked on the street.

Mr. Royce stated this is aesthetically pleasing. The paved area prevents cars from having to be parked on the lawn. She continued by stating that they relied on their contractor, but months later received a Notice of Violation from the City Engineer. They are hoping not to have to tear up approximately \$8,000 worth of asphalt, put soil back, regrow grass, etc.

Mr. Hoefler asked whether the contractor had mentioned anything about there being a permit required. Ms. Royce answered in the negative and added they have reached out to them but to date have not received a call back.

Ms. Mastrogiovanni asked if there had been an increase in runoff because of this installation. Mr. Royce stated they have not seen any increase and there have been no complaints from neighbors who have sent a letter of support to the Board. He added the area that is paved now had three inches of mud and that mud travelled to the road and this is when they decided to do something about it.

Staff comments were next. Mari Brunner, Senior Planner, addressed the Board and stated that many of the driveway standards do not apply, but there is one standard that has not been met with this application. The driveway criteria or standard that requires a residential driveway to be 30 feet at the right of way line, and 20 feet at the property line. There is a process in the code, in

which you can request something called an exception. It requires mailed notice to the direct abutters.

If there are no objections raised by any abutters after 14 days, the City Engineer, the Staff member who has authority to approve driveways for single and two-family residences, will then make a decision. The decision has to be based on the criteria for granting an exception in Section 23.5.6.

Ms. Brunner noted the criteria for granting an exception:

Issuance of the exception will not adversely affect the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles using adjacent streets and intersections.

The criteria has been met.

The issuance of the exception does not adversely affect the efficiency and capacity of the street or intersection.

The criteria has been met.

There are unique characteristics of the land or property which present a physical hardship to the requester.

Staff's determination is that the criteria has not been met.

In no case shall financial hardship be used to justify the granting of the exception.

Ms. Brunner stated Staff feel sympathetic to the situation and the reason it is before the Board. She explained that the Board has to use the same criteria to evaluate the application. This concluded Staff comments.

Councilor Ellis asked what the basis for the code to require that a driveway should be 30 feet wide at the street and 20 feet wide at the property line. Ms. Brunner stated this standard is specifically for residential driveways for single- and two-family homes. The idea behind that requirement is for access management on the street. The City does not want to see large curb cuts. Once you get into the property, it could flare out to create more space for parking; along the streetscape, the intent behind that standard was to limit the amount of disruption to the roadway. Limiting this kind of disruption has been shown to improve safety for users, especially in areas where there are sidewalks and high pedestrian traffic, bicyclists and motorists. She stated she wasn't sure when the standard was first adopted by the City, but these are criteria that are adopted by Council.

Ms. Mastrogiovanni asked if the curb cut was narrowed and they left the driveway the same whether this would be within standard. Ms. Brunner agreed it would, even though this would mean that people would be driving over the portion that is unpaved; but this would meet our standards and would hopefully meet the applicants' needs as well.

Mr. Kost felt if the Board accepts this appeal, he was afraid the Board might be setting precedent and there is a reason why the City has building codes and land use codes.

Mr. Cocivera asked whether the Board has recently issued a driveway exception for a situation such as this. Ms. Brunner a while a while ago the Board did approve an exception where it was a corner lot and because of the location of the buildings, there was no space on the lot; the Board was able to determine that there was a unique characteristic of the lot that caused a hardship in that instance.

Mr. Kost asked whether that driveway was installed before the exception was granted for the prior application. Ms. Brunner stated the driveway had not been installed when the Board granted the exception. Ms. Brunner added that regardless of whether the driveway was already installed or not, the Board can treat it as if it has not been installed. The Board needs to base its evaluation on the merits of the application and not base it on an applicant not knowing the rules.

The Chair asked whether there has been further input from the City Engineer or whether this was a “black and white” issue for engineering. Ms. Brunner stated it is pretty “black and white” from City Engineer’s perspective. She stated the Engineer did provide comments, which are included in the Staff Report, which states as follows: *based on our review, we have determined that your request is not satisfied. The evaluation criteria specifically that there are no unique characteristics of the land which present a physical hardship.*

Mr. Kost asked Ms. Brunner for clarification as to why Planning Staff was or wasn’t supporting this application. Ms. Brunner stated, from Staff’s perspective, in order to grant an exception to the driveway criteria, the applicant is supposed to demonstrate that they meet the criteria in Section 23.5.6 of the Land Development Code. This is included on the second page of the Staff Report, Criteria C, which states that *there are unique characteristics of the land or property which present a physical hardship to the requestor.* Criteria D: *no case shall financial hardship be used to justify the granting of the exception.* Ms. Brunner stated those two criteria together make it challenging for Staff to recommend approval and added that Staff is sympathetic to the property owners, but stated there was not much wiggle room to approve this exception by Staff.

Ms. Mastrogiovanni asked for clarification on whether the curb cut was to be filled at the end, how deep it would have to go and how complicated that is. She continued by asking if that would be a great expense for the applicant or if they could get Gemini Paving to pay for this expense. She stated she is sympathetic, this was a mistake, and noted Keene does have a lot of rules applicants have to follow.

Ms. Brunner stated she has no idea how much it would cost to take out a small portion of the driveway; for example, it could be 5 feet, maybe 10 feet. She stated it would be a financial cost and a hassle to remove this driveway. Ms. Mastrogiovanni asked whether the applicants would also have to put grass back once the asphalt is removed. Chair Farrington noted the City Engineer’s letter calls for revegetation.

Mr. Hoefler stated the Board’s role is to make sure that the Staff that denied this request has done so correctly, which he felt they had. Absent a misinterpretation of Criteria C, he did not see there was room to overturn the decision of the City Engineer.

Megan Fortson, Planner, stated that using the GIS Map as Ms. Brunner had stated it is about 9.5 feet or 10 feet from where the edge of the road is to where their property line begins. If it is 10 feet by 9 feet in width that they added onto their driveway, that is about 90 square feet approximately that they would at least have to remove.

The Chair asked for public comments next.

Mr. Royce addressed the Board, again, and stated he wanted to reiterate the spaces used previously was lawn. It was three vehicles wide and they were using this area as pavement. They were still coming into the road on Robbins Road with their vehicles. He stated this is one of the arguments, the safety aspect for pedestrians. There is no curvature; the grade is essentially within probably an inch of the asphalt on the road. All they have done is use it as a driveway but it was mud with topsoil getting on to the public right of way. Now there is pavement, but if they were making this special cut, there is nothing saying they couldn't use it the same way, but they would just be wasting money to cut this back.

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

ii) Board Discussion and Action

A motion was made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni that the Planning Board deny the requested exception from Section 23.5.4.A.8 of the Land Development Code to allow for a driveway width greater than 30 ft at the curblin and 20 ft at the property line. The motion was seconded by Michael Hofer.

Mr. Hofer reiterated what he said previously in that Staff has interpreted this standard correctly and there is no valid reason for the Board to overturn this decision. Absent a hardship he could not see how this decision could be overturned.

Councilor Ellis stated it seems the purpose of this regulation is for safety of pedestrians and bikers. If this is a low-density area with very little pedestrian and bike traffic, she stated she could not see how essential this standard would be for this area. She stated she understands that code is created for a purpose, but in this instance, the purpose of the code is not necessarily a factor for this the specific home and driveway.

Chair Farrington stated he agrees with Councilor Ellis and noted there is no curbing on this road and did not feel the Board will be setting precedent if they were to approve the exception request.

Mr. Cocivera stated he has the same feeling and if these are teenage drivers they are likely going to drive over the grass.

Mr. Kost felt another reason for the 20-foot standard is for uniformity in a neighborhood. He stated the Code is there for a reason.

Chair Farrington stated the Board should also be in a position of supporting City Staff.

Mr. Mehu stated he agrees with what Councilor Ellis and Mr. Cocivera said. He stated he has not driven this street and hence is not sure what the visibility is like, but felt parking on the street does present an issue. He stated he is trying to, in his mind, see if *unique characteristics of the land or property constitute a safety as a physical hardship* but didn't think it did.

The Chair was ready to call a vote and explained a yes vote constitutes a denial of the exception request and a no vote will grant the exception.

The motion made by Roberta Mastrogiovanni carried on a 4–3 vote with the Chair, Vice-Chair and Councilor Ellis voting in opposition. The exception was denied.

6) Public Hearing:

- A) **PB-2025-27 – Major Site Plan & Congregate Living & Social Services Conditional Use Permit – ANEW Behavioral Health, 232 Winchester Street – Applicant Anew Behavioral Health, on behalf of owners David & Brianne Gray, proposes to convert the mixed-use building at 232 Winchester St (TMP #592-017-000) into a small group home with 8 beds. The parcel is ~0.4-ac in size and is located in the High Density District.**

i) Board Determination of Completeness

Planner, Megan Fortson, stated the applicant has requested exemptions from submitting separate existing and proposed conditions plans; grading, landscaping, and lighting plans; elevations; and all technical reports. 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 that the Planning Board accept this Application as complete. The motion was seconded by Kenneth Kost and was unanimously approved.

ii) Public Hearing

Mr. Jason Pratt, CEO of ANEW Behavioral Health, and Keith Littell, Regional Director of Operations, addressed the Board. Mr. Pratt began by stating that ANEW has long experience in covering these types of projects. They are operational in New Hampshire and Ohio and have 18 such facilities and are looking forward to moving forward with this project.

Mr. Littell address the Board next. He stated their plan is to transform this multiuse building into recovery housing. There are two other recovery homes in Keene. He stated this is something their stakeholders, like Drug Corp and The Doorway, are looking for in this area as Keene is a little bit separate from the recovery capital in the rest of the state. New Hampshire Partnership for Recovery Housing, the body that certifies recovery housing in the state, also has this area as an identified need. Hence, this would be a certified recovery home. Mr. Littell stated they have two clinical offices in Keene and they operate all their own clinical programming, which the clients in recovery housing would attend. He noted they have all their policies and procedures in

their operations manuals for this type of program. He went on to say that they are working with the State to adapt to the standards the state has.

Mr. Pratt stated all their operational standards and environment of care is based on the National Alliance of Recovery Residents, which is the federally recognized leader in terms of Gold Standard Care in this regard.

Chair Farrington asked about rules for visitors. Mr. Pratt stated, with Congregate Living, the safety of everyone needs to be considered, while balancing the fact that this is home for everybody that is living there. Visitors are welcome, but it depends on the clinical appropriateness of where people are in the program. For the first 90 days, visitors are not permitted while they get acclimated to the program, establishing a history of sobriety, and making sure that they are following all programming rules. Once those criteria have been met, the clinician that is assigned to each person approves visitors. Then there are standards for anybody coming and going from the home in terms of searching belongings, etc. There are also designated areas for those visits to occur and there is 24-hour supervision that would include during visitation.

He went on to say there is also an extra element that everybody involved in this program as a client is verifying and confirming their ongoing sobriety with weekly drug testing as well. If visits have been successful and there is no disruption to the community at large those visits are encouraged.

Mr. Littell added there are different levels to this program: Level 4 is the most structured, which is a clinical program for large treatment centers. Level 3 is not clinical, but much more structured, which is what this House would be. To track stages is what the residents will go through to ensure stability and are building recovery capital and everyone in the house is safe. Level 2 recovery housing and level 1 recovery housing have different levels of restriction.

Chair Farrington asked whether there are any restrictions for clients coming in and out of the house. Mr. Pratt stated this again ties back into the level system and the clients have to work on these restrictions. However, the end goal is their independence. Mr. Littell added Staff know where the clients are at all times; they might be at a clinical program or have a pass to go to work. He added clients are monitored at all times.

Chair Farrington asked how meals for the clients are handled. Mr. Pratt as stated before a client gains their independence, meals are covered. Mr. Littell added that a part of the non-clinical portion of the recovery home is developing life skills. Staff help set a schedule with all clients to make sure chores are addressed, meals are taken care of and common areas are clean, to make sure clients are developing habits that support independence, building recovery capital and self-efficacy, maintaining employment, managing their money, having a house and family and establishing community bonds.

Chair Farrington asked whether the expectation is that the clients would be predominantly from Keene. Mr. Pratt stated they are open to anybody within the State to meet the need, but they already have an established wait list of local clients who want to receive help and need the help.

The Chair asked what the expectation is for staffing needs. Mr. Pratt stated they are adding three jobs across the board for 24-hour coverage; Recovery Monitors. He added they also have existing Staff that will help out in terms of Licensed Therapists and Psychiatrists. However, as the clientele grows, they would need to hire more Staff. There would also be a need to add Staff to the substance abuse side.

Ms. Mastrogiovanni clarified the outdoor space would be well sheltered and shielded from public right-of-way. Mr. Littell stated the outdoor smoking area will be shielded from the public right-of-way.

Councilor Ellis asked whether this is a co-ed site. Mr. Littell stated it would be all men at this time. The Councilor asked whether there is a plan to take clients to an offsite gym for physical activity. Mr. Pratt stated these are relationships they will be working on even if it is as simple as using open park space. He added they are known to use their own nursing staff or bring in trainers or partner with the YMCA for membership. This concluded the applicant's comments.

Staff Comments were next.

Ms. Fortson addressed the Board and stated the subject parcel is less than 1/2 an acre in size and is located to the southern portion of Winchester Street, to the west of Winchester Court, and directly adjacent to the Ashuelot River. The building was previously occupied by an office and two apartment units, and is now proposed to be converted to an eight-bedroom congregate living use, which will be a small group home. Ms. Fortson noted the site is located within the 500-year floodplain. However, no portion of the lot is currently located within the 100-year floodplain or the floodway.

Under the Use Standards of the Land Development Code, in the High Density District, Congregate Living uses, such as a small group home accommodating up to eight people, is allowed, but only through the issuance of a Congregate Living and Social Services Conditional Use Permit.

Ms. Fortson stated, during review of the application, Staff did not feel the proposed use was going to have any sort of regional impact.

In regard to departmental comments, there were comments received from both Code Enforcement and the Fire Department. Those comments were to make sure the applicant was aware of the fact that the change of use from office and apartments to a small group home is going to need to meet certain life safety requirements and certain building code requirements

Ms. Fortson next reviewed the Congregate Living and Social Services criteria and the applicable Site Development Standards.

The first Congregate Living Standard says that *the nature of the proposed application is consistent with the Zoning Regulations, the Land Development Code, and the City's Comprehensive Master Plan*. It also requires that *the proposal comply with all specific standards for small group homes, which are outlined under Section 8.3.4 of the Land Development Code*.

Standards in Section 8 are specific to this use and state as follows: *there shall only be one group home permitted per lot. Group homes may not operate without an approved Conditional Use Permit. Congregate Living and Social Services License shall be obtained and renewed on an annual basis, and that the building exterior shall maintain the appearance of a residential structure.* Ms. Fortson noted the applicant is not proposing to change anything on the outside of the building.

Connecting this use to the Comprehensive Master Plan, Ms. Fortson continued by stating that one of the goals of the Livable Housing Pillar is to address the housing needs of all residents (current and future). Action item number 5.7 under this goal states that *the community needs to ensure that zoning and development regulations allow for diverse housing.* Ms. Fortson noted the proposed use is going to be providing dwelling units and services to a vulnerable population in the Keene community. Based on Staff review, the proposal appears to be consistent with the spirit and intent of the zoning regulations, the land Development Code, and the Master Plan.

The next standard, B, states that *the proposed use will be established, maintained and operated so as to not endanger the public health, safety or welfare.* Ms. Fortson noted, as explained by the two applicants present today, there are a number of procedures that will take place both inside the building and outside of the building to ensure that all residents are going to be safe. There will be locked doors, etc. The only outdoor area that is proposed is the 120 square foot smoking shelter towards the southern portion of the site.

Standard C is similar, which addresses the fact that if there are not going to be any waiting areas and that they need to be screened.

Standard D states as follows: *the proposed use will be of a character that does not produce noise, odors, glare and or vibration that will adversely affect the surrounding area.* Ms. Fortson noted most of the use would be inside the building, as it is a residential use, and the site itself is screened on most sides by fencing and on the side that is not screened is the Ashuelot River, which already has an existing vegetated buffer, which will be used to help screen the site as well.

Standard E states as follows: *The proposed use will not place an excessive burden on public infrastructure, facilities, services or utilities.* Ms. Fortson stated this site is not expected to have a large amount of traffic generation. There is an approximation of about 10 vehicle trips per weekday and six vehicle trips per weekend day. There is only parking available for eight vehicles, which is what is driving the number of beds on site (one bed per space for this use). This standard has been met.

Standard F: *The proposed use will not result in the destruction, loss, or damage of any feature determined to be of significant natural, scenic, or historic importance.* Ms. Fortson stated Staff did not feel this standard was applicable because there is nothing that fits into any of these characteristics on site.

Standard G: *The proposed use will not create a traffic safety hazard or a substantial increase in the level of traffic congestion in the vicinity of the use.* Ms. Fortson stated this would not be an issue, as most residents will not have their vehicle on site for at least 90 days.

Standard H: *The proposed use will be located in proximity to pedestrian facilities (e.g., multiuse trails and sidewalks), public transportation, or offer transportation options to its client population.* Ms. Fortson stated this site is ideally located to meet this standard because the Cheshire Rail Trail is located not too far from the site. They are less than 1/2-mile from the City Express, the facility will also have its own transportation for its residents and there are sidewalks right outside the facility. This standard appears to be met.

Ms. Fortson next reviewed the Site Development Standards.

Snow Storage and Removal: The applicant identified a large snow storage area on the southern portion of the site. That standard had been met.

Screening: Ms. Fortson stated this is the only standard that is really applicable in this instance, which applies to the outdoor smoking area. Staff think it is proposed to be sufficiently screened from view of the public right-of-way and adjacent parcels.

Surface Waters and Wetlands: The subject parcel is located right next to the Ashuelot River and is located in the High Density District. The applicant is required to maintain a 30-foot buffer from the edge of the river onto the parcel, and they have submitted a plan and supplemental information indicating that they are aware that they cannot place any structures within that 30-foot buffer. If they were to do any work or construct anything within that buffer in the future, it could potentially need a Surface Water Protection Conditional Use Permit. That standard has been met.

Ms. Fortson reviewed the proposed motion outlined in the Board's packet.

Ms. Fortson stated, if the applicant is granted this Conditional Use Permit, they would be required to go before the Congregate Living and Social Services License Board to obtain their initial CLSS license, which will then be required to be renewed every year. If that license were ever to be non-renewed, their Conditional Use Permit would be invalidated.

The Chair asked for public comment next. 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 approve PB-2025-27 as shown in the application and supporting materials submitted to the Community Development Department on November 14, 2025 and last revised on January 12, 2026, with the following conditions:

1. Prior to the final approval and signature of the plans by the Planning Board Chair, the following conditions precedent shall be met:
 - a. Owner's signature appears on the submitted plot plan.
 - b. Submittal of five (5) full sized paper copies of the plot plan.
2. Subsequent to final approval and signature of the plans by the Planning Board Chair, the following condition shall be met:
 - a. The Applicant shall obtain all required state and local permits and approvals.

The motion was seconded by Stephon Mehu.

Mr. Kost stated, from a land development perspective, the application meets all code requirements. From Planning Board standpoint, he did not see any issues. Mr. Kost asked how this facility would benefit Keene residents, as it is also open to anyone from the State; how do we make sure it is actually helping Keene residents. Mr. Pratt stated, when he says it is open to anyone from the State, that is based on their licensing. They can't prevent anyone from the State enrolling as a resident of this facility. He stated they already have a waitlist for people to get in and could not see too much participation from outside of Keene. Mr. Pratt stressed, from a licensing issue, they cannot prevent anyone from the State applying.

He added there could be an instance in which someone might need to be moved out of their residential area for a fresh start, and in an instance like that, for example, someone from Manchester could end up in Keene and someone from Keene could end up in Manchester.

Councilor Ellis felt this project would be an asset to Keene.

Mr. Hoefler echoed what other Board members stated, and he did not feel there was any regional impact from this project.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

7) Staff Updates

Ms. Brunner stated there were no minor projects approved during July through December 2025, and all of the applications on the memo were administrative approvals. She noted these approvals are posted on the department page on the City website. Ms. Fortson noted these items are deleted from the website on a quarterly basis.

Mr. Kost asked whether things are posted while they are pending approval or do they get posted after they have been approved. Ms. Brunner stated they are posted after they have been administratively approved. However, Staff is in the process of updating the permitting software, which will allow members of the public to track projects while they are in progress.

The Chair stated he did not want to diminish the importance or amount of work that goes into these administrative approvals, but was disappointed to see no dwelling units included in six months. He added the read out provided to the Board is very helpful.

Ms. Brunner addressed the next Staff Update. She called the Board's attention to a Memo from the Community Development Director regarding the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which happens once every two years. In the past, the Board has been asked to vote on the CIP at the beginning of the process, but this year, the Board is being asked to vote on it closer to the end of the process. Hence, the Board would have several opportunities to follow along. She encouraged Board members to attend the CIP kick-off presentation. It is an information event with presentations by Staff. There are also other presentations the Board can attend. By the time this item comes to the Board for its March meeting, there will have been a public hearing before City

Council, two Committee meetings before FOP, plus the kickoff presentations. The Planning Board's role is to make a recommendation as to whether or not the program is consistent with the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan.

The Chair encouraged Planning Board members to attend. He also welcomed Councilor Ellis as a member of the Board.

8) New Business

None

9) Upcoming Dates of Interest

- Joint Committee of the Planning Board and PLD – February 9th, 6:30 PM
- Planning Board Steering Committee – February 10th, 12:00 PM
- Planning Board Site Visit – February 18th, 8:00 AM – To Be Confirmed
- Planning Board Meeting – February 23rd, 6:30 PM

10) Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Farrington adjourned the meeting at 8:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Emily Duseau, Planning Technician