

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Monday, June 22, 2026

6:30 PM

**Council Chambers,
City Hall**

Members Present:

Harold Farrington, Chair
David Bergeron
Michael Hoefer
Kenneth Kost
Mayor Jay V. Kahn
Councilor Molly Ellis
Stephon Mehu, Alternate (Voting)

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner
Megan Fortson, Planner

Members Not Present:

Roberta Mastrogiovanni, Vice Chair
Tammy Adams, Alternate
Joseph Cocivera, Alternate
Andrew Madison

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

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

2. MINUTES FROM PRECEDING MEETING - May 26, 2026

Chair Farrington offered the following corrections:
Page 518 – typographic error: “axes should be taxes”
Line 674 – correct word should be “added”

A motion was made by Mayor Kahn that the Planning Board approve the May 26, 2026 meeting minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Kenneth Kost and was unanimously approved.

3. EXTENSION REQUESTS

None

4. FINAL VOTE ON CONDITIONAL APPROVALS
1. Applications Ready for Final Approval

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 applications that are ready for final approval this evening. The first is for PB-26-9, which is a major site plan for Froling Energy for the properties at 20 and 37 Manchester Street. There were three conditions precedent to final approval:

1. Owner’s signature appears on the plans
2. Submittal of the paper and digital copies of the final plan set
3. Submittal of security to cover the cost of landscaping, erosion, sedimentation control in a form and amount acceptable.

All three conditions have been met.

A motion was made by Mayor Kahn that the Planning Board issue final site plan approval for PB-26-9. The motion was seconded by David Bergeron and carried on a unanimous vote.

Ms. Brunner stated the next project that is ready for final approval is PB-26-11 for 30-42 Production Avenue, Major Site plan application as well as a Surface Water Protection Conditional Use Permit. There were a number of conditions and they are as follows:

1. Owner’s signature appears on the plans.
2. Submittal of five full size paper copies in a PDF digital version of the final plans.
3. Submittal of a security for erosion and sediment control measures.
4. As built plans for landscaping and a conservation seed mix.
5. Submittal of a revised site plan that shows the installation of 1/3 inch caliper American Linden tree, 1/3 inch caliper swap White Oak in place of the two proposed Red Maple trees.
6. Addition of a note to the plan stating that best management practices for invasive and noxious plant species shall be utilized.
7. Submittal of a new design for the rain garden that preserves the three mature trees.
8. Submittal of a salt reduction plan.

All conditions have been met.

The Mayor asked for explanation of this application. Ms. Brunner explained this building is on Production Avenue where they have one row of diagonal parking in front of the building which is needed for customers. They are hoping to expand their parking lot in the rear to provide 24 parking spaces for employees. Because they are adjacent to a City tax ditch and their stormwater management system was built within the surface water protection buffer, they are required to come before the Planning Board.

A motion was made by David Bergeron that the Planning Board issue final site approval for PB-26-9. The motion was seconded by Kenneth Kost and carried on a unanimous vote.

Ms. Brunner stated the next application ready for final approval is PB-2025-21. This is a two-lot subdivision at 315 Old Walpole Road, which is also a Surface Water Conditional Use Permit. The conditions of approval include:

1. Owners' signatures appear on the plan.
2. Wetland scientist stamp appears on the plan.
3. Submittal of four required paper copies, two mylar copies and a PDF version of the final plan set.
4. Submittal of recording fees.
5. Inspection of the lot monuments by the Public Works Director.
6. Submittal of documentation demonstrating that subdivision approval has been granted by the
7. New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services.
8. Revised stormwater management report to be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer.

Ms. Brunner indicated all conditions except for the subdivision approval by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services have been met. Staff is recommending that the Board issue final approval tonight, but with the addition of a condition subsequent stating that prior to the issuance of a building permit, the subdivision approval from New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services will be obtained. She added, in talking with the applicants, the subdivision approval is being held up by the wetland permit, which they are expecting to hear back in early July.

A motion was made by Mayor Jay Kahn that the Planning Board issue final site approval for PB-2025-21 with the addition of a condition subsequent to final approval that prior to the issuance of a building permit approval shall be obtained from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. The motion was seconded by Councilor Ellis and was unanimously approved.

5. BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT

None

6. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. **PB-26-12 - - Major Site Plan & Cottage Court Conditional Use Permit – Applicant Fieldstone Land Consultants, on behalf of owner Nuevo Transfers LLC, proposes to construct four townhouse buildings with a total of 14 units on the parcels at 0 Carroll St; 0 Elm St; and 225 Elm St (TMP#s 536-049-000; 536-050-000; 536-055-000 & 536-056-000). The parcels are ~.75-ac in total and are located in the Medium Density District.**

a. *Public Hearing*

Mr. John Noonan of Fieldstone Land Consultants addressed the Board on behalf of Christopher Masiello and Nuevo Transfers LLC. Mr. Noonan stated this continued hearing is based on a few items that were requested: Orientation of the building – he explained currently they have the

gable ends of the building facing the street frontage. He noted the architectural elements of that gable end was to try to mimic more of a residential style on the end of the building. The architect has revised the ends of the buildings so each gable end facing the road frontage would have the windows aligned with each floor. A doorway has been added with a small roof overhead. This is similar to other properties in the neighborhood.

Mr. Noonan noted having the gable ends facing the street on both sides would maximize their room for stormwater management and minimize impervious areas and have less pavement. This would also allow for a central drive aisle connecting both ways of traffic. There will be plantings along the frontage.

Mr. Noonan went on to say one of the other items discussed was the cost of soils and geotech with deep foundations. He stated his client has priced out with the geotech, they were looking at about \$400,000 additional cost just for foundations. They are yet to decide exactly what type of deep foundation that is. He indicated they are likely to hit bedrock at 42 feet and will be looking at steel pikes at that depth or an aggregate foundation. He indicated this \$400,000 extra cost places them at the maximize density and hence would want to hold at 14 units to help spread that cost.

The last item was in reference to sewer capacity. Mr. Noonan stated an abutter at the last meeting raised the issue regarding sewer and water capacity as well as drainage. Mr. Noonan stated they have submitted their drainage report initially for stormwater management to the City Engineer who has reviewed the report and confirmed this proposal meets City standards.

With respect to the water line, which was revised prior to the previous meeting, the solution was having the water line run between the streets, which ultimately provides a loop and doesn't reduce any pressure.

For sewer, the applicant is working with Public Works to upgrade sewer lines if deemed necessary. The Engineer has confirmed they have not had any complaints regarding sewer in the neighborhood. If necessary, the applicant has agreed to upgrade to eight-inch pipes. This concluded Mr. Noonan's comments.

Ms. Brunner addressed the Board. She stated staff just had a question from the Mayor; the question was if Board members were not present at the last public hearing or at the last site visit – were those members able to participate in the vote. Ms. Brunner stated staff sends out the materials ahead of time, giving members a chance to review the materials, review the minutes and there is also the recordings online for anyone interested in listening to the meeting. As long as members have reviewed these materials they can participate in the vote.

The Mayor asked about the configuration of the units. Mr. Noonan explained it would be three unit and four-unit buildings on opposite sides with a five-foot gap between the buildings. He asked about the foundation and roofline. Mr. Noonan stated the roofline would be matching but the foundations would be separate. However, if they do piers for the deep foundation, they would likely share a row of piers with a grade beam on it. The Mayor asked whether storage and mechanical would be below grade. Mr. Noonan stated they are coming in at grade with a garage

and mechanicals and living space would be located on the second and third floor. The Mayor asked for clarification that the application is requesting approval tonight conditioned on what other items that need to be met. Mr. Noonan stated the foundation would be part of the building permit and the applicant is aware they have to install deep foundations to support the building. A Geo Tech report supports this issue which has been provided to the City and there will be a structural engineer who signs off on that. The Mayor stated his familiarity with piles is there will be a report that site conditions have been achieved. Mr. Noonan stated this would part of the building permit process and was not the purview of the Planning Board.

Ms. Brunner stressed this will be covered as part of the building permit process but added the Board could also include a condition that the Structural Engineer's report will be reviewed and inspected by City staff.

Mr. Bergeron referred the type of piers being proposed, "helical coil piers," and asked whether this was preferred to driving piles. Mr. Noonan stated the applicant is looking at multiple options and hasn't locked in on one option yet. The \$400,000 estimate was based on the helical coil with a grade beam.

The Chair asked whether there is an updated staff report. Ms. Forston stated there was an amended staff report that was included in the agenda packet, which went through the items that were brought up during the previous public hearing. Mr. Noonan has addressed all those items. She added the City Engineer expressed no concerns about the potential for drainage to run off onto adjacent properties. He is assured there is sufficient water capacity due to the closed loop described by Mr. Noonan. Staff has also included the updated elevations showing the extra windows and entryways being added to the street facing façade. Ms. Forston stated the only additional item she would add is related to the sewer capacity; not being able to fully confirm there is sufficient sewer capacity, the City Engineer is recommending a sewer flow study be completed. Staff feels this can be included as a precedent condition of approval. She added the Board could include a subsequent condition of approval which says if the sewer flow study shows that there is not sufficient capacity in the existing sewer infrastructure in that area the applicant could submit the funds to cover the cost of improving the infrastructure in a form and amount acceptable to the Community Development Director and Public Works Director.

The Chairman asked for public comment next.

Ms. Paige Taylor of 125 Carroll Street addressed the Board and stated adding more asphalt would heat up the City more and felt vegetation was necessary. She felt if there is a housing crisis that tells you that people want to live in Keene but if the area is changed with larger townhouses, etc. we are changing the quaint nature of Keene. She noted this is not the only housing development this applicant is proposing – she noted they are also proposing another development behind her house.

Ms. Taylor stated she did not hear anything mentioned regarding structural damage to homes in the neighborhood because of this development and added her home has already suffered damage and would like to see what monitoring will be done to address this issue. She raised concern that the applicant did not check the condition of the soils before purchasing the property and now that

they are required to invest more money, additional units need to be added to offset that cost, which causes issues for abutters on Elm and Carroll Streets.

Mr. Brian Miller of 119 Carroll Street stated, as indicated last month, he is still concerned about the number of units being proposed for this development. He noted three years ago when this applicant came before the Board, the Board felt five dwelling units would be acceptable. Three years later, 14 units are being proposed, and he questioned the purpose of zoning. Mr. Miller stated he understands the concept of cottage court and this has worked well on Pearl Street and on Portland Street. He questioned how the City could approve 14 units on three quarters of an acre and expressed concern that the neighborhood has no say in this type of development. He also noted this development would be able to look down on all the existing homes because of the height of these homes. He felt the purpose of cottage court was to introduce a wider demographic and could not see how a senior citizen would want to live in these homes. He felt it was the Board's responsibility to make sure development fits into a neighborhood. Mr. Miller stated each cottage court development needs to be reviewed to make sure it fits into a neighborhood. He felt expanding the number from five units (three years ago) to 14 units is too many and felt the Board had the power to pause this development from happening.

Mr. Miller noted Keene is at its maximum growth and noted that both colleges, Keene State and Antioch have a reduced enrollment. He felt other towns need to be contributing to addressing the housing crisis in New Hampshire, not just Keene.

Mr. Greg Taylor of 125 Carroll Street stated he agrees with what has been stated by the prior two speakers. He raised the issue of how the tax assessment was going to be addressed and noted he had learned that there was to be a tax abatement on this project because this was considered to be a condominium project. Mr. Taylor stated he does not object to housing being located on this site but felt 14 units was excessive for this neighborhood. He referred to the traffic issues that already exist in this neighborhood and the issue of emergency vehicles accessing the site.

He questioned the resale value of homes that exist in this neighborhood after this development is introduced.

Mr. Duncan Hilshe of 45 School Street asked whether there was a requirement that a certain proportion of the space in the cottage court development be green space or shared open space. Ms. Forston stated with cottage court ordinance you are permitted additional density and could also get more density if you proposed workforce housing. As long as you meet the maximum impervious surface requirements for the underlying zoning district, you are not required to have a certain percentage of green space. Ms. Brunner added for the medium density district, the minimum amount of green space or open space is 40%, this is one of the things that the applicant had to demonstrate with this plan.

Mr. Noonan stated they have to meet zoning regulations and the requirements for Cottage Court Overlay; the 40% is the minimum requirement and the applicant has 49.6% proposed green space. For impervious coverage, the maximum is 60% the applicant is proposing 50.4% which is for both buildings and paved areas. Building coverage can be a 45% maximum - the applicant is proposing 26.5%.

Councilor Tobin addressed Board and stated when looking at the City website to see how the Cottage Court Ordinance is described, it states as follows: *Cottage Courts are groupings of small houses around a shared public space considered a type of missing middle housing.... oriented around shared green space and have parking screened from the street.* She stated she could not speak very clearly on this project as she has not been following it as much. She added what is being proposed was not her understanding when this Ordinance was discussed.

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

Ms. Fortson stated one item staff failed to mention is to add an item as a potential condition subsequent related to vibration monitoring during the driving of the pilings, if the Board felt it was something that was appropriate to add.

b. Board Discussion and Action

A motion was made by Kenneth Kost that the Planning Board approve PB-26-12 as shown on the plan set identified as “Multi-Family Residential Development; Tax Map 536 Lots 49, 50, 55 & 56; Elm City Commons” prepared by Fieldstone Land Consultants, PLLC at varying scales on April 17, 2026 and last revised on May 19, 2026, and in the elevations identified as “Elm City Commons; Elm and Carroll Streets; Keene, NH 03431” prepared by Sampson Architects at varying scales on April 14, 2026 and last revised on June 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 title page and proposed conditions plan.
 - c. Submittal of five (5) full size paper copies and a flattened PDF version of the final plan set and elevations.
 - d. Submittal of a recorded Voluntary Merger for the four (4) subject parcels.
 - e. Submittal of security to cover the cost of sediment and erosion control measures, landscaping, and as-built plans in a form and amount acceptable to the Community Development Director.
 - f. Submittal of draft written documentation of any easements or/or other necessary legal instruments required for this application, which shall be subject to review by the City Attorney.
 - g. Submittal of an updated plan set showing a native replacement for the pear trees. Callery.
 - h. Completion of a sewer flow study to demonstrate there is adequate capacity in the City sewer line, subject to review and approval by the City Engineer.
2. Subsequent to final approval and signature of the plans by the Planning Board Chair, the following conditions shall be met:
 - a. Prior to the commencement of site work, a preconstruction meeting will be scheduled with Community Development Staff.

- b. Prior to the commencement of site work, the erosion and sediment control measures shall be inspected by the Community Development Department to ensure compliance with this application and all City of Keene regulations.
- c. Prior to the installation of building foundations, the building corners shall be pinned by a surveyor and inspected by Community Development Staff to ensure compliance with the required setbacks.
- d. Submittal of recorded easements and/or any other legal instruments necessary for this application to the Community Development Department.
- e. Following the installation of landscaping, the Community Development Department shall be contacted to perform an initial inspection.
- f. One year following the installation of all landscaping, the Community Development Department shall be contacted to perform a final landscaping inspection.
- g. Foundation construction will be approved by the Building Permitting Department.
- h. If it turns out that the sewer line is not adequate, the applicant will pay for an upgrade as necessary.
- i. Vibration monitoring will be conducted for houses in the neighborhood that might be affected during driving of pilings and the applicant will provide a plan for driving of pilings.

Ms. Brunner stated she had failed to mention that staff had noticed that the Callery Pear trees, while not invasive, are on the State of New Hampshire Invasive Species watch list. Staff reached out to the applicant to see if they would be in agreement with switching it out for a native tree and they have agreed to this change.

The motion was seconded by David Bergeron

Mr. Kost agreed we need housing in Keene, which is something that has been discussed for many years and felt this development will provide that. He referred to the description of cottage court as outlined by the City, which is an issue that was just raised by one of the speakers and stated this is a concern he has as well. He stated he looks at this more as motor court than cottage court because it is front doors of housing facing almost 70 feet wide of paving with some grass. He noted this is a nice walkable community and did not feel this development fits in with the neighborhood. He stated street facing is an important aspect of a house, which encourages walkability. Mr. Kost did not feel this development is trying to encourage what the City is trying to do.

Councilor Ellis stated she understands what Mr. Kost says about street facing and indicated she lives on Carroll Street and they use their side door to exit their home and rarely use their front door and felt this was a rather common practice for most people. With reference to vibration, she noted as was explained at the site visit, because the ground is so soft there is not likely to be issues with vibration. She felt the Board might not like this project but felt if the applicant was meeting the standards the Board probably could not prevent it from being constructed. She felt the applicant has met the required conditions.

Mayor Kahn stated his concern is the density on the site; 14 units on 3/4 acres. He referred to prior cottage court developments – 18 units on 2.3 acres and 29 units on 9 acres. He stressed this was a lot of density on that site.

Mr. Hoefer stated he appreciated the discussion around orientation to the street. He referred to language from Standard 21:14, 3a – which states “... *principal building shall be oriented toward the public right away... if due to site constraints, the primary facade of new buildings cannot face the street that the secondary elevation facing the street shall be designed with form, composition details consistent appropriate to the primary façade*”. He felt based on this language this project meets that standard.

In terms of the purpose of a cottage court overlay district, Mr. Hoefer referred the following “...*promote infill development and redevelopment within established neighborhoods that is built at scale and character* (which will be a judgment call amongst Board members) *within existing development patterns. Encourage efficient use of land and cost-effective way to deliver community services. Expand the range of housing choices available to meet the needs of the City’s changing demographic trends, including smaller households, young professionals, older adults and empty nesters. Provide developers and property owners with flexibility to choose to achieve high quality design and develop projects that strengthen existing neighborhoods and encourage compact development that is pedestrian scaled, healthy, safe and affordable.*”

Mr. Hoefer felt this project meets the spirit of those purposes. He stated he might feel different if this was a landlord, but these are going to be owner occupied units and hence will be a credit to the City and the neighborhood to have more homeowners in that area. Based on what he stated and the proposed conditions, Mr. Hoefer stated he was in favor of approving this project tonight.

Mr. Bergeron stated he too echoed those sentiments – when looking at the streetscape as opposed to all the units facing onto the street, he felt this was a better use of the property and a better view of the property. He noted this option provides for more green space around the buildings as well as having less of a mass of buildings facing the street to keep with the neighborhood. He agreed this is an intense use of the property, but it seems to fit the regulations.

Mr. Mehu stated while this project, in his opinion, meets the minimum requirements of the standards, it is distastefully designed and does not match the character of the neighborhood. He indicated it provides the missing middle housing Keene needs and serves the purpose but couldn’t see families living in this development.

The motion carried on a 6-1 vote, with the Mayor voting in opposition.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 1. PB-26-15 - Major Site Plan & Surface Water CUP - Eversource L163 Transmission Line - Applicant Normandeau Associates Inc., on behalf of owner Public Service Company of New Hampshire (d/b/a Eversource Energy), proposes to replace five existing utility structures along the L163 Transmission Line. The proposed work area is located ~1 mile north of the entrance to Old Gilsum Rd from Timberlane Dr. A Surface Water Protection CUP is requested**

for ~1,930-sf of impact within the 75-ft surface water buffer to allow for the installation of timber matting and a temporary gravel access road.

a. *Board Determination of Completeness*

Planner Megan Fortson stated the applicant has requested exemptions from submitting a grading plan, landscaping plan, lighting plan, elevations/renderings, a drainage report, traffic report, soil analysis, historic evaluation, screening analysis, and architectural analysis. 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 Mayor Kahn to accept this Application as complete. The motion was seconded by David Bergeron and was unanimously approved. Mr. Mehu was not present for this vote.

b. *Public Hearing*

Mr. Jeremy Finnell of Eversource Energy and Elizabeth Oliver of Normandeau Associates addressed the Board. Ms. Oliver stated this item is in reference to the replacement of five existing utility structures in the City of Keene. She stated the work would require access along Old Gilsum Road which is not proposed to be improved by the project and it will involve impact to the 75-foot buffer of wetland as part of building a temporary gravel access road. She noted the gravel access road would be restored to vegetative cover following completion of the project.

Mr. Finnell stated this is an existing Class VI Road. He stated the road would be restored to pre-existing conditions, which is what has been discussed with the Conservation Commission. He indicated Andy Bohannon was at this meeting. This concluded the applicant's comments.

Staff comments were next. Ms. Fortson stated this is a typical request the City receives from Eversource. This year's work is to replace five poles in Keene and will be covering a few different municipalities. Access for the project area in Keene will be from Old Gilsum Road (about a mile) before coming to the Eversource right of way, and at that point will cross through a wetlands buffer. Ms. Fortson noted the crossing of the wetland buffer is the reason the applicant needs the Surface Water Conditional Use Permit for the creation of that temporary gravel road within the 75-foot wetlands buffer.

Ms. Fortson next reviewed the Surface Water CUP Standards as well as the Site Development Standards. In terms of regional impact, staff did not feel that there was the potential for regional impact.

Ms. Fortson stated staff did get some comments from the City Engineer: there is one section of the gravel road which is proposed to cross over a stonewall. If this stonewall is to be removed, the request from staff is that it be reset by a surveyor and verified by the Engineer's office. The other comments from the City Engineer is to let the applicant know that they are going to need to obtain an encumbrance and or excavation permit if necessary.

The applicant will also be coordinating access on Old Gilsum Road with the Parks and Recreation Department as this is a trail.

Next, Ms. Fortson reviewed Article 11.6.2- Surface Water CUP Standards.

The first standard is related to the potential for relocation of the proposed use or activity. Ms. Fortson noted because this is an existing 150-foot-wide right of way, it is not something that could be easily relocated on the site versus maintain it in its existing condition. This standard is met.

The next standard is related to minimizing buffer encroachment. The proposed temporary access road is going to impact about 2,000 square feet within the buffer. To minimize impacts to the buffer and the wetland, the applicant notes that the access road is the shortest feasible route and will utilize an existing wetland crossing rather than creating a new crossing. That standard appears to be met.

The next standard is related to avoiding or minimizing adverse impacts – this is a proposed replacement of one structure on the eastern side which would impact the wetland buffer. Hence, the applicant is proposing to maintain and stabilize the access road as necessary during construction, utilizing timber matting for the wetland crossings and then appropriate perimeter controls, such as straw waddles or silt fencing to be used during construction to protect adjacent surface water resources. The applicant is also going to have an environmental monitor on site to make sure erosion control measures are maintained properly throughout the course of construction, and restoration is completed properly. That standard appears to be met.

For the preservation of the buffer, the applicant is proposing to restore impacted areas of the site to their pre-construction conditions through site stabilization, seeding and mulching at the end of construction. All other areas within the buffer used during the project, such as old Gilsum Road, are already disturbed. That standard appears to be met.

Under Section 11.6.2.E – Ms. Fortson stated there are a long list of items the Board could consider during deliberations, such as the quality of the wetlands, etc. However, the surface water resources in the project area consist of a scrub-shrub wetland and one vernal pool. The State Wildlife Action plan characterizes this area as a tier 3 habitat, which is considered supporting landscapes with a hemlock hardwood pine habitat. The applicant notes that the existing vegetation will be restored following construction and that the project will result in no permanent changes that are going to alter or eliminate any of the functions and values currently provided by the surface water resources.

Ms. Fortson went on to say, as part of the City's CUP process, the Conservation Commission did weigh in with some recommendations, which Ms. Fortson stated Ms. Brunner will share.

Ms. Brunner stated the Conservation Commission met on Monday, June 15 and proposed the following recommendations:

1. Documentation of the existing conditions on Old Gilsum Road in the project area and addition of a note on the plan as well as a condition of approval stating that Old Gilsum Road shall be returned to pre-construction conditions.

2. The Commission has also requested invasive species management throughout the course of the project to ensure that no invasive plants are introduced into the project area.
3. The Commission requested the use of a pollinator friendly seed mix.

Ms. Brunner stated the Deputy City Manager was present at this Conservation Commission meeting and asked a number of questions about the road, communication with the public and added that the Parks and Recreation Director Carrah Fiske Hennessey has been in contact with the applicant and has asked for coordination and messaging to the public and users of the road.

Ms. Forston stated the applicant is going to need some federal and state permits: Alteration of Terrain Permit from NH Department of Environmental Services, US Army Corps of Engineers Permit and EPA 2022 General Construction Permit. Staff is recommending that the submittal of these permits be included as a condition of approval.

In terms of snow storage and removal - snow will be removed on an as-needed basis. If no work is happening, snow removal will not be an issue.

No landscaping is being proposed other than the seed mix.

Screening, lighting, sewer and water are not applicable.

Traffic and Access Management would be from the Eversource right of way or from Old Gilsum Road.

Filling and Excavation - Ms. Fortson stated there is going to be a total of about 43,565 square feet of land disturbance outside of the surface water buffer. The proposed work area is not located within the 100-year floodplain and there is no proposed placement of fill within the wetlands. That standard appears to be met.

Hazardous and Toxic Material – Ms. Fortson stated the applicant has a plan to handle any potential sources of hazardous or toxic materials. Staff recommends that the submittal of that plan be included as a condition of approval.

Noise - Will be limited to typical noise generated by construction activities and won't change after the completion of construction.

This concluded staff comments.

The Chair noted he does not see the Conservation Commission's recommendations that were read included in the conditions of approval.

Ms. Brunner apologized but added staff is supportive of those conditions. She went on to say coordination with the Parks and Recreation Department is not a recommendation from the Conservation Commission although it is something that staff has asked for. The other recommendation from the Conservation Commission was the addition of a note on the plan as

well as a condition of approval, stating that Old Gilsum Road shall be returned to pre-construction condition.

Mr. Hoefer asked what if the pre-construction condition is poor. Ms. Brunner explained this being a Class VI Road, what this means is that at one point it was a public right of way but was discontinued. The City no longer maintains the road but wants to be careful that it doesn't become a road that now needs to be maintained.

Mr. Bergeron clarified based on the condition of the road and the age of the road, should a metal culvert collapse under the weight of trucks, it would be the responsibility of the applicant to replace that culvert. Ms. Brunner answered in the affirmative and added Old Gilsum Road was improved about four or five years ago by Eversource during a previous project. Hence, it is suitable for heavy trucks.

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

c. Board Discussion and Action

A motion was made by Kenneth Kost that the Planning Board approve PB-26-15 as shown on the plan set identified as "L163 Line ACR Project; Keene, Nelson, Stoddard and Antrim; New Hampshire" prepared by Normandeau Associates at varying scales on April 22, 2026 and last revised on June 3, 2026 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 plans.
 - b. Submittal of five (5) color copies of the final plan set.
 - d. Submittal of documentation of all necessary permits and approvals, including but not limited to the following:
 - i. An NHDES Statutory Permit by Notification for Utility Maintenance Activities
 - ii. An NHDES Alteration of Terrain Permit
 - iii. A US Army Corps of Engineers Permit (self-verification)
 - iv. An EPA 2022 General Construction Permit
 - e. To require the addition of a note on the plan stating that Old Gilsum Road shall be returned to pre-construction conditions.
2. Subsequent to final approval and signature of the plans by the Planning Board Chair, the following conditions shall be met:
 - a. Prior to the commencement of site work, submittal of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan to the Community Development Department.
 - b. Following the completion of construction, any portions of stone walls that were impacted shall be reset in the same location, verified by a surveyor licensed in the State of NH, and confirmed by the City Engineer.

- c. Documentation of existing conditions will be provided for Old Gilsum Road in the project area
- d. Monitor for invasive species throughout the course of construction.
- e. Use of a pollinator friendly seed mix for any restoration of replanting or ground cover.
- f. Roadway restriction during construction be communicated by the contractor to Parks and Recreation and the public.

The motion was seconded by Mayor Kahn.

The Mayor stated there is regional impact but the applicant is working with neighboring communities and hence are covering regional impact adequately. He added he is also pleased to see that the replacement poles are with steel.

The Chair asked because there is regional impact whether the Board should be notifying the other towns. Ms. Brunner stated if the entire Board voted to find this to be a development of regional impact, the item will be placed on hold and a notification would be sent to the other communities. She added when staff was looking at this application, staff was only considering the portion of the project in Keene. Looking at those five structures - it is a limited project area and does not come anywhere near the boundaries with other towns. The Chair reminded the Board of the project approved last year, which went along Keene State and went into Swanzey and Troy and the Board did not determine that development to have regional impact for the same reason that they were contained to the poles in Keene. He stated his recommendation would be the same for this application as well.

Mr. Kost clarified each town will hold their own meeting about the sections going through other their towns. The Chair agreed but stated this would be a question for the applicant.

Mr. Finnell stated their Alteration of Terrain Permit notifies town clerks and Conservation Commissions for each town. Ms. Oliver added copies of the Standard Dredge and Fill Wetland Permit are forwarded to every municipality that have impacts related to those permits. Mr. Finnell added they also conduct community outreach and reach out to Town Administrators.

The motion made by Mr. Kost carried on a unanimous vote.

The Mayor suggested reaching out to other towns to let them know that this project was approved by Keene.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

None

9. STAFF UPDATES

Ms. Brunner stated there is a training opportunity on June 26, which would usually come at a cost, but because Keene is a housing champion, the Board is welcome to attend the training at no

cost. She stated she has attended a different version of this training and found it to be very helpful in terms of the factors that go into making a development project work. Mr. Mehu stated he has attended this course and found it be very helpful.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Kost stated this last cottage court project was of concern to him. He felt some of the cottage court CUP and some of the architectural standards allow for things to happen which the City might otherwise not want to see. For a good urban design and in keeping with Keene, the standards don't have a mechanism for the Board to say No. He asked whether there was a way to tighten up some of these standards. He stated Keene needs housing and they are likely going to be constructed in ways that don't keep with Keene's character.

The Chair felt the Joint Committee could be a good venue to discuss this issue. Mr. Kost asked whether this is brought up as a new item; the Chair stated that Mr. Kost could draft a new proposal for staff review.

11. UPCOMING DATES OF INTEREST

- Joint Planning Board and PLD Committee - July 13, 2026, 6:30 pm
- Planning Board Steering Committee — July 14, 2026, 12:00 pm
- Planning Board Site Visit — July 22, 2026, 8:00 am - To be confirmed
- Planning Board Meeting — July 27, 2026, 6:30 pm

There being no further business, Chair Farrington adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM.

A motion was made by Kenneth Kost that the Board adjourn for a non-public session to discuss pending litigation pursuant to RSA91-A:3,2E. The motion was seconded by Mayor Kahn and was unanimously approved on a roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted by,
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Mari Brunner, Senior Planner