KEENE CITY COUNCIL
Council Chambers, Keene City Hall
October 15, 2026
7:00 PM

ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES FROM PRECEDING MEETING

- October 1, 2026

A. HEARINGS / PRESENTATIONS / PROCLAMATIONS

1. Proclamation - Friends of the Keene Public Library Fall Book Sale
2. Proclamation - National Pharmacy Week
3. Public Hearing - Ordinance O-2026-09-A - Relating to Short-term Rental Uses
4. Public Hearing - Residential Property Revitalization Zone (RPRZ) Application 128-130 School Street

B. ELECTIONS / NOMINATIONS / APPOINTMENTS / CONFIRMATIONS

1. Nominations - Energy and Climate Committee
2. Confirmation - Human Rights Committee

C. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Councilor Jones - Request for Proclamation Honoring and Expressing Gratitude to All Veterans for Their Service
2. Cole Mills - In Opposition to Proposed Ordinance O-2026-09-A - Relating to Short-term Rental Uses

D. REPORTS - COUNCIL COMMITTEES

1. Kiwanis Club of Keene - Request to Use City Property - Tree Lighting Ceremony
2. Request to Consider Restricting the Sale of 7-Hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) and Concentrated Kratom Products

E. CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

F. REPORTS - CITY OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS

1. Fiscal Year 2025 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Award Acceptance – Fire Chief
2. Acceptance of Donations - Finance Director
3. Gilbo Avenue Planning Charrette - Request for Letter of Support - Senior Planner

G. REPORTS - BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

H. REPORTS - MORE TIME

1. Draft Ordinance Amendment Regulating Dogs at Downtown Events

I. ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

1. Relating to Wells Garage Lower Level Public Parking
   Ordinance O-2026-16

J. ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING

1. Relating to Zoning Map Amendment - 0 Howard Street - Medium Density to Conservation
   Ordinance O-2026-13

K. RESOLUTIONS

1. Relating to the Allocation of Funds for Construction of the Monadnock View Cemetery Expansion Project
   Resolution R-2026-42

NON PUBLIC SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

A regular meeting of the Keene City Council was held on Thursday, October 1, 2026. The Honorable Mayor Jay V. Kahn called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Roll called: Randy L. Filiault, Michele A. Chalice, Catherine I. Workman, Bryan J. Lake, Jacob R. Favolise, Laura E. Tobin, Robert C. Williams, Philip M. Jones, Kris E. Roberts, Bettina A. Chadbourne, Edward J. Haas, Laura E. Ruttle-Miller, Molly V. Ellis, Thomas F. Powers, and Mitchell H. Greenwald were present. Councilor Powers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES OF THE PRECEDING MEETING

A motion by Councilor Greenwald to adopt the September 17, 2026, meeting minutes as presented was duly seconded by Councilor Powers. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Kahn announced upcoming dates of interest in October 2026:

- All of October: Domestic Violence Awareness Month
    - Relative to that, Mayor Kahn said to check out the Keene Sentinel article from today about some changes for Monadnock Center for Violence Prevention in our community
- October 3:
    - Keene High School Homecoming Parade at 11:00 AM taking off from Savings Bank of Walpole followed by a football game against opponent Merrimack High School at 1:30 PM
    - Resurrection of the 1980s International Zucchini Festival in Keene. Mayor Kahn said that for years, it was a pretty interesting thing that made world, national, and global news for the City of Keene, preceding the Pumpkin Fest. The event is taking place between 12:00 PM and 3:00 PM at the Wyman Tavern. It is a humorous thing to dress up like a zucchini.
    - The People's Park Petite Pumpkin Painting Party is being held at 1:30 PM at 100 Church Street at the pocket park.
- October 4–October 10: Fire Prevention Week: A reminder the Fire Prevention Parade will be held October 4 at 1:00 PM. There will be a viewing station for Councilors on Main Street near Cherry Garden.
- October 6–October 8: Radically Rural. Check out the Hannah Grimes Center's website to find out more registration information.
- October 8: The annual Fireman's Dinner. A reminder that the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee meeting that evening has been canceled to allow all Councilors to attend. Please be sure to RSVP to the Fire Department.
- October 9: New Hampshire's 24th Annual Advanced Manufacturing and High Technology Summit at Grappone Conference Center, Concord
    - Mayor Kahn said this would be a conversation about Advanced Manufacturing Week. But it concludes next week on Friday, October 9, 2026 with New Hampshire's 24th annual Advanced Manufacturing and High Technology Summit at the Grappone Conference Center in Concord. This is a good get together of a

lot of the advanced manufacturing industries and from Keene and around the state.

- The weekend of October 10: Keene Bottle Show and Sale between 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM at Keene High School.
- Sunday, October 11: Firefighters Memorial Day
- Monday, October 12: Columbus Day A/K/A Indigenous Peoples' Day – City Offices will be closed
- Tuesday, October 13: US Navy 251st Anniversary
- October 18–October 24: New Hampshire History Week
- October 22: New Hampshire Business and Industry Association is launching the NH Optics Alliance co-founded by Steve Fortier (who co-chairs it with the Mayor), Sarah McGregor (a Physics professor at Keene State College), and Matt Zabko (of Bond Industries). Mayor Kahn said that would be the kickoff of the organization, and it would not be held in Concord or Manchester, but here in Keene at Keene State College. So, he called it nice recognition for the optics manufacturing industry in Keene.

Mayor Kahn led the Council in congratulating Councilor Williams who was elected to serve on the Balance of State Continuum of Care Executive Committee. The Balance of State Continuum of Care coordinates resources, services, and community partnerships across 223 New Hampshire municipalities to support individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness in finding stable, permanent housing. Mayor Kahn said it looks like a good place for some local conversations we are having and thanked Councilor Williams for his service.

Lastly, the Mayor announced that the Monadnock United Way Campaign theme for this year is "Local Community - Lasting Change." He encouraged Councilors to contribute to the City of Keene United Way Campaign; pledge forms were provided on their desks: scan the QR code on the form provided if you would like to do a one-time donation. Check the box indicating you are donating as part of a "Workplace Campaign," and select the City of Keene as the organization. You can also choose to do a payroll deduction by filling out the paper form and returning it to the City Clerk.

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION - MANUFACTURING WEEK

Mayor Kahn noted that Electronic Imaging Materials recently earned the BarTender Platinum Partner status, from Seagull Scientific. This is the highest level of certification, reflecting 25 years of partnership, expertise, and dedication to delivering the label and barcode solutions customers need in sectors like logistics, manufacturing, and healthcare.

The Mayor welcomed Alex Henkel, President of Electronic Imaging Materials (EIM). Mayor Kahn read into the record and presented Mr. Henkel with a Proclamation, declaring October 2026 as Manufacturing Month in the City of Keene and encouraged all residents, businesses, educators, and community partners to recognize the vital contributions of manufacturing, and to support the continued advancement of New Hampshire's Advanced manufacturing industries through innovation, collaboration, and investment in our workforce. The Mayor thanked Mr. Henkel for what he contributes to our community and the state.

Mr. Henkel thanked the Mayor and said he was delighted to accept this on behalf of our area manufacturers. He said the Mayor mentioned precision optics, but they have multiple clusters of valuable manufacturers. In their case, they are a 50-employee company at 39 years; it is second generation. Next year would also be Mr. Henkel's 20th year as being the President of EIM. He said some in the audience would know his father, Paul Henkel, who is very involved with the Keene Library. One thing Mr. Henkel noted was that the long-term vision of community leaders in this area has really helped create an environment where manufacturers can thrive. He said he had the privilege of serving on the Master Plan Steering Committee and there were a couple of key pillars: of the six pillars, there are thriving economy and adaptable workforce, and he said both of those really support maintaining the strength of our manufacturing sector. He thanked everybody again and said the group really appreciated it.

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION - HCS - CERTIFICATION OF FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

Mayor Kahn recognized Katie Hart, Director of Operations at Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services (HCS). Mayor Kahn read into the record and presented Ms. Hart with a community recognition, hereby recognizing and celebrating the opening or rededication of the Family Resource Center at HCS, and commending the organization for their long-standing commitment to support these families throughout Keene and the Monadnock Region.

Ms. Hart thanked the Mayor for this recognition on behalf of HCS and the Healthy Starts Family Resource Center; she was honored to accept this Proclamation recognizing their designation of Family Resource Center of Quality. This designation reflects a rigorous review process that recognizes their commitment to providing high-quality family centered services to people in our community. For them, she said this designation is not just a certificate on the wall, it is a promise: a promise that every family who walks through their doors will be welcomed, supported. And connected to the resources they need to thrive. Whether families are seeking parenting, support, home visiting services, kinship resources, diapers, clothing, community connections, are simply a place where they feel like they belong: she said we are here for them. This year alone, HCS has supported more than 150 families, over 240 individuals across Cheshire County, including many families right here in Keene. As Mayor Kahn had alluded to, she said this recognition belongs to their dedicated staff, volunteers, community partners, and most importantly, the families who trust them every day. Together, they are strengthening families. They are building connections and creating healthier, stronger communities for everybody.

PROCLAMATION - FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

Mayor Kahn recognized Fire Chief, Greg Seymour. Mayor Kahn read into the record and presented Chief Seymour with a Proclamation, declaring October 4 through 10, 2026 as Fire Prevention Week in the City of Keene and encouraged all residents to learn about the safe charging practices and to take simple steps to reduce the risk of lithium-ion battery fires. Remember: plug in, power up, and stay safe.

Chief Seymour thanked everyone. He said the Fire Department truly appreciates the support of the Council, our City leaders, and the community most of all. The Fire Department is very proud to be here for you.

PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE O-2026-13 - RELATING TO ZONING MAP AMENDMENT - 0 HOWARD STREET - MEDIUM DENSITY TO CONSERVATION

Mayor Kahn opened the Public Hearing at 7:23 PM and the City Clerk read the notice of hearing. Mayor Kahn requested introductory comments from Senior Planner, Mari Brunner.

Ms. Brunner noted that this Ordinance was introduced to the Council in July 2026 and the public workshop was held on September 14, 2026. The petitioner for this Ordinance is Mr. Steven Ringland, although with the Ordinance application, there was a list of other neighbors that had signed as well. Ms. Brunner noted that the proposal is to change the zoning designation of this one parcel from Medium Density to Conservation. These were previously several different parcels that were created as a part of a rather old subdivision. So, it predated the Planning Board Subdivision process and those lots were never developed. The City came into ownership through a tax deed process sometime in the past and was the owner, decided to merge them, and put out a Request for Proposals for the property. As part of that, there was a wetland delineation done on the property and a lot of preparatory work went into that. So, during the public workshop, staff presented this information to the Joint Committee of the Planning Board and Planning, Licenses and Development Committee and heard from nine members of the public: eight opposed and one in favor during deliberation. The main points of discussion were around our need for housing and concerns about the potential of this rezone to be considered spot zoning. At the end of the workshop, the Planning Board voted to find the proposal to be inconsistent with the Master Plan, and then the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee voted to refer this to the Council for a Public Hearing.

Mayor Kahn welcomed comments from the applicant, Steven Ringland. Mr. Ringland said that if you look at the map, this parcel is right in the middle of many homes, right in the backyard, which is probably the worst place to put it. So, he said he did not even know this was happening. When he filed the notice that the land had been consolidated on the City's website, the GIS map, he came down to file a petition because he figured somebody would try to build on it. He gave his petition to the Community Development Department and the Community Development Director looked at it and said the City is putting buildings there. Mr. Ringland said no one he talked to on the street of the 20 doors he knocked on had any idea what was going there or that anything was happening, they just heard rumors. Mr. Ringland heard Ms. Brunner say that the Ordinance would be inconsistent with the Master Plan but he said he read the Master Plan and it actually contradicts itself in some places, but it does talk about buildings that should align with the character of the neighborhood and the character of the neighborhood is that this wooded lot has been there for 90 plus years. He explained that his family moved from West Keene to Howard St. in 1971. His father grew up in the neighborhood, and he reiterated that it has been a wooded lot for 90 years, which he said is a long time: almost four generations. And the houses: he looked again from High Street up to Spruce Street and the most recent home built in that section is from 1926, which is 100 years, so he said it is an established neighborhood and it is a green space, it is not just a vacant lot. There are trees there and they provide some privacy from

light pollution or noise pollution in people's backyards. He noted this site is almost in his backyard, just a few houses down. Mr. Ringland said it is a wildlife habitat there; he guessed it was technically not wetlands but said it is wet and there are amphibians there and every year you hear the spring peepers. So, there is probably water there, citing the potential for vernal pools. He called it a carbon sink outside the ocean, noting the trees are the largest carbon sink after the ocean. So, in conservation, he said it would be nice to keep the trees, and he said the City is cutting trees down all over the place (e.g., Elm Street up past the Hospital). He said we really should be planting trees and at least preserving what we have, which is what Conservation would do, he believed. He talked about light pollution, which he called a big deal for him because he is in the Amateur Astronomer's Association and he said it is pretty dark out there with this wooded lot and he would kind of like to keep it that way. He said it would be great if it could stay like it is for generations more. He noted it kind of seems to defeat the purpose of an established neighborhood if you can just use the Cottage Court District and go into an established neighborhood. In that case he said there is no such thing as an established neighborhood, because every neighborhood is vulnerable now.

Councilor Ruttle-Miller requested clarification for the record, because a statement was made that the City is putting buildings on this property. City Manager Elizabeth Ferland said that in December 2023, the City Council authorized the purchase of one of those properties and authorized the combination, so putting them all together to be a developable lot. The City then went through the process, through the Community Development Department, to combine the lots. After that, the City then went through the process to delineate the wetlands so that it could be developed. Then later, in early 2026, there was a Request for Proposals (RFP) to develop the parcel; we have a purchase and sales agreement with the developer to develop this parcel. The City Manager stated that the City is not actually developing it. It was a combination of tax deeded property and one parcel that was purchased by the City to accommodate a Cottage Court development project on that site.

Mayor Kahn opened the floor to public comments.

Kyle Mason (of 96 Howard Street, formerly of 135 Howard Street from 1966 to 1982) said his question was that he realized [you] wanted to sell this piece of property or have a developer do it, but he asked why the City did not do this years ago on Spruce Street: that would be his biggest question. Why could we not make that ballpark? Those are trees growing now. He asked: why did we make that a green area or tree area; we tried to make it grass. He said they looked at him the night he was there and explained that it is wetlands, and he realizes you can build houses on wetlands, but you get the neighbors that are surrounding that little piece by the old auction barn: they do not want it. Not just because it is going to be a wetland and it is going to be tough to build, but there is more room over on Spruce St. to build a house than there is over there on Howard St. Then, you get the congested area of a driveway, and you get the other house across from 135 Howard St. He asked: where are you going to park? He stated that there are a lot of things which are not good vs. things which are good. He questioned why not to have the houses on Spruce St. and how many houses there could be there. He said that piece of property was already cleared once and it did not work as he remembered, which was for grass, never mind a house. He said it is wetlands; he is unsure how you determine wetlands, but he has lived there since 1966, and he knows it is wet there.

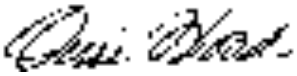
Andrew Madison (of 178 Elm Street) has lived in that same neighborhood for the last 12 years. When he first moved to Keene he lived on High Street, then for a few years on Carroll Street, and now he owns a house on Elm Street. First, he said the lot on Spruce Street is a park. He took his dog and walked it just a few hours prior; he said there is a nice trail in a section of it. He wanted to discourage the City Council from adopting this Ordinance because it is the textbook definition of spot zoning. He said once you do that, it kind of opens Pandora's box in allowing others to spot zone. He said that allowing one disconnected lot to become Conservation may be fine and harmless, but now there would be a legal precedent to make one disconnected spot Industrial or one disconnected spot Commercial. Mr. Madison said he understood the petitioner's point of view and in many regards, agreed with it, but said once we open that Pandora's box, there's nothing stopping him from buying the house next to the petitioner's house and saying, "you know what, I want to reach on this as industrial. I'm putting in some sort of obnoxious factory that's going make noise until 2:00 AM." He said others would be encouraged to do so. He wanted to discourage the Council from opening that Pandora's box there. He said there is merit to what the petitioner says but Mr. Madison said there are other ways to go about seeking the conservation of the land other than a zoning change.

Bill Bradford Hutchinson (of Keene) thought about this long and hard. He was an environmental studies major at Keene State College. So, he said you might think that he was going to be all gung-ho to zone this Conservation. He remembered about 10 or 15 years ago in the dead of winter when there were several feet of snow on the ground. He was riding past this property and looked and saw a snowshoe hare in that little patch of woods: they are not common in the City of Keene at all. Like people had said, Mr. Hutchinson said he could see both sides of this; we do need housing, but in that neighborhood? He questioned a Cottage Court development or even a single-family home or a new house built on that piece of property today: it is going to totally change the character of the neighborhood and the quality of the neighborhood. So, he questioned what the purchase and sale agreement would be to build. He could see something built there that would fit in just fine in the neighborhood. He could see something built there that would have a very negative impact on the rest of the neighborhood. He agreed that it is a wetland but asked if it had been taken care of. He asked if it looked like an abandoned lot that is there waiting for something to happen or could it be a pocket park? He thought what is going to be built there should be taken into consideration. If there were going to be a Public Hearing about rezoning it, Mr. Hutchinson thought that speculated about what the proposed developer, if there were a purchase and sale agreement, would be wanting to put there: a duplex, triplex, a mini apartment. He could see something built there that would fit well with the rest of the neighborhood and would be a welcome addition, and he could see something built there that would be a nightmare for the neighbors and it would be a boondoggle. He could see something built there that would be sort of in between. He brought up the wetlands issue and wondered whether that was getting glossed over. He asked who the developer was. Mr. Hutchinson said there were a lot of questions that needed to be answered before the process of whether it is going to be zoned or rezoned. He said this brings up the problem with zoning and the issue with spot zoning: doing this here and this there. He asked: do we stick with the process, or do we do what is right? He wanted to ensure the Council would look at this as thoroughly and carefully as it needs to be without anyone trying to push the Council toward voting one way or the other. He thought this could be contentious: somebody would be unhappy no matter what the Council decides, and somebody is

going to be happy no matter what they decide. He thought this may need a little more time, such as being deferred to the next meeting. Mr. Hutchinson suggested that maybe there needed to be more questions asked and answered and maybe this needs to be thought out a little bit more. Maybe the public needs to be a little more involved. These were some of the things that he would present to the Council, and each Councilor would have to vote one way or the other. He was not trying to sway it; he just wanted the best vote for everybody. He asked: what is best for the property? What is best for the neighborhood? What is best for the future? What is the best decision? That is a difficult thing, but the Council would have to make the best decision and he wished them luck.

Mayor Kahn pointed out that this was not a site development hearing and that kind of process would happen through the planning Board and is something that would happen in the future. This was a petition to rezone a parcel.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Kahn closed the Public Hearing at 7:43 PM except that written comments would be accepted up until 1:00 PM on Tuesday, October 6, 2026. This would be before the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee at their regular meeting on October 9, 2026. No additional public comments would be accepted at that meeting.

A true record, attest: 
City Clerk

NOMINATION - HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Mayor Kahn nominated Mackenzie Perkins to serve as an Alternate Member of the Human Rights Committee, with a term to expire December 31, 2028. Mayor Kahn tabled the nomination until the next regular meeting.

COMMUNICATION - COUNCILOR FILIAULT - REQUEST TO REVIEW PLANNED TRAFFIC LANE CONFIGURATION AROUND CENTRAL SQUARE

A communication was received from Councilor Randy Filiault, requesting to review the planned single travel lane around the northern section of the Common in Central Square and consider retaining two travel lanes. He mentions concerns regarding traffic patterns and congestion during peak travel hours and states that the proposed change could be made without additional construction or cost. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee meeting on October 23, 2026.

COMMUNICATION - KENNETH KOST - IN OPPOSITION TO SOLAR PAVILION CONCEPTUAL DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

A communication was received from Kenneth Kost, opposing the current solar pavilion conceptual design recommendations, stating that the design will reduce the potential for use as housing and commercial buildings and will not achieve the vision for this site as defined in the land development code and master plan. Mayor Kahn filed the communication as informational.

COMMUNICATION - MARTIN WYMAN - REQUEST FOR ENFORCEMENT OF CITY ORDINANCE REGARDING BARKING DOGS

A communication was received from Martin Wyman, requesting the City enforce the City Ordinance relating to nuisance dogs (Chapter 10, Section 10-35(b)(1)) as it relates to what he describes as ongoing excessive dog barking coming from an adjacent property in his neighborhood. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to the City Manager for follow up with the letter writer.

COMMUNICATION - KIWANIS CLUB OF KEENE - REQUEST TO USE CITY PROPERTY - TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

A communication was received from Elizabeth Sayre of the Kiwanis Club of Keene, requesting their annual license to conduct the Tree Lighting Ceremony on Central Square on Friday, November 27, 2026. Mayor Kahn referred the communication to Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.

MSFI REPORT - DUNCAN HILCHEY AND AMY CHRISTIAN - REQUEST FOR A TRAFFIC STUDY AND SAFETY ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL STREET

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending referring the request for a traffic study and safety assessment of School St. to staff for a report back. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Workman. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

MSFI REPORT - MICHAEL GUITARD/GUITARD HOMES LLC - PETITION FOR CITY OWNERSHIP OF WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE - COTTAGE COURT COMMUNITY ON COURT STREET

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending accepting the water and sewer infrastructure proposed to be constructed as part of the proposed Cottage Court Development on Court St. (Parcel No. 228-016), including valves, hydrants, manholes and other appurtenances, but excluding individual dwelling unit service connections, be accepted as Public Infrastructure. Approval and final acceptance shall be subject to the conditions and requirements listed in Article 23.2.2, 23.2.3 and 23.2.4 of the Land Development Code. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Workman. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

MSFI REPORT - SHAWN VOISINE/ELMSIDE LLC - REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF CITY PUBLIC UTILITIES STANDARDS FOR WATER METERING INFRASTRUCTURE - ELMSIDE COTTAGE COURT

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending denying the Petitioner's request to waive City of Keene Public Works standards for the referenced project. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Workman. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

MSFI REPORT - KENNETH KOST - REQUEST FOR A COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING STUDY OF THE GILBO AVENUE SITE PRIOR TO SOLAR PAVILION DEVELOPMENT

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending accepting the request for a Comprehensive Planning Study of the Gilbo Avenue Site Prior to Solar Pavilion Development as informational. Mayor Kahn accepted the report as informational.

MSFI REPORT - GILBO AVE SOLAR PAVILION CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

The first Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, on a vote of 3–1, recommending Location Option 2 be selected as the preferred alternative, and that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to complete the design for the Gilbo Avenue Solar Pavilion Project. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Workman.

Chair Greenwald stated that his minority position is that he is concerned about that location in total, feeling that location is developable for housing and retail of greater magnitude, and that the whole pavilion should be located elsewhere. He said there are several other locations he feels are more appropriate, though he said it would not be a hill to die on. Councilor Greenwald thinks the project is very worthwhile, and he voted no just because he would like a different location, but the Committee felt to go for Location Two behind Margaritas.

Councilor Jones said he did not agree with both parts of this, but especially Gilbo Avenue, stating that is like an entryway to downtown and there is so much potential there. He does not think that is a good use of that space. There is potential for building there: we have talked about needing housing. He asked: would it not be great if we could have more housing or mixed-use closer to downtown? He said he would speak to the aesthetics later, but he just thinks it is in the wrong place. He noted we do not even know if something is going to go up next to it that is going to shade it and keep it from getting sun right now. He recalled the City at one time had a Gilbo Ave. Overlay, which showed a beautiful streetscape going down Gilbo Ave. and that went away when we developed our new plan. He thinks we should go back to looking at something like the Gilbo Ave. Overlay and give it a purpose: look at the street as a whole and not just one little section. So, Councilor Jones was opposed to the location.

The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, offered some history. She noted that this project is a federally funded grant project at $2.19 million. It is 80% Federally funded and the City funds the 20% match; it is in the CIP. This originally came from Arts Alive: a process where they looked at Gilbo Ave. and discussed potential uses. One of the ideas that came up was to have a pavilion to locate the Farmers Market as a more permanent location from that which moved to the

Downtown Project. She recalled that originally, the Downtown Project included Gilbo Ave., but as we went through many stages of the Downtown Project, funding for Gilbo was removed and this project moved along on its own, because we were awarded the grant funds. So, the location that was identified both by the Arts Alive group that did the public forum and came up with the plans for Gilbo Ave., but also it is the location that was used as the grant application and the reason that location was chosen. If you recall, Northern Borders is an Economic Development Grant focused on economic development and the timber portion of Northern Borders is focused on timber structure, which is what this pavilion is. The City Manager said Location One, which faces Gilbo Ave., was chosen because it would activate that space: it would be a connector to the rail trail system, it would be the covered pavilion for the Farmers Market. Right now, Gilbo Ave. is just a very wide piece of pavement. So, the thought was to really begin to activate it, to have more events and things, but she said we did not want to add additional costs to the Downtown Project. So, the City sought the grant. Now, the debate has been, is it in the parking lot or do we leave it in that original location? The original location that faces the street does have the issue of shade from the trees, which does reduce the amount of solar power we are able to generate, but this was never a solar power project (it was a part of it). This was discussed with the Energy and Climate Committee to offset the energy for the Downtown Project and so it has evolved to both the pavilion and the solar project.

The City Manager said that Option One, which faces Gilbo Ave. has a longer payback period if you are looking strictly at the payback period. This evening, Councilors were presented with a list of answers to questions from the MSFI Committee meeting, which the Public Works Director provided. They looked at straight payback period for the City's portion of the project, and they also looked at if the City put more solar panels on the structure and what that would that do in terms of electricity production as well as the payback period. She shared those details briefly with the public. A couple of things to be thoughtful of are so far the City has awarded just over $300,000 in contracts, so this has been going on for a few years now and the City has paid just over $157,000, which has not yet been recouped through this federal grant because we have not yet gotten to that point of submitting. The next step would be to start submitting for reimbursement for those funds. The grant requires that we have all our submissions in and the project to be done by September 30, 2028. She said there was a little more time but each time we go back to evaluate another spot, we are incurring additional dollars. The City had now looked at five locations on Gilbo Ave. and really, the focus has been on these two: the original Option One and the Option Two in the parking lot. The other question that came out this week from Council was asking about development and could that parking lot be still developed in the future and if Option One was chosen, how would that impact development in terms of shade? So, the Community Development Department looked at that and provided an answer: basically, their answer is yes, development can still occur. The height of the building may be impacted. Their answer was that it would probably limit Location One to five stories behind it and for Location Two to three or four stories behind it, and it would be more limited because the solar structure would be in the parking lot. So yes, there is still potential for development.

The City Manager said the other thing is we have talked about when Arts Alive did their work and the public outreach that the City talked about moving forward with its own planning charrette for Gilbo Ave. and it really has not been the right time to do that. The City is now working with PlanNH to bring their team to the City for a design charette that would cost

approximately $6,500. However, Option One would really not be impacting that. Option One, which includes a narrower parcel that would cover parking, has the bike path on the other side of it, so it is limited to that parking space or taking more space from the roadway itself. The parking lot is something that Ken Kost has talked about the possibilities of, and others have looked at the possibilities of developing that lot. That is a possibility for the future.

The City Manager said this really comes down to what is the priority of the City Council. So, the Council had said that it wanted to activate space on Gilbo Ave. because mainly all the City's events are on Central Square and the City is looking to use the space on Gilbo Ave. and create something that brings that attention and breaks that sea of pavement. She said this would do that. The other thing that it does at a low cost, even at the higher payback period, is getting the majority of this pavilion funded by grant funding. The City's portion is either entirely offset during the life of the project or mostly offset. The payback period was outlined on the paper that the Public Works Director provided. So, the City Manager wanted to give all the background on how we got here in terms of making the decision, the timeline, and the money that has been spent today on the project that has not yet been reimbursed.

Councilor Workman said the City Manager answered a couple of her questions, the main one being the timeline for completion or start of the project, because she thought that would sway a lot of the Council's discussion/decision making. Her other big remaining question was about the life of the structure itself in the solar panels. She saw the payback time, but she was thinking for options for the actual design itself. The City Manager believed the City was using a 20-year life cycle for the project. She said that was what Public Works had looked at. For Option One, you will see on your chart, that the payback period for the City's portion goes beyond the 20-year life cycle. Without the additional panels, it is just under 26 years. With the additional panels, it is just over 22 years. The payback period is much faster in Option Two because it does not have the shading that's impacting the production of the solar. So, the City Manager said: do you want to preserve the parking lot for future development or do you want to maximize the solar part of this project to have a quicker payback period for the project itself for the City's match.

Councilor Filiault first said kudos to the MSFI Committee; he enjoyed sitting in the audience for this and said the Committee put a lot of time into this one. He said both options would provide enough solar power to fund and pay for all the lighting downtown: that was the original discussion the Council had way back when we were talking about this part of the downtown project, that the viability of it was whether it would pay itself back. Councilor Filiault said he would go with either way the Council wants to go because either one will provide enough power to provide all the lighting downtown, and that was the main selling point of this right from the beginning. He said it is a self-funding project. He wanted to point out one thing, which was if there is a potential developer coming down the road (an unknown), no matter where the City builds this, it is a pavilion; it is not a brick-and-mortar building. It is a pavilion with some solar panels on it and in the Councilor's opinion, it could be easily disassembled and reassembled somewhere else. He said it isn't rocket science. He did not think this was an issue where one site was going to be a win-win or a lose-lose. He thought wherever they put it would be fine. Councilor Filiault reiterated that they would be getting enough solar power on it to provide enough lighting downtown and if a project comes downtown, it can always be moved around.

Mayor Kahn pointed out that with the grant dollars, if you just look at the payback period with the City dollars as the cost, these payback periods wind up being miniscule to the taxpayer, recognizing that payback periods are usually calculated on total costs. The City Manager said the payback periods that are on the memo from the Public Works Director are calculated based on the city's share of the project. Mayor Kahn said just on the $400,000 and the City Manager said yes.

Councilor Haas thanked the City Manager for reminding the Council of what the original intent of this was on the Downtown Project: to invigorate the Gilbo Avenue area. He said its location on that side of the rail trail draws more interest in the rail trail and more activity there. He noted that the solar panels, which he is all in favor of, were an add-on and are a great use of that space, just as the church has done. He said everybody was nervous about how they would change that but said to look and it is fine. Now, he said this would be creating a little solar area here to brag on what we have in Keene, stating that it is all worthwhile. It would be great if we had a developer chomping at the bit to put up buildings here and grow this area, or even if the City had a plan for that; he said the City would get to a plan for that. he said the City could not wait for a plan and still get this done under the September 2028 deadline. He reinforced what Councilor Filiault said that this pavilion is not concrete; it is not welded steel. This is a Timber for Transit Grant, and this is mass timber bolted together so it would not be difficult to take down (there would be footings to deal with). He said it could all be reused and be put up in another location. Councilor Haas said the original intent is still good. He noted that this might even make that area more attractive to development: that it builds on the downtown and draws attention to the rail trail and works out that part of Gilbo Ave. So, he said he would love to see the City have a master plan that were out to bid or with developers but said the City was not there yet. Other than that, he said let's keep this thing and keep it going in Location One.

Councilor Tobin really appreciated all the people who had expressed concern about the location and said one of the things it did was challenge her to think differently and go back through the process of how the Council got here. She was reminded of one of the first meetings that she attended on the planning of the Downtown Infrastructure Project in 2017/2018 (the pre-pandemic timeline made her think of planning in a certain way). At that first meeting, which was a brainstorming session, one of the questions that was asked was, "how do you define downtown?" "Where are the boundaries of downtown?" She thought that how we look at Gilbo Ave. now, it would be easy to think that this was just kind of plopped there and that there was no plan, but said that is just how much this area downtown can evolve over the course of ten-ish years. Councilor Tobin said that while she could appreciate the concerns, she does think that if we never complete a plan and we are always reassessing and revisiting, we kind of end up getting stuck, and she thinks that sometimes when we second guess ourselves then we do kind of stall. She said that having a plan and looking at that once this is built for the whole Gilbo Ave. landscape is going to be helpful. She knew there was concern expressed about the shade, which was something that she thought about just in general. She mentioned solar panels if someone builds a building and said she thinks maybe that is something that the Council should look at some eventually and how to protect solar panels and their energy as a source. Councilor Tobin went back and forth between Options One and Two and said she would honestly be comfortable with either.

Mayor Kahn wanted Councilor Haas to understand that the Committee's current recommendation was for Option Two. Councilor Haas said he understood and would let the discussion roll a little bit more and then offer an amendment.

Councilor Ellis thought this was a great project and thought it was wonderful that we have grant funds to help activate downtown. She agreed with Councilors Haas and Greenwald that it makes sense to stick with Location One: it meets the metrics better than any of the other locations, it is the site that was originally identified as being the spot to activate downtown. Councilor Ellis thought that as Councilor Tobin said, we do not want to get stuck stalling. She said if they decide to go with Location Two instead, there would be more permitting and that creates more delays and costs. She said that going back to the original Location One would allow for proceeding more quickly and more efficiently without additional costs.

Councilor Ruttle-Miller did not really have a lot to say when this started but was thinking back on her time in Keene. One of her first memories of coming to Keene back in 2009 as a freshman was walking from Carl Hall down that little corridor and up through the fields there next to Gilbo Ave. late at night to the Port Authority Café. She was thinking about how similar that whole corridor had been the entire time she has lived in Keene: that is essentially just a wide street and a parking lot. She said that it would be nice to see things evolve as Keene grows and changes and for some things to look a little fresher in that area. Other than restaurants and businesses changing and some nice new murals on that on that strip, nothing has really changed in the 18 years here. She said it had been open and nothing, and if we want to start seeing more things come to that space, she thinks we need to move a chess piece here and there and this would hopefully be the first part of that.

Councilor Greenwald appreciated this discussion. He did not come into this to try to steer the discussion or advocate or try to push the Committee in any direction, so he was happy listening to this. An idea came to his mind: what we are building in essence is a giant carport and it is going to be open on one side. He knew this was the second part of the design, but pretty likely it was just going to be a flat roof and said if there is going to be a performance, it is going to be angled south, so the open end is going to be on the north end, so the performance is going that way, which he said made too much sense. In thinking of Option Two behind Margaritas, somehow, he was thinking that the roof would open/end going south but said that is not the case: the panels are going to be angled to the sun, open end north. He stated that all this is leading toward if it is behind Margaritas and the performance is there, it is kind of projecting into the trees and as the crowd gets larger, it is all over the bike path. He said in Option One, open end is to the street, and if it is a really good concert or whatnot, they put up the cement blocks and traffic barriers (i.e., safety things), so the performance can grow, and there would be a performance center, which maybe could spill into the whole of Gilbo Ave. Councilor Greenwald stood on not liking any of this, but if he had to pick one, he was leaning toward Option One.

Councilor Chalice appreciated all the conversation, but said public safety is the issue that bothers her the most. She was in support of option two because we are going to open onto the area. Number One, she said we are going to be generating more electricity. She has solar panels and said you do not put solar panels in an area where trees are going to shade. The logic just does not make sense. More importantly, she said the public safety is that Location Two would open onto

the path area and Location One would open on to Gilbo Ave. So, for very formal occasions, we will go through the whole very extensive rigmarole of putting all the concrete barriers and closing off Gilbo Ave., but for the rest of the time for the smaller events, we would be actually putting the public immediately alongside a travel lane. That made no sense to Councilor Chalice. She did not see putting people for the Farmers' Market and all those things along a travel lane; that just made no sense in her mind. So, Councilor Chalice supported Option Two for the solar generation and for keeping people that we are attracting to this area out of a travel lane and out of incurring additional costs for concrete for closing off Gilbo Ave. She reiterated that it made no sense to her.

A motion by Councilor Haas was duly seconded by Councilor Ellis to amend the Committee report by changing to Option One for the location.

Councilor Lake appreciated the lively discussion and said there was certainly a lot to consider. He said that when he was thinking about the two different options, he thought there were pros and cons to both from a functional standpoint. He heard the comments about public safety, about where the people would be during performances and thought it is again a little bit of plus or minus both ways. The piece that was speaking to him a little bit more was the financial piece. He said if we go with Option Two, where they are not shaded by the trees, the simple payback if we put the whole thing with solar panels is 8.5 years shorter at $30,000 per year in today's dollars; he said that is quite a bit. He said we essentially have a free project here plus some and it was really hard for him to argue against that, but he did understand that there is a little bit of additional cost with that. He knew there was talk about permitting, so he asked the City Manager to clarify the two different costs: for option two, it was a little bit more and he asked if that was a little bit of extra cost there (1) accounted for in the payback period and (2) is that accounting for all of the additional permitting and everything that we had that we would have to go through. The City Manager said yes.

Councilor Jones said nobody was wrong here and everybody was right in what they were saying: it is just that they had different opinions. Whether it is Option One or Option Two, Councilor Jones said it is still a chicken or the egg thing: the egg is the structure, and the chicken is Gilbo Avenue. He thought the Council should do the chicken before the egg. He knew some people wanted to lay the egg and let it grow into chickens. He suggested the chicken first.

Councilor Tobin said that if she remembered correctly, Option Two was going to require moving the EV chargers and she asked the associated cost. The City Manager said she did not know whether the Public Works Director had a sense, but the City Manager said there is an additional cost of moving the EV charging stations. The City Manager noted there was a concern with truck traffic entering the parking lot because of the location. So, they did talk at MSFI a little bit about that issue as well.

Councilor Haas said he respected the question about safety as raised by Councilor Chalice for traffic on Gilbo Ave. To Councilor Haas it works toward one of our other goals, which for some is traffic calming and would include appropriate lane markings and identifying signage or other things that could help slow the traffic through there and make that a little safer. Second, Councilor Haas said he respected the economics of this situation. He called it a no brainer that

Option Two would be better long-term cost wise but. Following on with Councilor Jones, Councilor Haas said he thought the chicken was important here and he was presuming that Councilor Jones meant, “build the damn thing in the place we said we were going to do it” as the chicken and then the egg will come later. Councilor Haas said his point was that the Council should progress, as Councilor Workman pointed out, that the City had this plan for a while to revitalize Gilbo Ave. and make it more connected with the downtown and grow our activities out.

Councilor Ellis said her understanding was that the Airport solar project was going to be creating so much solar power that the City cannot even use it all, and the City is going to have to sell it off. So, she did not think the City was shorting itself: we are still going to have plenty of solar power and it is still going to be an essentially free project; she said just a little bit slower if we go with Option One. All that said, Councilor Ellis said she would support it either way, saying she thinks it is a great project. Still, she thought the Council should stick with Option One.

Mayor Kahn said we got into this because of trying to animate or give some life to Gilbo Ave. He said he heard that comment and thought it was supported by the fact that the primary purpose was to give life to Gilbo Ave., however the power generation is used. He said how much is generated is a second question. The City Manager said she just wanted to provide an answer to the question about moving the EV chargers, noting that it would cost about $10,000 and it is included in the cost of Option Two for two chargers.

Councilor Favolise observed that matters he anticipates will be straightforward and require little discussion often end up generating the most debate, and this was one such instance.-He said this project seemed so simple when the City first got the grant, and we were going to build the thing, and we were going to have it up and everybody would be happy. Councilor Favolise still thinks everybody will be happy. He thinks some people might be happier than others. He had thought a lot about the location. He voted for Option Two at Committee based on the information that he had at the time. Councilor Favolise said he had some thoughtful communications with constituents. He had some thoughtful communications with business owners in the community. City staff have been very helpful in answering the questions on a short timeline here. He thought that he would be more inclined to change his vote from Committee and support this amendment in front of the Council if he felt like the choice was between no development in this commercial lot area vs. unlimited development in this commercial lot area, but that is not the choice as he understood it tonight. He said the development might look different and what exactly is possible might look different, but he really feels confident that development in that lot is not closed off entirely. He also wanted to say that he had thought about the Airport generation question in the same way that Councilor Ellis had. He did not know that having one project that pencils out well should be an incentive for us to not try to make other projects pencil out well. To Councilor Lake’s point “I don't know that having one project that pencils out really well should be an incentive for us to not try to make other projects pencil out really well.” Councilor Favolise thought that the 8.5 year difference here is something he could not vote against here tonight. He said he just could not do that. Councilor Favolise appreciated the conversation. He noted that stop signs and solar panels probably take up 50%–60% of the Council’s time and he would not have it any other way with the 14 folks around him.

Councilor Chadbourne said she was curious, noting the thing about Option Two is the elimination of existing parking. With parking being such a big issue downtown, she asked how many spaces it would eliminate and what would be the revenue lost by the spaces over the years. the City Manager did not have the number readily but believed it was one to three and the reason for that is because they have to be located inside the lot, whereas at the other location they are doing it over the parking lot spaces.

Mayor Kahn repeated the amendment: to go with Option One, which is to the north side of Gilbo Ave. and the north side of the bike path.

Councilor Lake stated that on the idea of losing parking spaces, because he also does not necessarily want to lose parking either, he looked through the recent parking report on the Downtown Project. If he was not mistaken, this is one of the least utilized parking areas downtown: it essentially never hits maximum capacity, except maybe during shows at The Colonial Theatre. He stated that the City is using overflow parking in other lots anyways to accommodate all those people. Councilor Lake did not think that this would negatively impact the general parking downtown, even if we were to lose a couple of spots because again, most of the time this is one of our less utilized parking locations.

Councilor Jones asked for clarity about the City Manager's explanation: the one that just goes over is Option One and the one that takes one to three spaces is Option Two. The City Manager said yes.

On a vote of seven Councilors voting in favor and eight Councilors voting in opposition, the motion to amend the Committee report by changing to Option One for the location failed. Councilors Filiault, Tobin, Jones, Haas, Ellis, Powers, and Greenwald voted in the minority.

Councilor Jones wanted to remind the Council that in the return on investment, they did look at a lot of factors for 22 years. He said what they did not look at is the potential loss of ratables if adjacent buildings are limited to five stories or less. He said 22 years of two or three stories is a lot of potential ratables to lose. So, he said there is kind of exchange there.

Councilor Filiault called it a great conversation tonight (i.e., stop signs and pavilions). He was on the short end of this vote but thought the Council should show complete support and the full Council should vote for this option to unanimously show that they are all in this together.

Councilor Workman respected the conversation tonight and the way that the first vote went. She particularly appreciated Councilor Tobin's point and agreed. Councilor Workman does not typically like to put things on More Time and kick the can down the road, but with such a close vote, like the last vote and so much discussion (she said she knew the Council had a lot of its questions answered). She said this was not very time sensitive.

A motion by Councilor Workman was duly seconded by Councilor Greenwald to send this item back to the MSFI Committee for additional public comment and discussion.

Councilor Haas said that given the closeness of the vote, it shows that maybe we are a little uncertain on this as to what is the best place for it to go. He thought it was a great idea to take another look at it.

Councilor Favolise thought it was difficult to imagine what the Council would discuss one month from now that we did not discuss tonight. He also said that sometimes a close vote means that your side won by a vote. Sometimes it means you lost by a vote. He does not think it often means that the Council is uncertain about the decision.

Councilor Tobin reiterated that she could have voted either way on that because she felt comfortable with either location. She also wanted to highlight that this was before the MSFI Committee back in July 2026, before the Council was on break and requested More Time specifically to get more public input. She said there had been a few events since then. She thought this had been a great discussion and she honestly appreciated it. Councilor Tobin thought a close vote honestly could also mean that a lot of us might support either option. So, she thought she would be comfortable voting tonight.

Councilor Roberts said he was not going to support sending the report back to Committee because he said finally the people could see how the City Council is supposed to work: they had a detailed discussion and anybody who wanted to speak could a couple of times. So, he said now if they send it back to Committee, whoever changes their vote, the people will know who got their hand twisted. He said everybody voted with their conscience right now. He said what would change in another month is a little arm twisting and politics being played. Councilor Roberts said the Council did what it was supposed to do tonight: gave the people what they elected us to do, to discuss it. He said the Council is not supposed to get a 15–0 on every vote.

Ellis noted one of the first things she said was delays adding more costs. She thought the vote was the vote, and the Council should move forward tonight.

On a vote with three Councilors voting in favor and 12 Councilors voting in opposition, the motion to send this item back to the MSFI Committee for additional public comment and discussion failed. Councilors Workman, Jones, and Haas voted in the minority.

Councilor Roberts stated that he would not vote to support the Committee report. He said the reason he was not going to support it is because we do need housing in Keene and we want is as close to downtown as possible. He goes to Manchester and other cities and sees them building four to six story buildings full of apartments with parking garages attached; some are self-contained and even have their own stores. He said the only place Keene could do that downtown would be in that Gilbo Ave. area. He said the City does not get free money from the government, sometimes the government gives the City money and forces us to spend it how they want (like someone giving a donation to a college to put their name on it). Right now, he thought the most important part, for the future if we are going to grow, we must have small apartments. He said we have had people come up here and look at workforce housing. He remarned that no one can afford the current cost of a home. If we want people to come to and stay in Keene Councilor Roberts said we have to have affordable housing and the only way to do that is to do

so like Europe and Asia and build up, and limit the spaces, and have contained parking right there. Councilor Roberts said he could not support giving that potential for the future.

Councilor Williams agreed with Councilor Roberts that it is a very important place for housing and he very much wants to see housing go there. He said if it were a question of a builder doing four stories if the pavilion were there and six stories without it, he said the City would move the pavilion. Councilor Williams thought it was important to build something there because he remembered about six years ago there were many plans to do an arts corridor in that area and he did not love the idea mainly because it did not include housing. So, he voted against the arts corridor at that time. He said maybe that was the right choice, maybe it was not. Regardless, Councilor Williams said the place had not changed since, the City can not just allow it to stay that way. He noted that if there were a developer on the horizon ready to build on this spot, he would jump at it, but there are several spots in that area, which are similar. At this point he did not see holding up this project on the hope that housing will come; he very much hopes it will come and when it does let's embrace it. For now, he said let's build this pavilion.

The motion to carry out the intent of the first MSFI Committee recommendation carried with 12 Councilors voting in favor and three voting in opposition. Councilors Jones, Roberts, and Greenwald voted in the minority.

A second Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, on a vote of 3–1 recommending Concept Option 1 with the flat, monoslope roof be selected as the preferred alternative for the Gilbo Avenue Solar Pavilion. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the second Committee recommendation was duly seconded by Councilor Workman. The motion carried with 12 Councilors voting in favor and three voting in opposition. Councilors Jones, Roberts, and Greenwald voted in the minority.

Mayor Kahn called a recess from 8:48 PM to 8:53 PM.

MSFI REPORT - PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending accepting the Partner City Committee's presentation as informational. Mayor Kahn filed the report as informational.

The Mayor noted that written reports submitted by City Boards and Commissions were provided to Councilors on their desks. They will also be added to the Board pages on the City website for public review.

MSFI REPORT - CONTINUED DISCUSSION: ERIK MURPHY - PETITION - SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS AT THE SOUTH LINCOLN STREET AND ROXBURY STREET INTERSECTION

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to negotiate and obtain sight distance easements, and that City staff reassess intersection conditions in six months to

confirm improved conditions. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Workman. The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

MSFI REPORT - ROADWAY SAFETY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending accepting the Roadway Safety Action Plan Update as informational. Mayor Kahn accepted the report as informational.

MSFI REPORT - DOWNTOWN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT UPDATE

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending accepting the Downtown Infrastructure Project Update as informational. Mayor Kahn accepted the report as informational.

Councilor Greenwald provided an update. At the last MSFI meeting, a downtown update was on the agenda, and there was a huge change that came as a shock to the Committee. The construction company, Casella, as a part of their contract, can change the order of the construction. He said originally, it was planned to start with Central Square and to work their way south. Councilor Greenwald said Casella came up with a better plan, and he agreed that it is a better plan. The crew will be working at Central Square, and another crew will be starting down by Water Street heading north, so Councilor Greenwald called them two armies coming together and said he looked forward to the driving of the golden pipe. He said it made an awful lot of sense, but he thought it was very important to communicate with the merchants, particularly on the south end, that what they though was three years out would be October 22, 2026, when some of the trees would be coming down near Bagel Works and they would be doing the prep work. The intention is to try to get the underground work done during this construction season coming north. Nothing would be disturbed on the sidewalks, so they are not taking any of the lateral connections or streetscape. He urged the Council to read through the report carefully because it has a lot of information within it about the accelerated work schedule, with a goal of finishing early. Councilor Greenwald said it was important for this to be communicated to the public, and the media would get a copy of this so it could be communicated. He said the Downtown Ombudsman would have a lot of work to do during the next week.

MONADNOCK VIEW CEMETERY EXPANSION PROJECT FUNDING ALLOCATION

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending accepting the Monadnock View Cemetery Expansion Project Funding Allocation Update as informational. Mayor Kahn accepted the report as informational.

2027 HIGHWAY SAFETY AGENCY GRANT

A Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending that the City Manager be authorized to do all things necessary to accept and expend the grant

from the New Hampshire Highway Safety Agency to fund Highway Safety Grant- Keene. A motion by Councilor Powers was duly seconded by Councilor Lake.

Councilor Tobin commented that a lot of what was discussed would have been great to hear as a part of the Roadway Safety Update because a lot of these things are addressed in there, specifically the populations that that they are talking about.

The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE KEENE COMMUNITY POWER PROGRAM — ENERGY & CLIMATE COMMITTEE; *AND* PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE KEENE COMMUNITY POWER PLAN

The first Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the report from Energy and Climate Committee, in support of proposed amendments to the Keene Community Power program, be accepted as informational. Mayor Kahn accepted the report as informational.

A second Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee report was read, unanimously recommending adoption of the amendments to the Keene Community Power Plan. A motion by Councilor Powers to carry out the intent of the Committee report was duly seconded by Councilor Lake

City Manager Elizabeth Ferland noted that Councilor Favolise talked very passionately about this at their Committee meeting. The City Manager said the good news is that the City's rates through the Community Power Program, in all the categories, are still lower than they ever were. She noted how automatically enrolling people on the Electrical Assistance Program and the lower Basic option is great, but we also need to get the word out so that people know that it is really easy to make this change. If you had a third-party provider that was providing your electricity and that contract ended, you would be put back on the default Eversource rate and if you do not take the initiative and go back and select Community Power, you are missing out because all of Keene's categories are lower than the Eversource electric rates. So, the City would be pushing out some additional information to make sure people realize that.

The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

First, the City Manager reported on the Airport solar project. The City received significant approval for the Airport solar project this week. The FAA has formally approved the use of approximately 24 acres of Airport property for the solar facility, finding that the project will not materially interfere with current or foreseeable aviation uses and will provide a net benefit to the Airport; the City knew that would be the case, but you have to go through a somewhat long process with the FAA in order for that approval and did recently receive it. There were some administrative steps that we would still need to take. We do need to update the Airport Layout Plan that will be filed and that needs to be done before we start construction. Over the winter we

will also need to finalize a market rate lease agreement between the City and the Airport; the City Manager had talked about how the Airport is funded differently and said it is important that we go through the process and create this lease. City Manager Ferland said we also need to execute our net metering agreements, which she had mentioned. She said the City had some conversations with Cheshire County, and they had tentatively agreed to participate in our net metering program, and the town of Swanzey is also interested as well. Over the winter, she said we need to execute a rec agreement that is for our renewable energy credits and an O&M agreement for the project to maintain the solar project after it has been built. Those are some of the things we have yet to accomplish, but the City Manager said we are close to starting construction. The target date was October 12, 2026 and the project will go through the winter; they want to do the work through the winter because it will be less disruptive to the habitat. We hope to be live next spring or in the summer at the very latest.

Next, the City Manager was pleased to share the City of Keene received notice that we were awarded the Federal Safer Grant. The award provides just over $1.6 million in federal funding over three years to support the hiring of up to eight additional firefighters. This is a significant opportunity for the City and comes at a time when we have been having lots of conversations about staffing, overtime, and minimum staffing requirements. The City will be responsible for a match during this grant period and then eventually at the end of the grant for the full amount for the firefighters. There will also be additional first year costs associated with hiring, training, equipment, and outfitting them. So, before bringing this forward to the Council for action, staff will review the final grant terms and develop a financial analysis, so the Council understands both the immediate and the long-term financial commitment that the City is making when we accept this award. Additionally, the Fire Staffing Committee was scheduled to meet on Wednesday, October 7, 2026 to review the award and develop a recommendation regarding implementation and deployment of the additional personnel. Following that work, staff would bring the grant acceptance through the necessary steps for the City Council. The grant provides federal funding toward the cost of the firefighters. The City Manager said the City will also need to ask for additional appropriations from Council for our match for the grant. So, she said there was a plan for the 2026–2027 season, which is to partner with Hundred Nights again to operate a warming center at the United Church of Christ (UCC) from December 7, 2026 through April 15, 2027. That will provide 129 nights of shelter, compared to the only 71 nights that we were able to provide last year. She said St. James Church has also been participating in these conversations and will provide shelter during periods when the UCC location is unavailable, so this will provide a good, coordinated approach. The group has also (the Mayor is participating in these meetings) been looking at other alternatives should there be need for overflow or should there be an issue with either location. The City Manager called it a good group conversation and effort to make sure we have a good plan for the winter. The City has again budgeted $50,000 to support this effort.

Lastly, the City Manager noted that the Transportation Heritage Trail was just about completed. So, the project that the City had been working on was coming to completion at the end of this month. There would soon be a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate that work.

Mayor Kahn recognized that the warming shelter is staffed by a couple of full-time staff that the Hundred Nights shelter takes responsibility for hiring, but there are many volunteer opportunities

and many people in our community who do step up. He said the Hundred Hights folks and the UCC Church folks have been looking for volunteers; the shelter will open at 9:00 PM in the evenings and closes in the mornings. He asked everyone to please consider it, pass it on, and have people get in touch with Hundred Nights Shelter.

REPORT – CITY OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS - RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY REVITALIZATION ZONE (RPRZ) APPLICATION 128-130 SCHOOL STREET - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A memorandum was read from Community Development Director Paul Andrus, recommending that the Mayor set a public hearing regarding the Residential Property Revitalization Zone (RPRZ) application submitted by Evan Ray, owner of the property located at 128-130 School Street. Mayor Kahn set a Public Hearing to be held October 15, 2026 at 7:05 PM and referred the application to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee meeting of October 22, 2026.

Mayor Kahn reminded the Council that there would also be a second Public Hearing on October 15, 2026 at 7:00 PM on Ordinance O-2026-09: Land Development Code Amendments related to Short Term Rental Uses.

REPORT – CITY OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS - LET IT SHINE - 2026 PUMPKIN FESTIVAL LICENSE AMENDMENT - CITY MANAGER

A memorandum was read from City Manager Elizabeth Ferland, recommending that the City Council suspend its rules and approve an amendment to the license previously granted to Let It Shine, Inc. for the Keene Pumpkin Festival on October 17, 2026, to authorize City staff, in coordination with the event sponsor, to make adjustments to the approved event footprint, road closures, and areas of use based upon the status and conditions of active downtown construction, including allowing event activities within or adjacent to construction areas when conditions safely permit, provided such adjustments are consistent with public safety and the general scope of the approved event, and further, that Let It Shine, Inc. shall not be responsible for City service costs associated with the 2026 Keene Pumpkin Festival that exceed the amount of Community Event Funding awarded to the event.

A motion by Councilor Filiault to suspend Sections 26 and 33 of the Rules of Order to act on this time sensitive matter was duly seconded by Councilor Workman. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

Mayor Kahn recognized the City Manager for comments. The City Manager, Elizabeth Ferland, talked about this and got a consensus from the Council about it at their prior meeting. She recapped that the original Pumpkin Festival license had already been approved before tonight, and so tonight's action is a limited amendment to allow the use of Central square and provide flexibility as downtown construction conditions change. During a recent discussion about the Downtown Infrastructure Project and the recent Music Festival, Councilors, downtown businesses, and the Mayor all expressed an interest in keeping community active in the downtown and using Central Square when conditions allow. So, the City spoke with Let It Shine about expanding some of the festival activity into Central Square and the organizers, some of

whom were present, were willing to do so and accommodate that request. Then, there was a Protocol meeting last Thursday to review the expanded footprint. Central Square has been used for events in the past and staff did not identify any additional safety concerns that would prevent its use under the current conditions. There are no power pedestals in Central Square, so activities there would be limited to displays or vendors that do not require City power. Tonight's amendment also provides flexibility for City staff, in coordination with the event's sponsor, to adjust the approved event footprint, road closures, and the area's use based on the status and conditions of active downtown construction. This is the language that we are intending to put in future Community Event licenses to make sure that we have that flexibility moving forward. It would allow us to make these changes because oftentimes these licenses are approved months in advance and the conditions may change and would allow some additional flexibility. The financial provision in tonight's motion is specific to the Pumpkin Festival. Let It Shine agreed to expand the festival into Central Square at the City's request, and the intent is to ensure the organization is not financially disadvantaged by accommodating that request. The provision is not intended to become standard language in future Community Event licenses. This is really just a one-time thing and what that language says in the motion is that they will not be responsible for costs above the allocated $10,000 in Community Funding for the Festival. She reminded the Council that Community Event Funding is to offset the cost of City services, when we bring in Police and Fire and we put up blocks for the road, all of that is part of that Community Event Funding. In this case, if the Council approved the motion before them, Let It Shine would not be responsible for anything beyond the $10,000 that had been allocated for their community event. With the Festival coming up on October 17, 2026, it was necessary to suspend the Rules. The City Manager said she felt comfortable with this. The Protocol group came together quickly; it was a large group of many departments, who worked with the event sponsor and spent a lot of time looking at how to accommodate this request. The City Manager thought they were in a good position to move this forward.

Mayor Kahn recognized that, aside from the financial piece in the motion, this is not just a one-off for the Pumpkin Festival. This language related to the area of use would become a part of future license agreements where Central Square or any of the downtown area could possibly be amended from the original protocol document or to the original approval. It grants the City Manager the opportunity to amend those based on conditions within the active construction area. Mayor Kahn called it a good, timely conversation and thanked the City Manager for taking it up with staff and coming forward with a recommendation.

Councilor Filiault thanked the City Manager, City staff, and those from Let It Shine, noting that this was not an easy task, but it happened rapidly based on some of the concerns from downtown merchants about a previous event. Councilor Filiault said kudos to everybody for jumping on board and coming together amicably and quickly, stating that it was appreciated.

A motion by Councilor Filiault was duly seconded by Councilor Jones to amend the license previously granted to Let It Shine, Inc. for the Keene Pumpkin Festival on October 17, 2026, to authorize City staff, in coordination with the event sponsor, to make adjustments to the approved event footprint, road closures, and areas of use based upon the status and conditions of active downtown construction, including allowing event activities within or adjacent to construction areas when conditions safely permit, provided such adjustments are consistent with public safety

and the general scope of the approved event, and further, that Let It Shine, Inc. shall not be responsible for City service costs associated with the 2026 Keene Pumpkin Festival that exceed the amount of Community Event Funding awarded to the event.

Mayor Kahn reiterated what the City Manager already said that the last statement about the cost would be a one-off that would not be applied to other events. The Mayor said it is disruptive to this event to have this agreement as close to the Festival as it is happening, so the City recognizes there are some additional adjustments the organizers are needing to make and this is an exceptional provision.

The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

REPORT – CITY OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS - FISCAL YEAR 2025 ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT AWARD ACCEPTANCE - FIRE CHIEF

A memorandum was read from Fire Chief Gregory Seymour, recommending that the City Council suspend its Rules due to the time-sensitive nature of the federal grant award and authorize the City Manager to do all things necessary to accept and expend the Fiscal Year 2025 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) award in the amount of $198,181.81; approve the required City match of $19,819.19; and approve the reallocation of $10,590.35 in remaining funds from the FY27 Ventilator Replacement CIP project, account 00000300-534080, to be used toward the required grant match, with the remaining $9,227.84 of the match to be funded from the Fire Department operating budget, account 40200000-523110, for a total approved project budget of $218,000.00. The grant funds and required City match will be used for the purchase of powered ambulance cots, powered cot loading systems, and powered stair chairs for the Keene Fire Department's frontline ambulances.

A motion by Councilor Powers to suspend Section 26 of the Rules of Order to act on this time sensitive federal grant award was duly seconded by Councilor Chadbourne for a second. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

Mayor Kahn recognized comments from Fire Chief Seymour, who explained that he was here tonight looking for authorizations to do all things necessary to accept the fiscal year 2025 Assistance to Firefighters Grant award in the amount of $198,181.81. This grant will support the purchase of powered ambulance cots, powered loading systems, and powered steer chairs for the Department's frontline ambulances. The equipment will improve the Department's ability to safely move and transport patients, reduce manual lifting demands placed on firefighters and paramedics, and provide greater standardization across the frontline EMS fleet. As a condition of the grant, the City is responsible for a local match of $19,819.19. Resulting in a total project value of $218,000.00. He said they were also requesting authorization to reappropriate $10,590.35 in remaining funds from the FY2027 ventilator replacement CIP project toward the required match. The remaining $9,227.84 would be funded through the Department's Operating Budget. No additional appropriations will be requested. The request to suspend the Rules is based only on the time sensitive nature of the federal award and requirement for the City to complete the acceptance in a 30-day time limit. Chief Seymour said that with the Council's approval, the City will be able to leverage approximately $998,000 in federal funding toward the

$218,000 investment and completely outfit all of our frontline ambulances, making them all the same.

Councilor Powers noted that this was time sensitive because the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee would not be meeting this week. More relative to it is that this is 2025 money, and Councilor Powers said all the sudden we are spending it, which is happening to every community. He said unless you all put together to get these things in a bottom drawer, you do not get another opportunity to do this. He called it another good reason why this kind of government works.

A motion by Councilor Powers was duly seconded by Councilor Chadbourne to authorize the City Manager to do all things necessary to accept and expend the Fiscal Year 2025 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) award in the amount of $198,181.81; approve the required City match of $19,819.19; and approve the reallocation of $10,590.35 in remaining funds from the FY27 Ventilator Replacement CIP project, account 00000300-534080, to be used toward the required grant match, with the remaining $9,227.84 of the match to be funded from the Fire Department operating budget, account 40200000-523110, for a total approved project budget of $218,000.00. The grant funds and required City match will be used for the purchase of powered ambulance cots, powered cot loading systems, and powered stair chairs for the Keene Fire Department's frontline ambulances.

Councilor Lake asked the Chief if this would be entirely new equipment or replacing something existing. He also asked the Chief if he had a general understanding of the life cycle of this equipment or how long the equipment should last for. Chief Seymour replied that the powered cots and power load systems are two that are new to the City; the primary ambulances are still working off manual systems, which was identified years ago as an area for injury and safety. So, he said they would try to include this in their new ambulance purchases moving forward but that is a very slow process. He said they were fortunate that this was one of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) priorities, so the City was able to complete it now, about six years earlier than otherwise. Chief Seymour reported that the current life cycle on these is anywhere from seven to 10 years, which he called pretty good, and he noted that a trade-in is offered when they are replaced. This will bring all of the ambulances up to the same standard.

Councilor Jones wanted to say that the Chief and Fire Department had been doing very good with grants lately and thanked them for all they do. Councilor Jones looked forward to this new equipment and hoped he would never get to see it.

The motion carried unanimously with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING - RELATING TO THE INSTALLATION OF TWO STOP SIGNS ON ROXBURY STREET - ORDINANCE O-2026-15

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending the City Council vote against Ordinance O-2026-15. Mayor Kahn filed the Committee Report. Ordinance O-2026-15, Relating to the Installation of Two Stop Signs on Roxbury Street, was read into the record for a second time. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to

adopt Ordinance O-2026-15 was duly seconded by Councilor Workman. On a roll call vote with zero Councilors voting in favor and 15 Councilors voting in opposition, Ordinance O-2026-15 was unanimously defeated.

RELATING TO THE ALTERATION OF THOMPSON ROAD - RESOLUTION R-2026-37

Councilor Greenwald reminded Councilors that they could not vote if they did not attend the site visit.

A Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee report was read, unanimously recommending adopting Resolution R-2026-37. Mayor Kahn filed the Committee Report. A motion by Councilor Greenwald to adopt Resolution R-2026-37 was duly seconded by Councilor Workman. The motion carried with 11 Councilors voting in favor and five abstaining. Councilors Jones, Roberts, Chadbourne, Ruttle-Miller and Powers abstained.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

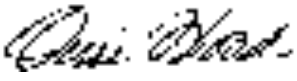
A motion by Councilor Greenwald to go into non-public session to discuss land matters pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(d), legal matters pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(L), and litigation matters pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(e) was duly seconded by Councilor Workman. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

The session began at 9:37 PM. The regular session reconvened at 9:52 PM.

A motion by Councilor Greenwald was duly seconded by Councilor Powers to seal the minutes of the non-public session as divulgence of the information would render the proposed actions ineffective. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote with 15 Councilors present and voting in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Kahn adjourned the meeting at 9:53 PM.

A true record, attest: 
City Clerk

PUBLIC HEARING

Amendment to Land Development Code -

Ordinance O-2026-09-A: Relating to Short-term Rental Uses

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held before the Keene City Council relative to Ordinance O-2026-09-A - Relating to Short-term Rental Uses. Petitioner, City of Keene Community Development Department, proposes to establish a use definition and use standards for "Short-term Rental" in Article 8 of the Land Development Code and permit this use by right with limitations in the following zoning districts: Rural, Residential Preservation, Low Density, Low Density 1, Medium Density, High Density, High Density 1, Downtown Core, Downtown Growth, Downtown Transition, Commerce, Neighborhood Business, Business Growth and Reuse, Office, and Agriculture.

The Ordinance is available for inspection in the office of the City Clerk during regular business hours.

HEARING DATE: October 15, 2026

HEARING TIME: 7:00 pm

HEARING PLACE: Council Chambers, Keene City Hall

Attest: Terri Hood

City Clerk

ORDINANCE O-2026-09-A

CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Six

AN ORDINANCE Relating to Short-term Rental Uses

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That Chapter 100 of the City Code of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by adding the bolded underlined text, and deleting the stricken text as follows:

1. Add a new section "AI" to Article 8, Section 8.3.2, "Commercial Uses" to define "Short-term Rental," as follows. The intent of this proposed change is to support wealth-building opportunities for Keene residents, ensure the health and safety of Short-term Rental guests, preserve the residential character of Keene's neighborhoods, and protect quality of life for abutting residences.

   AI. Short-term Rental (STR)

   1. **Defined.**

      Short-term Rental (STR) - A dwelling or any portion thereof that the owner or the lessee of the dwelling offers for occupancy, for a fee, for fewer than 30 consecutive days. Short-term Rentals can be hosted, where the dwelling is the primary residence of the owner or lessee, or non-hosted, where the dwelling is not the primary residence of the owner or lessee.

   2. **Use Standards**

      a. **If located in a residential zoning district, the residential appearance of the dwelling or the lot on which the STR is located shall be maintained.**
      b. **Non-Hosted STRs shall have posted contact information in accordance with Chapter 18, Section 18-16 A of the City Code of Ordinances. The exceptions listed in Section 18-16 B shall not apply to this use.**

2. Allow "Short-term Rental" as a permitted use in the zoning districts listed below by amending Sections 3.1.5, 3.2.5, 3.3.5, 3.4.5, 3.5.5, 3.6.5, 3.7.5, 5.1.5, 5.3.5, 5.4.5, 5.5.5, 7.2.5, and Tables 4-1 and 8-1, to display "Short-term Rental" as a permitted use under the category of commercial uses.
   a. Rural
   b. Residential Preservation

c. Low Density
d. Low Density 1
e. Medium Density
f. High Density
g. High Density 1
h. Downtown Core
i. Downtown Growth
j. Downtown Transition
k. Commerce
l. Neighborhood Business
m. Business Growth and Reuse
n. Office
o. Agriculture

_____

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

APPLICATION TO AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE

Petitioner: Community Development Department Date: September 17, 2024

Address: 3 Washington St., Keene NH

Telephone: (603) 352-5440 Email: communitydevelopment@keenenh.gov

Existing Section Reference in Chapter 100, Land Development Code: Article 8 + various sections (see attached ~~[illegible]~~)

Does the amendment affect "Minimum Lot Size"? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Does the amendment affect "Permitted Uses"? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Number of parcels in Zoning District*: Attached

Validation of Number of parcels by the Community Development Department

Petitioner's Signature

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS WHICH MUST BE COMPLETE AT TIME OF SUBMISSION TO THE CITY CLERK:

- A properly drafted Ordinance containing the amendment in a form meeting the requirements of the City Clerk.
- A typed or neatly printed narrative explaining the purpose of, effect of, and justification for the proposed change(s).
- $100.00 application fee.
- As provided for in RSA 675:7, if the proposed amendment would change the minimum lot sizes or the permitted uses in a zoning district, ***and such change includes 100 or fewer properties,** the Petitioner shall submit a notarized list of property owners affected by the zoning amendment. The list shall include the tax map number and address of each abutter or owner, and must be current with the Assessing Department's records within ten days of submittal. Two sets of mailing labels shall be provided.

Date Received by City Clerk: 05/19/2026 Ordinance Number: O-2026-09

On City Council agenda: 05/21/2026 Workshop to be held: _____

Public Hearing to be held _____

K:Forms/Council/application_amend_zone ordinance_2021.doc

Zoning District	Approx. Number of Parcels in District	Requires Mailed Notice?
Rural	1,500	No
Residential Preservation	169	No
Low Density	3,700	No
Low Density 1	13	Yes
Medium Density	787	No
High Density	772	No
High Density 1	3	Yes
Downtown Transition	96	Yes
Commerce	233	No
Neighborhood Business	48	Yes
Business Growth and Reuse	28	Yes
Office	9	Yes
Agriculture	46	Yes

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

O-2026-09 Relating to Short-term Rental Uses

This ordinance proposes to establish a use definition and use standards for "Short-term Rental" in Article 8 of the Land Development Code and allow this use by right in the following districts: Rural, Residential Preservation, Low Density, Low Density 1, Medium Density, High Density, High Density 1, Downtown Transition, Commerce, Neighborhood Business, Business Growth and Reuse, Office, and Agriculture.

The intent of this proposed change is to support wealth-building opportunities for Keene residents, ensure the health and safety of Short-term Rental guests, preserve the residential character of Keene's neighborhoods, and protect quality of life for abutting residences.

The attached materials include the full text of Ordinance O-2026-02 and excerpted sections of the City of Keene Land Development Code that are proposed to be amended with this ordinance. Text that is **bolded and underlined** is proposed to be added, and text that is ~~stricken through~~ is proposed to be deleted.

CITY OF KEENE
PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that a Public Hearing will be held before the City Council relative to an application for Residential Property Revitalization Zone (RPRZ) Tax Relief under RSA 79-E:4-b submitted by Evan Ray, owner of the subject property located at 128-130 School Street.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to determine whether the structure at issue is a qualifying structure; whether any proposed rehabilitation qualifies as substantial rehabilitation; and whether there is a public benefit to granting the requested tax relief and, if so, for what duration. The owners are requesting the City Council consider sufficient relief that would allow for the expansion of the existing two-unit residential building at 128-130 School Street by adding a third horizontally conjoined residential dwelling unit consisting of a one-bedroom apartment approximately 686 square feet in size. Copies of the application and background information are available during regular business hours in the Office of the City Clerk, 3 Washington Street, Keene.

Per order of the Mayor and Councilors of the City of Keene, this 1st day of October, two thousand and twenty-six.

Hearing Date: October 15, 2026
Hearing Time: 7:05 PM

Attest:

City Clerk

From: developers@paragondigital.com
To: Help Desk; Paul Andrus; Daniel Langille
Subject: New submission from Community Revitalization Tax Relief Application (RSA 79-E)
Date: Wednesday, August 19, 2026 9:28:42 PM

Applicant Information

Applicant Name

Evan Ray

Is the Applicant the Property Owner?

Yes

Address

[redacted]

Phone

[redacted]

Email

[redacted]

Building Information

Building Address

128-130 School St
Keene, New Hampshire 03431
United States
Map It

Tax Map Lot #

555/ / 001/000 000/000

Zoning District

Low Density

Cheshire County Registry of Deeds Book #

3237

Page #

1051

Gross Square Footage of Building

2832

Year Built

1880

Is the building eligible for listing or listed individually on the National or State Register of Historic Places or located within a locally designated, State or National Historic District?

No

Does the property currently have any credit or exemption from real estate tax assessment?

No

Project Information

Describe Existing Uses

The property at 128–130 School Street is currently used as a residential two-family dwelling consisting of two residential apartment units. The building is currently configured as two horizontally conjoined residential units, with each unit functioning as an independent dwelling.

The property is entirely residential in use and does not currently contain any commercial or office space. The property does not have any employees associated with its current use.

The existing residential units are approximately 632 square feet and 2200 square feet, respectively, and are currently used as long-term residential housing.

Describe Proposed Uses

The proposed use of the property will remain residential. The project will expand the existing two-unit residential building at 128–130 School Street by adding a third horizontally conjoined residential dwelling unit. Upon completion, the property will contain three residential units. The new unit will be a one-bedroom apartment consisting of approximately 646 square feet. The existing two residential units will remain in their current residential use.

The project will not create any new employment positions, as the property will continue to be used exclusively for residential purposes and will not contain commercial or office space.

Please disregard the first-floor portion of the attached drawings for purposes of this application. At this time, I am only proposing to complete the second-floor portion of the project, which will consist of a one-bedroom residential apartment within the existing barn structure. The first-floor work shown on the drawings is not part of the current project scope.

Is a change of use associated with this project?

No

Will any state or federal grants or funds be used to finance the rehabilitation or construction?

No

Does the project involve the replacement of an existing structure?

No

Describe the work to be done and estimated cost

(1). Attach a copy of a contract, contractor estimates, or itemized list of materials (2). Attach a project narrative, building plans or sketches, renderings or photographs to help explain the proposed rehabilitation or construction. Attach additional files if neccessary.

- schoolst.pdf
- quote-28-3d669.pdf

Structural Work:

No structural work is separately identified in the contractor's quote.

Cost of Work:

$0

Exterior Alterations (storefront, walls, windows, doors, etc.):

Addition of an exterior door to provide access to the new apartment. No other significant exterior alterations are proposed. The cost of the door is not separately itemized in the contractor's quote.

Cost of Work:

Not separately itemized

Interior Alterations (walls, ceilings, moldings, doors, etc.):

Interior renovation of the existing barn to create a one-bedroom apartment, including demolition and preparation, flooring, bedroom work, bathroom and kitchen work, and stairs to the second story.

Cost of Work:

$45,500 Total. This is the sum of: Demo and preparation: $2,750 Flooring: $5,000 Bathroom and kitchen: $22,750 Bedroom: $10,000 Stairs to second story: $5,000

Electrical:

Electrical work associated with the new apartment.

Cost of Work:

$8,750

Plumbing/Heating:

Plumbing work associated with the new apartment.

Cost of Work:

$10,750

Mechanical:

Heating and cooling for the new apartment.

Cost of Work:

$10,000

Energy Efficiency:

No energy-efficiency work is separately identified in the contractor's quote.

Cost of Work:

$0

Other:

Design, planning board approvals, permitting and coordination.

Cost of Work:

$3,750

Total Estimated Project Cost:

$78,750

Estimated Project Start Date:

10/01/2026

Expected Project Completion Date:

12/01/2026

Public Benefit

Enhances the economic vitality of downtown areas.

Yes

If yes, please describe:

The addition of a new residential apartment in downtown Keene will contribute to the economic vitality of the area by increasing the availability of housing within the downtown district and making productive use of existing building space. Adding another residential unit will bring an additional resident or household into the downtown area, increasing the potential customer base for nearby restaurants, shops, businesses, and services. By creating new housing within an existing downtown property, the project also supports the continued use and improvement of the existing building while contributing to a more active and vibrant downtown community.

Enhances & improves a structure that is culturally or historically important on a local, regional, state, or national level, either independently or within the context of an historic district, town center, or village center in which the building is located.

No

Promotes the preservation and reuse of existing building stock by the rehabilitation of historic structures, in accordance with energy efficiency guidelines established by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

No

Promotes efficient design, safety, and a greater sense of community in a manner consistent with the Keene Comprehensive Master Plan.

Yes

If yes, please describe:

The project promotes efficient design, safety, and a greater sense of community by converting an existing barn structure into a new residential apartment. The project makes efficient use of existing building space and infrastructure while improving the structure for safe and functional residential use. Adding another housing unit within the established downtown Keene area also supports a more active and connected community by providing additional housing close to existing businesses, services, and amenities.

Will add to the City's employment base by creating at least one new, full-time job in Keene's downtown area.

No

Directly supports the integration of public art in the downtown.

No

Promotes development of a sustainable building stock in the downtown that achieves a nationally or internationally recognized green building standard (e.g. LEED, Green Globes, National Green Building Standard, and International Green Construction Code).

No

Maintains owner occupancy of a residential building or it returns a residential building to owner occupancy.

Yes

If yes, please describe:

The project maintains owner occupancy of the residential property, as the property owner will continue to reside on-site. The addition of a residential apartment within the existing barn will allow the property to provide additional housing while maintaining the owner's residence within the building.

Results in an increase in energy sustainability in conformance with the City adopted greenhouse gas initiatives as determined by a home energy score of at least six (6), and demonstrated carbon emission reduction of at least 10%.

No

Affidavit

Applicant

Signature Image

Date

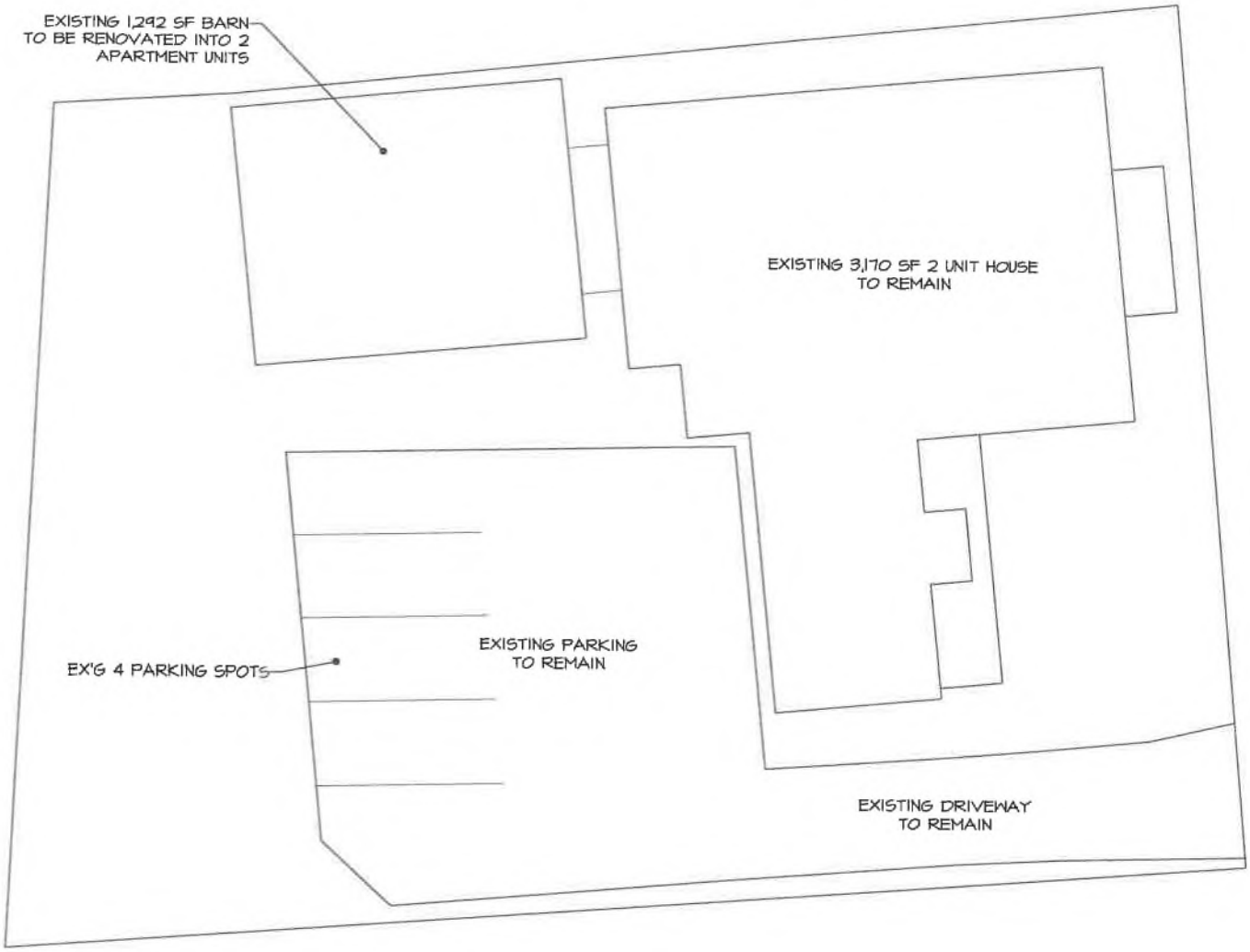
08/18/2026

Owner

Signature Image

Date

08/19/2026



1 APPROXIMATE SITE PLAN
NOT SURVEYED
SCALE: 3/32"= 1'-0"

N

DRAWING LIST

A0	COVER & SITE PLAN
AD1	DEMO PLANS
A1	PLANS
A3	SECTIONS & DETAILS

SQUARE FOOTAGE:
BUILDING FOOTPRINT: 646 SF

APPLICABLE BUILDING CODES:
IRC 2021
IEBC 2021
IECC 2018
ALL CONSTRUCTION SHALL COMPLY WITH LOCAL AND STATE CODES THAT PERTAIN.

GENERAL NOTES:
1. ALL MATERIALS AND PRODUCTS AS HEREIN DRAWN AND SPECIFIED SHALL BE TRANSPORTED, STORED, INSTALLED, FINISHED AND MAINTAINED ACCORDING TO THE MANUFACTURER'S SPECIFICATIONS.

2. DRAWINGS ARE NOT TO BE SCALED. USE ONLY WRITTEN DIMENSIONS.

3. ALL WRITTEN DIMENSIONS ARE TO FINISH, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

4. PLUMBING, HVAC & ELECTRICAL ARE TO BE DESIGN-BUILD BY THE SUB CONTRACTOR PERFORMING THE WORK.

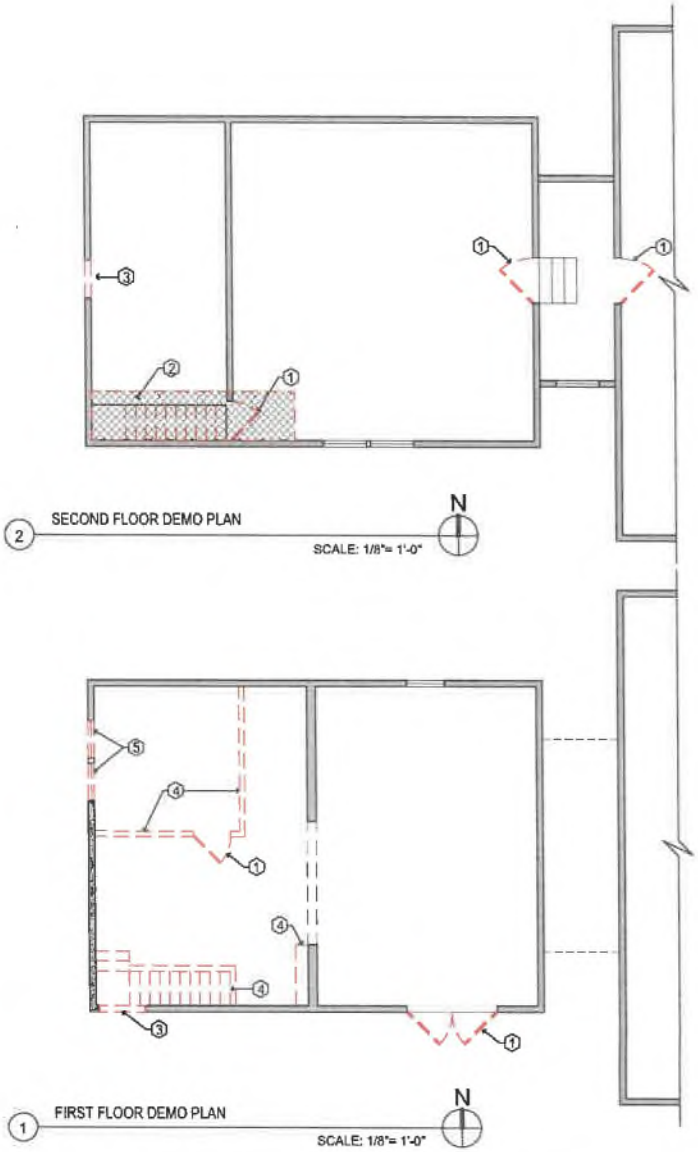
EVAN MICHAEL
BARN RENOVATION
128 SCHOOL STREET
KEENE, NH

COVER & SITE PLAN

SCALE: AS NOTED
04-24-26
REVIEW

A0

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



PHASE KEY

- EXISTING
- DEMO
- NEW

DEMO KEY NOTES

1. REMOVE DOOR
2. ENLARGE FLOOR FOR NEW STAIR OPENING
3. DEMO FOR NEW WINDOW/ DOOR OPENING
4. DEMO WALLS
5. REMOVE EX'G WINDOWS, ENLARGE FOR NEW EGRESS WINDOWS

DEMO NOTES

1. THE G.C. SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF THE BUILDING THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE CONSTRUCTION PROCESS. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INSTALLATION OF PROPER AND ADEQUATE TEMPORARY SHORING DURING THE PROGRESS OF THE WORK.

2. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE G.C. TO LEGALLY DISPOSE OF ALL WASTE OFF SITE.

3. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE G.C.. TO PROTECT LANDSCAPING DURING DEMOLITION & CONSTRUCTION.

4. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE G.C. TO CONTACT 'DIG SAFE' PRIOR TO ANY EXCAVATION/ UTILITY WORK.

5. DEMOLITION OF EXISTING CONSTRUCTION SHALL BE AS SHOWN AND LIMITED TO THAT WHICH IS REQUIRED TO BE REMOVED IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEW PLAN.

6. EXCAVATE ORGANIC MATERIAL PRIOR TO THE INSTALLATION OF ANY CONCRETE FOUNDATIONS, SLABS OR PADS.

7. ALL DAMAGED MATERIALS, OPENINGS AND VOIDS CREATED BY THE REMOVAL OF EXISTING CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT, PIPING, DUCTS, ETC, SHALL BE PROPERLY PATCHED AND CLOSED OFF. ALL DAMAGED WALLS SHALL BE PATCHED TO RECEIVE NEW FINISH AS REQUIRED.

8. WHERE THE PATCHING OF EXISTING FLOOR IS REQUIRED, ANY SLOPING OR RAMPING TO A LEVEL FLOOR SHALL NOT EXCEED 1/8" PER 10 FEET UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

9. IN DEMOLITION, TO ALLOW FOR NEW DOOR, & WINDOW OPENINGS, PROVIDE TEMPORARY SUPPORT UNTIL NEW HEADERS ARE INSTALLED.

10. REMOVAL OF PLUMBING ITEMS SHALL INCLUDE ALL FIXTURES AND ASSOCIATED PIPING. ALL PLUMBING SHALL BE REMOVED TO A POINT AS NOT TO CREATE "DEAD END LINES".

11. PROVIDE TEMPORARY PROTECTION AS REQUIRED AT UNPROTECTED EXTERIOR ROOF AND WALL OPENINGS.

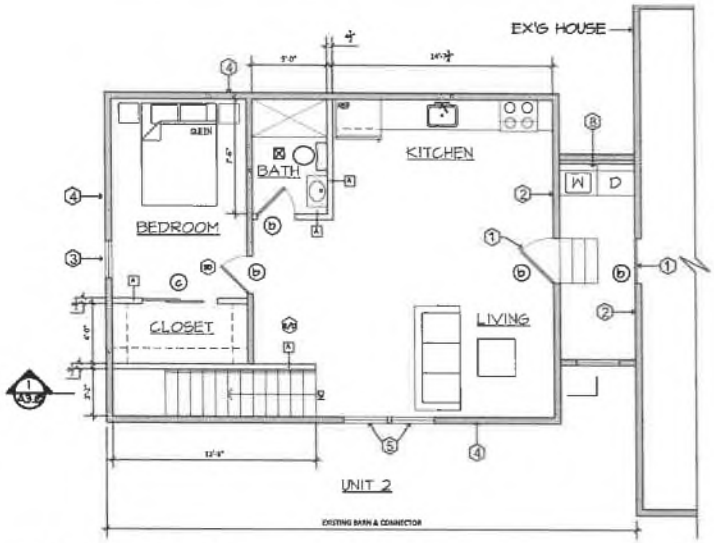
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

EVAN MICHAEL
BARN RENOVATION
128 SCHOOL STREET
KEENE, NH

DEMO PLANS

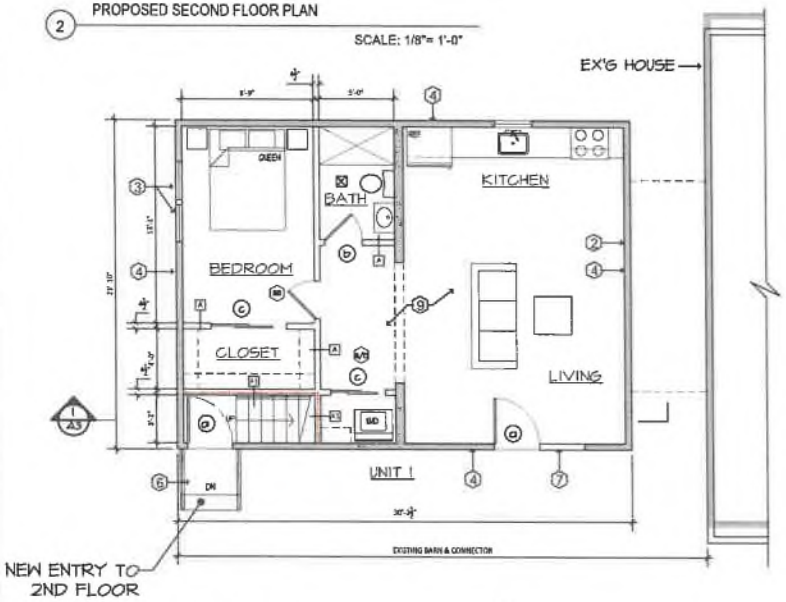
SCALE: AS NOTED
04-24-26
REVIEW

AD1



2 PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 1/8"= 1'-0"



1 PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 1/8"= 1'-0"

N

PHASE KEY

- EXISTING
- DEMO
- NEW
- 1 - HOUR RATED WALL

PARTITION TYPE

- A — 2x4 stud @ 16" o.c. ½" gwb ea. side
- A1 — 1 HOUR RATED 2x4 stud @ 16" o.c. fiberglass batt ⅝" gwb ea. side

KEY NOTES

1. NEW 20 MIN. RATED DOOR
2. NEW FIRE RATED WALL-2 LAYERS OF ⅝" GWB
3. NEW EGRESS WINDOW MIN. 5.7 SF
4. NEW WALL INSULATION, MIN. R-20 OR FILL EX'G CAVITY
5. PROVIDE TEMPERED FILM TO EX'G WINDOWS
6. NEW PT STAIR, LANDING & HANDRAIL
7. NEW WALL INFILL @ DOOR OPENING
8. NEW WASHER & DRYER IN CONNECTOR
9. NEW FIRE RATED CEILING-2 LAYERS OF ⅝" GWB. BETWEEN FIRST AND SECOND FLOORS

EXHAUST FAN & HEATER

S/C SMOKE/ CO DETECTOR

SD SMOKE DETECTOR

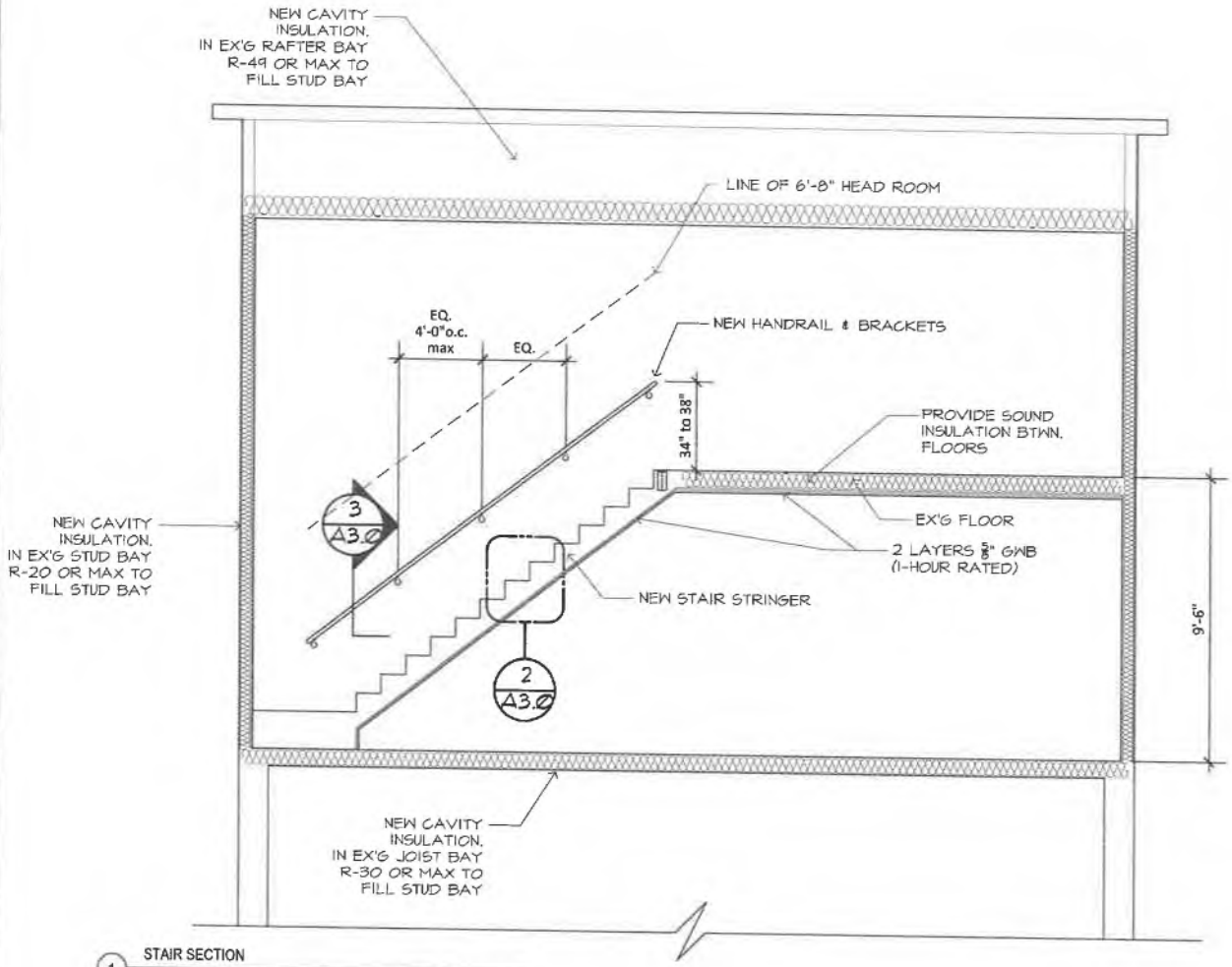
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

EVAN MICHAEL
BARN RENOVATION
128 SCHOOL STREET
KEENE, NH

PROPOSED PLANS

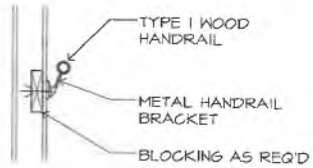
SCALE: AS NOTED
04-24-26
REVIEW

A1



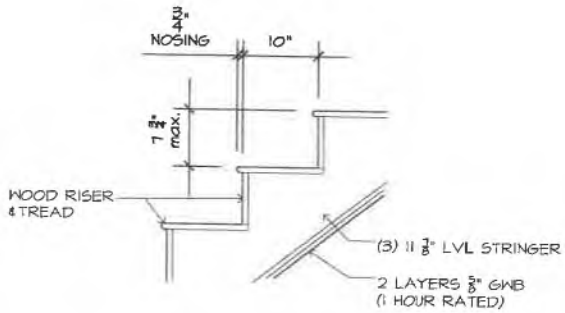
1 STAIR SECTION

SCALE: 1/4"= 1'-0"



3 HANDRAIL DETAIL

SCALE: 3/4"= 1'-0"



2 STAIR DETAIL

SCALE: 3/4"= 1'-0"

EVAN MICHAEL
BARN RENOVATION
128 SCHOOL STREET
KEENE, NH

STAIR SECTION & DETAILS

SCALE: AS NOTED
04-24-26
REVIEW

A3

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Quote #28

Prepared for
Evan Ray
[redacted]

Offer good until:
10/01/2026

REconstruct Realty
30 Hanover St
Keene, NH 03431

Provided by
Zack LeRoy
603-321-6952
zack@reconstructrealty.com

Scope of work

Convert existing barn in a one bedroom apartment.

Products and services

Design, Planning board approvals, Permitting and coordination.	$3,750.00 $3,750.00 × 1
Demo and preparation	$2,750.00 $2,750.00 × 1
Flooring	$5,000.00 $5,000.00 × 1
Bathroom and Kitchen	$22,750.00 $22,750.00 × 1
Bedroom	$10,000.00 $10,000.00 × 1
Stairs to second story	$5,000.00 $5,000.00 × 1
Hearing and cooling	$10,000.00 $10,000.00 × 1
Electrician	$8,750.00 $8,750.00 × 1

Plumber	$10,750.00 $10,750.00 × 1
Subtotal	$78,750.00
Discount	$2,500.00
Fees	$0.00
Taxes	$0.00
Total	**$76,250.00**
Deposit	
Deposit (18.61%)	$14,187.50

CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Five

A RESOLUTION Relating to Adopting the Provisions of RSA 79-E "Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive"

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

WHEREAS, RSA 79-E "Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive" (hereinafter "RSA 79-E) declares it a public benefit to enhance downtown and town centers with respect to economic activity, cultural and historic character, sense of community, and in-town residential uses that contribute to economic and social vitality; and

WHEREAS, RSA 79-E further declares it a public benefit to encourage the rehabilitation of underutilized structures in urban and town centers as a means of encouraging growth of economic, residential, and municipal uses in a more compact pattern, in accordance with RSA 9-B; and

WHEREAS, RSA 79-E also declares it a public benefit to provide short-term property assessment tax relief and a related covenant to protect public benefits in order to encourage substantial rehabilitation and use of qualifying structures, or in certain cases, the replacement of qualifying structures, as described herein; and

WHEREAS, RSA 79-E:4-b, "Residential Property Revitalization Zone," further declares it a public benefit to revitalize and preserve existing housing stock by providing temporary tax relief for renovation projects that significantly improve the quality, condition, or use of qualifying residential structures in a designated residential property revitalization zone; and

WHEREAS, RSA 79-E:3 permits municipalities to adopt modifications of the provisions of RSA 79-E, as set forth within the Statute.

WHEREAS, on December 21, 2017 the City Council adopted RSA 79-E within certain districts located within the City as defined in R-2017-41; and

WHEREAS, on November 15, 2018 the City Council rescinded R-2017-41 and adopted RSA 79-E within certain districts located within the City as defined in R-2018-33; and

WHEREAS, the downtown district map changed when the City adopted in May 2021 with Ordinance O-2020-10-B the Land Use Code, along with the remapping of the City's downtown zoning districts with Ordinance O-2020-11-A;

WHEREAS, on April 17, 2025, the City Council rescinded R-2017-41 and further updated the downtown district map as defined in R-2025-09;

WHEREAS, the City Council hereby rescinds R-2018-33 and R-2025-09, and readopts RSA 79-E in accordance with this Resolution;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Keene that the Council hereby adopts and implements the provisions of RSA 79-E:4, with certain modifications, as follows:

RSA 79-E:4 Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive

A. For purposes of administering a RSA 79-E program within Keene, the City hereby defines that a "qualifying structure" shall mean non-residential use building or a mixed use building, being located within the area depicted on the map labeled "City of Keene Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive (RSA 79-E) District" dated December 4, 2025 attached hereto and made part of this Resolution.

B. "Substantial Rehabilitation" shall mean rehabilitation of a qualifying structure which costs at least $75,000 and, in certain cases, replacement of a qualifying structure which costs at least $75,000;

C. For purposes of administering the RSA 79-E program, the City Council shall ensure that the proposed substantial rehabilitation provides one or more of the following public benefits, or that the proposed replacement provides one or more of the public benefits to a greater degree than would substantial rehabilitation of the same qualifying structure:

I. It enhances the economic vitality of downtown areas;

II. It enhances and improves a structure that is culturally or historically important on a local, regional, state, or national level, either independently or within the context of an historic district, town center, or village center in which the building is located;

III. It promotes the preservation and reuse of existing building stock throughout a municipality by the rehabilitation of historic structures, thereby conserving the embodied energy in accordance with energy efficiency guidelines established by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation;

IV. It promotes efficient design, safety, and a greater sense of community in a manner consistent with the Keene Comprehensive Master Plan;

V. It will add to the City's employment base by creating at least one new, full-time job in Keene's downtown area;

VI. It directly supports the integration of public art in the downtown; or

VII. It addresses one or more of the City's adopted energy and climate goals as outlined in Resolution R-2018-36 and the Keene Comprehensive Master Plan.

D. “Tax Relief Period” shall mean that for a period of up to five (5) years, the property tax on a qualifying structure shall not increase as a result of the substantial rehabilitation or reconstruction thereof, beginning only upon completion of substantial rehabilitation or, in the case of a replacement structure, upon completion of its construction.

E. In accordance with RSA 79-E:5, the duration of the tax relief period for applications filed in Keene shall be considered in the context of each specific application and shall only provide that level of tax relief necessary in the discretion of the City Council to effectuate the specific targeted public benefit(s) outlined as determined by the City Council. By way of example, a qualifying project that is deemed by the City Council to provide one or two of the public benefits listed above may be granted a tax relief period of up to two years, and a qualifying project that provides three or more public benefits may be granted a tax relief period of up to five years; provided, however, that in determining what, if any, tax relief duration to provide, the City Council may consider the impact the proposed substantial rehabilitation will have on existing, or required, City infrastructure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Keene that the Council hereby adopts the provisions of RSA 79-E 4-b, as follows:

RSA 79-E: 4-b Residential Property Revitalization Zone

A. For purposes of administering the RSA 79-E:4-b Residential Property Revitalization program within Keene, the City hereby defines that a “qualifying structure” shall mean an existing residential structure which is at least 40 years old and is a one or 2-family home or an attached multi-family home with not more than 4 units. Parcel(s) must also have both city water and sewer service.

B. “Significant improvement” shall mean rehabilitation of a qualifying structure which costs at least 15 percent of the pre-rehabilitation assessed valuation or at least $50,000, whichever is less, and includes the creation of at least one new housing unit or resolves significant life safety or health risks, as determined by the Building and Health Official.

C. For purposes of administering a RSA 79-E:4-b Residential Property Revitalization program within Keene, the City Council shall ensure that the proposed significant improvement provides one or more of the following public benefits:

> I. It results in the creation of at least one new housing unit;
>
> II. It prevents at least one housing unit from falling into obsolescence by addressing a life safety or health issue that would render the unit unlivable otherwise;
>
> III. It enhances and improves a structure that is culturally or historically important on a local, regional, state, or national level, either independently or within the context of a historic district, town center, or village center in which the building is located; or it preserves a historically significant structure that is listed on or determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or the state register of historic places, such as existing carriage barns;

IV. It maintains owner occupancy of a residential building or it returns a residential building to owner occupancy;

V. It increases the livability of the home by flood proofing a structure in a flood hazard zone, remediating contamination such as lead or asbestos, or significantly improving the energy performance of a home as determined by the NHSaves Home Heating Index tool by reducing the home heating index from a score of 9 or above to a score of 4 or below;

VI. It results in a net-zero home that produces as much (or more) energy as it consumes by minimizing energy use through efficiency and meeting its remaining needs through renewable energy systems.

D. "Tax Relief Period" shall mean that for a period of up to five (5) years the property tax on a qualifying structure shall not increase as a result of the significant improvement or reconstruction thereof, beginning only upon completion of significant improvement. The City Council may, in its discretion, add up to an additional two (2) years of tax relief for a project that results in new residential units and add up to an additional four (4) years of tax relief for the substantial rehabilitation or significant improvement of a qualifying structure that is listed on or determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, state register of historic places, or is located within and important to a locally designated historic district, provided that the substantial rehabilitation is conducted in accordance with the U.S. Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

E. In accordance with RSA 79-E:5, the duration of the tax relief period for applications filed in Keene shall be considered in the context of each specific application and shall only provide that level of tax relief necessary in the discretion of the City Council to effectuate the specific targeted public benefit(s) outlined as determined by the City Council. In making a determination about the duration of tax relief the City Council shall consider the following: a qualifying project may be granted a base level of tax relief of up to five years and may only receive additional years as outlined in Section D based on the extent to which the project meets the criteria and public benefit(s); provided, however, that in determining what, if any, tax relief duration to provide, the City Council may consider the impact the proposed substantial rehabilitation will have on existing, or required, City infrastructure.

No property may be granted tax relief under this chapter more than once in a 20-year period.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a property owner, as a condition of being granted such tax relief, shall

A. Document the proposed public benefit(s) at the time of the application for tax relief under the Keene RSA 79-E program; and

B. Provide the City promptly with all information and documentation that the City may deem relevant for review of the application for such tax relief, as well as for review of the rehabilitation or replacement project under federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations, as may be applicable; and

C. Grant to the City a Covenant ensuring that the structure shall be maintained and used in a manner that furthers the public benefit(s) for which the property tax relief was granted and shall require the property owner to obtain casualty insurance, and flood insurance, if appropriate, for twice the term of the tax relief granted; and

D. Grant to the City a lien against the property for the purpose of ensuring proper restoration or demolition of damaged structures and property; and

E. Maintain the property as taxable, regardless of whether the property owner is otherwise subject to property taxes under RSA 72; and

F. The City reserves the right to conduct inspections of the property to ensure compliance with the covenant at the discretion of Community Development Director; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if the Covenant is terminated for any reason, the City shall assess all current and arrears taxes, with interest, to the property owner as though no tax relief was granted in accordance with RSA 79-E:9,II; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager or their designee is hereby authorized to execute all documents and undertake all actions as may be required to implement this resolution. This resolution shall take effect upon approval by City Council.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

In City Council December 4, 2025.
Referred to the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.
City Clerk

A true copy;

Attest:
City Clerk

PASSED: December 18, 2025

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #B.1.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Mayor Jay V. Kahn

Through: Terri Hood, City Clerk

Subject: **Nominations - Energy and Climate Committee**

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
Nomination tabled until the next regular meeting.

A true record;

Attest:
City Clerk

Recommendation:

Attachments:
None

Background:
I hereby nominate the following individual(s) to serve on the specified Board or Commission:

Energy and Climate Committee

Catherine Koning — December 31, 2028
Moving from Alternate to Regular Member
Slot 8

Matthew Bolton — December 31, 2028
Moving from Alternate to Regular Member

Slot 9

2026-484

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #B.2.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Mayor Jay V. Kahn

Through: Terri Hood, City Clerk

Subject: **Confirmation - Human Rights Committee**

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
Voted unanimously to confirm the nomination.

A true record;

Attest:
City Clerk

In City Council October 1, 2026.
Nomination tabled until the next regular meeting.

A true record;

Attest:
City Clerk

Recommendation:

Attachments:
None

Background:
I hereby nominate the following individuals to serve on the designated Board or Commission:

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Mackenzie Perkins December 31, 2028

2026-474

Alternate Member

Slot 13

2026-474

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #C.1.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Councilor Philip M. Jones

Through: Terri Hood, City Clerk

Subject: **Councilor Jones - Request for Proclamation Honoring and Expressing Gratitude to All Veterans for Their Service**

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
Voted unanimously to suspend Section 26 of the Rules of Order to act on the request.

Voted unanimously to direct the Mayor to present a Proclamation honoring and expressing gratitude to our veterans for their service at the next regular City Council meeting on November 5, 2026.

A true record;

Attest:
City Clerk

Recommendation:

Attachments:
1. Communication_Councilor Jones
2. Proclamation Honoring Vets

Background:
Councilor Jones has submitted a communication respectfully requesting that the City Council suspend its Rules of Order to act on his request that the Mayor present a Proclamation at the next City Council meeting honoring and expressing gratitude to our veterans for their service.

2026-481

Date: October 7, 2026

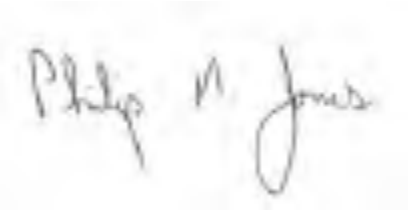
To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

From: Councilor Philip Jones

Subject: A Proclamation Relating to Honoring and Expressing Gratitude to All Veterans for Their Service

I respectfully recommend that the City Council directs the Mayor prepare a Proclamation which explains the reasons we should honor and express gratitude to our veterans for their service, and that the Proclamation be presented to Robert Campbell of the Keene Veteran's Council at the first City Council meeting in November.

Respectfully,



A PROCLAMATION

Honoring and Expressing Gratitude to All Veterans for Their Service

WHEREAS, the men and women who have worn the uniform of the United States Armed Forces have selflessly defended the principles of liberty, democracy, and freedom upon which our nation and the State of New Hampshire are founded; and

WHEREAS, veterans across our community and country have answered the call of duty during times of peace and times of conflict, demonstrating remarkable courage, sacrifice, and dedication; and

WHEREAS, the City of Keene is profoundly grateful for the long-standing commitment and service of our local veterans, whose sacrifices have protected our homes, families, and way of life; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the City Council, speaking on behalf of the entire citizenry of Keene, pauses to formally recognize the immense debt of gratitude owed to all who have served in the military forces of the United States;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Keene that the Council hereby extends its highest praise, deep respect, and sincere thanks to all veterans for their honorable service and steadfast commitment to their country.

_____

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #C.2.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

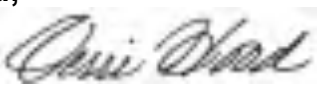
From: Cole Mills

Through: Terri Hood, City Clerk

Subject: **Cole Mills - In Opposition to Proposed Ordinance O-2026-09-A - Relating to Short-term Rental Uses**

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
Filed into the record as part of the Public Hearing on Ordinance O-2026-09-A.

A true record;

Attest: 
City Clerk

Recommendation:

Attachments:
1. Communication_Miles

Background:
Cole Mills has submitted the attached letter in opposition to proposed Ordinance O-2026-09-A - Relating to Short-term Rental Uses to be included in the record as part of the Public Hearing on this matter.

2026-498

Why is the Keene Community Development Department bent on destroying why Keene has historically been thought of as a great place to live?

This letter is in opposition to a proposed ordinance (O-2026-09-A) allowing ***by right*** the ability to have short-term rentals throughout the city, including the rural zone. Community Development has done enough permanent damage with its scattered gun approach to redrafting our zoning laws.

When buying home and picking a neighborhood, zoning, and, in particular, zoning stability, is a very important consideration. Over the past several years the following Community Development bad ideas have been enacted:

- Moving the minimum rural zone lot size from 5 acres to 2 acres;
- Allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) as a matter of right; and
- Increased density incentives for building certain types of housing or meeting energy efficiency standards.

These three changes effectively quadruples (4X) development in the rural zone areas of our city. The rural zone lacks the roads (traffic), city water and city sewer to support such overdevelopment.

There have been changes in other zoning districts, including setbacks and required parking spaces that have or will have further adverse impacts to Keene.

Community Development promoted these sweeping changes to our rural neighborhoods to promote "affordable housing." Enactment of O-2026-09-A in contrast to this objective. It appears that Community Development is either erratic or clueless in its approach to community development.

- Short-term rentals (e.g., AirBnB or VRBO) encourage investment buyers and those who look at single family residences, not as places to raise a family or be part of community, but as cap rates and returns on investments (ROIs). *This increases housing costs for everyone*;
- With ADUs this means a savvy investor can have 2 short-term rental units. *This displaces the people who need housing affordability the most*;
- ***By right*** means the City of Keene loses control of its neighborhoods and cannot prohibit bad actors from engaging in business; and
- Residential property assessments will increase because a consideration to tax value is income stream. *This disproportionately impacts those on fixed incomes, young families and those already struggling to find a place to buy or rent (long-term)*.

Community Development justifies is bad idea on providing income opportunities for Keene residents. This isn't justified by the facts as most of the short-term rentals and college rentals are owned by out-of-town and out-of-state landlords.

Please vote against O-2026-09-A. Honor the intention of the zoning changes that were rammed down our throats a few years ago.

Alternatively, vote in favor of 2 year moratorium on zoning changes related to short-term rentals.

Sincerely,

10/13/2026

Cole Mills
P.O. Box 145
Keene, NH 03431

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.1.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Planning, Licenses and Development Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: **Kiwanis Club of Keene - Request to Use City Property - Tree Lighting Ceremony**

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
Voted unanimously to carry out the intent of the report.

A true record;

Attest:
City Clerk

Recommendation:
On a vote of 5 to 0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends the Keene Kiwanis Club be granted permission to use downtown City rights-of-way on Friday, November 27, 2026, to conduct the 2026 Tree Lighting Festival, subject to the licensing requirements identified in the staff report including associated road closures and authorization of free parking. All permissions granted herein are subject to compliance with the City-approved safety protocol document, which becomes a part of this license. Approved event footprint, road closures, and areas of use may be amended based upon the status and conditions of active downtown construction, including allowing event activities within or adjacent to construction areas when conditions safely permit, provided such adjustments are consistent with public safety and the general scope of the approved event.

Attachments:
None

Background:
Councilor Filiault welcomed petitioner Elizabeth Sayre of 290 Main Street to speak on behalf of the Kiwanis Club of Keene.

Ms. Sayre started by explaining that this year the Kiwanis are collaborating with the Keene Downtown Group. They are going to make announcements during the Tree Lighting event to encourage participants to float down Main Street and the side streets to visit merchants. Additionally,

this year they will have both colored lights and white lights on the tree. If white lights can be purchased, they will turn off colored lights at the end of Epiphany and will turn on the white lights. The plan is to leave a winter festival look with those white lights on the tree and gazebo until mid-February when the tree is taken down.

Ms. Sayre continued that the decorating will all take place in one day, the plan for that day being the Saturday before Thanksgiving which is November 21, 2026. She went on to say that after all the construction is completed on Central Square, she is going to petition the City to have white lights on the gazebo and lampposts year-round.

Paul Andrus, Community Development Director reviewed some of the details from the perspective of the protocol process. He mentioned the staffing for the Police and how temporary pavement will be in place for purposes of safety, and how electricity will be made available for the lights prior to the event.

Councilor Haas said he has spoken to some downtown merchants who do not want the streets closing so early for this event. They feel it takes away business.

Chair Filiault thanked Ms. Sayre for her presentation.

The following motion by Councilor Williams was duly seconded by Councilor Haas.

On a vote of 5 to 0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends the Keene Kiwanis Club be granted permission to use downtown City rights-of-way on Friday, November 27, 2026, to conduct the 2026 Tree Lighting Festival, subject to the licensing requirements identified in the staff report including associated road closures and authorization of free parking. All permissions granted herein are subject to compliance with the City-approved safety protocol document, which becomes a part of this license. Approved event footprint, road closures, and areas of use may be amended based upon the status and conditions of active downtown construction, including allowing event activities within or adjacent to construction areas when conditions safely permit, provided such adjustments are consistent with public safety and the general scope of the approved event.

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #D.2.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Planning, Licenses and Development Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: **Request to Consider Restricting the Sale of 7-Hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) and Concentrated Kratom Products**

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
Voted unanimously to carry out the intent of the report.

A true record;

Attest:
City Clerk

Recommendation:
On a vote of 5 to 0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that the City Attorney be directed to create a draft Ordinance restricting the sale of kratom products for individuals under the age of 21.

Attachments:
None

Background:
Chair Filiault asked if the City Attorney had any information to share since this was last discussed in committee.

Deputy City Attorney Brandon Latham said there are no updates regarding the legislative and legal front at this time. He continued that two requests have been submitted by N.H. legislators, one in the Senate, one in the House, to confront this issue again in the next year. They had legislation this year that did not pass. He said that we like to look at what other cities are doing about this matter. He said that in Massachusetts, last month they temporarily scheduled same thing the federal government did that we talked about last time (which was to temporarily place kratom on the Schedule 1 substances list). He continued that nothing that has happened recently will directly affect the committees' decisions tonight.

Chair Filiault asked if the attorneys feel the committee should wait for state legislation or can they have an Ordinance created that would be able to be upheld without that state legislation.

City Attorney Amanda Palmiera said it is always better for the state to do the legislating. She continued that NH is a Dillon's rule state (which means local governments are not sovereign, they are the legal creations of the state legislature and possess only the powers the state explicitly grants to them). She continued that the City doing something on their own that's not clearly from state authority will always be risky. She continued that with all that being said, this issue is evolving and cities and towns are working on this and the feds have not quite fully caught up on the discussion. She recommends the City would not want to take actions without state approval.

Chair Filiault asked for input from Councilor Williams who was the original petitioner about this matter. He continued that it is obvious this is a dangerous product and in the past week we have heard about two fatalities due to kratom.

Councilor Williams said that the news of these fatalities in Missouri was tragic. Two people died separately from ingesting kratom or something that had kratom within it. He said that the point is that this is an unregulated substance that people are taking and that is dangerous. He said he would love to have the City Council say no more kratom in Keene. If not that, he wants restrictions on the sales put in place. At this point, he would like to see what the state legislators proposed in April 2027. He thought that meant putting this on more time.

Chair Filiault said that instead of putting this on more time, it would be better to accept this as information. Then it would be better to bring it back in the new calendar year on January 1, 2027.

City Manager Elizabeth Ferland said it would be cleaner to bring this back in the new year. But she wanted to first have the speakers that have come here this evening speak before any motion is made.

Chair Filiault asked for comments from the committee and the audience. Alyssa Bender, Youth Services Manager at the City of Keene and Samantha Grisson-Hill, YMCA Community Youth Coalition Director came forward to speak before the committee.

Alyssa Bender stated that she was here before the committee to share information about youth and their relationship with kratom. Ms. Bender explained that she and Ms. Grisson-Hill had attended training through Boston Medical Center. That training was about kratom. They learned about how Massachusetts raised kratom to a Schedule 1 substance on August 13, 2026. That is a one-year temporary change, and each year the matter is revisited to see if they will keep this as a Schedule 1 substance.

Ms. Bender continued at this time, there are no age restrictions on kratom. So technically, legally, a 16-year-old can go to a gas station and purchase kratom at any time. She said there are currently about 68,000 youth in the United States that disclosed they have knowingly used kratom. She continued that this is very concerning because of the high levels of 7-OH and the potency of these tiny tablets that are smaller than a cough drop can have up to four servings within them. She feels the youth are not looking at the packaging and do not realize this tiny tablet is four servings and can easily overdose.

Ms. Bender continued that recovery centers are not seeing kratom use in Keene very often, they are

instead finding out through their personal relationships that purchasing kratom is easy, whether online or in a store. She said that Samantha Grisson-Hill went to 12 stores locally and found that five of the 12 sold kratom. Ms. Grisson-Hill will talk in more detail about that and the age groups the stores are selling to. Ms. Bender continued that people believe it is a safe and natural substance, but they do not know that only the mitragynine is the natural substance and the 7-OH is a synthetic product.

Ms. Bender said they are hearing that people are having withdrawals when they try to quit kratom and say those withdrawals are work than withdrawals from taking opioids. She said that she has had discussion with local law enforcement. They said that people tell them they do not really understand the intended use of the kratom. They find that at low doses; it is a stimulant. But, at high does it acts like an opioid and can knock them out. Further, she has heard that some people are using it to limit their alcohol consumption, limit marijuana usage, and cover up withdrawal symptoms. The concern is that people are switching their addiction from one substance to another.

Samantha Grisson-Hill spoke next. She said they are concerned that there are no age restrictions in the law. The local stores that sell kratom are inconsistent with some selling to older than 18 and others older than 21. One store I canvassed has a large display on a whole wall with powders, pills, shots, and drinks. And, they are selling to people who are 18 and older. They had a large inventory and told me they sell often and that is why they have such a large stock.

Ms. Hill continued that people are calling this product, gas station cocaine. She feels that this is technically providing a legal high to young people which is scary. She continued that once the synthetic 7-OH is added into these products, we are seeing toxicity reports coming in describing the overdoses. She said that the shops are also marketing this using bright enticing packaging and coloring. And, she said, people are buying a box of two tablets and do not realize that one dose is one tablet and overdose using the pills that have a high dosage to begin with.

A Keene High student shared a letter through Ms. Hill that mentioned that overdosing is a major cause of death for people under 21, and we saw 11 people overdose from kratom in 2025 in N.H. They would like the legal age for kratom to be at least 21 or be banned because the product is not herbal once you add in the synthetic ingredient. Ms. Hill shared another letter from a student that said, as Cheshire County has a consecutively decreasing rate of opioid substance dispensers, kratom, the unregulated herbal substance with an opioid-like effect, is becoming more and more popular. According to the National Library of Medicine, kratom exposures have increased from 19 cases in 2010 to 1242 cases in 2023. That is a 93% increase each year. There will be an estimated 3261 cases in 2026. Please protect our community from our ever-growing addiction and ban this product from being sold in our City. Or restrict to age 25 and up.

Ms. Bender reminded the committee that our we were one of the few areas who raised tobacco-related product sales from 18 to 21. She said her entire job has turned into dealing with the vaping epidemic and if we bump up the sales to be to 21 or older, we could make a difference. She continued that she would rather have the City be more proactive than reactive. She mentioned that Keene may not see the issues yet, but there are other cities and towns that are having bad issues, such as Sanborn Regional High School.

Ms. Bender said a New Hampshire poison control staff member is highly recommending regulating the product sales at the city and town level. They are concerned that the state will not get onboard as quickly as we need them to.

Councilor Haas asked the presenters how the product sales restrictions were posted. Samanta Grisson-Hill said the age restrictions were not posted; she had to ask about them. Councilor Haas said that perhaps we should regulate the sales by age.

Councilor Williams said he is convinced that the age restrictions might be the way to move forward.

Councilor Ruttle-Miller said she spoke to a few teenagers who had not heard of kratom. She is concerned this product is not being mentioned in their drug and alcohol education. She said she is erring on the side of a general ban.

Chair Filiault thanked the presenters for their eye-opening presentation. He said the City should be acting more proactively. He asked the City Attorney about Ordinances brought forward in other communities in N.H. and whether they were full bans or age restricted.

City Attorney Amanda Palmiera referred this to her Deputy. Deputy City Attorney Brandon Latham said that multiple communities in N.H. have acted. Franklin was first, most restrictions have been general, Nashua's restriction age 21.

Chair Filiault said it would be great to copycat another community who already wrote an Ordinance. He said he would like either an outright ban or an age restriction, either would be proactive. An age restriction might be the best way to start and then we can see where the state goes with this and possibly go to an outright ban at that point.

Councilor Haas said he would like an age restriction as that appears to already exist voluntarily with the merchants selling the product. This seems like the best way to accomplish our goals.

Councilor Jones said he agrees with the chair that we should move forward with some kind of Ordinance, and we should not wait for the state to take action because of the state legislation processes. He also wants to be proactive not reactive.

Chair Filiault asked the City Attorney if she could bring a draft Ordinance to the committee at their next meeting with the age restriction of 21.

The following motion by Councilor Haas was duly seconded by Chair Filiault.

Councilor Ruttle-Miller clarified that the sales will be restricted to anyone under 21 years old.

Councilor Williams and Chair Filiault thanked the witnesses for their great job presenting information on this topic.

Chair Filiault thanked Councilor Williams for bringing this matter before the committee and City Council.

On a vote of 5 to 0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that the City Attorney be directed to create a draft Ordinance restricting the sale of kratom products to individuals under the age of 21.

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #F.1.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Gregory Seymour, Fire Chief

Through: Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager

Subject: **Fiscal Year 2025 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Award Acceptance – Fire Chief**

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
Voted unanimously to suspend Section 26 of the Rules of Order to act on this time sensitive matter.

Voted unanimously to authorize the City Manager to do all things necessary to accept the Fiscal Year 2025 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant awarded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to support the hiring of eight (8) additional full-time firefighters for the Keene Fire Department.

A true record;

Attest:
City Clerk

Recommendation:
That the City Council suspend its Rules of Order and authorize the City Manager to do all things necessary to accept the Fiscal Year 2025 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant awarded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to support the hiring of eight (8) additional full-time firefighters for the Keene Fire Department.

Authorization to expend grant funds and approve associated budgetary amendments will be brought forward separately through the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee.

Attachments:
None

Background:

2026-488

The Keene Fire Department has been awarded a Fiscal Year 2025 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The award provides federal financial assistance to support the hiring of eight (8) additional full-time firefighters, representing two (2) additional personnel assigned to each of the Department's four operational shifts.

The SAFER Grant program is designed to assist fire departments in increasing the number of trained frontline firefighters available to respond to emergencies, improving staffing levels, operational effectiveness, and firefighter safety.

The award represents a significant milestone in the City's ongoing efforts to address increasing demands for emergency services and improve fire department staffing. Annual emergency responses have increased from 5,509 in 2022 to 6,662 in 2025. This continued growth, combined with overlapping emergencies, limited regional mutual aid availability, and the Department's reliance on overtime to maintain daily staffing, reinforces the need for additional personnel.

The grant award is consistent with previous City Council discussions and established goals to improve firefighter staffing and emergency response capabilities. Acceptance would provide an opportunity to increase the Department's authorized shift staffing from thirteen (13) to fifteen (15) firefighters per shift, strengthening the Department's ability to staff frontline apparatus, manage simultaneous incidents, and improve the safety of firefighters and the community.

While the award provides significant federal financial assistance during the three-year performance period, implementation will require additional municipal funding to address the non-federal share of personnel expenses, as well as costs not covered by the grant, including protective equipment, uniforms, training, and other necessary expenditures associated with hiring additional firefighters.

The current request is limited to authorization to accept the federal grant award. The Fire Department and City Administration will return to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee for consideration of authorization to expend the grant funds, together with the necessary resolutions and budgetary amendments to support the City's required financial contribution and associated implementation costs.

Due to the time-sensitive nature of the federal award and the applicable acceptance deadline, the Department is requesting a suspension of the City Council's Rules of Order to allow for timely acceptance. This action will preserve the City's ability to secure the federal award while allowing the financial and budgetary components of implementation to proceed through the normal committee review process.

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #F.2.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

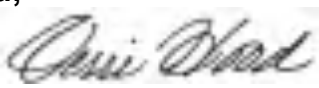
From: Kari Chamberlain, Finance Director/Treasurer

Through: Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager

Subject: **Acceptance of Donations - Finance Director**

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
Voted unanimously to accept the donations with gratitude, and that the City Manager be authorized to use these funds in the manner specified by the donor.

A true record;

Attest: 
City Clerk

Recommendation:
Move that the City Council accept donations totaling $5,750, as noted below, and the City Manager be authorized to use each donation in the manner specified by the donor.

Attachments:
None

Background:

- $4,250 in donations to honor nature photographer, Lee Porter, who recently passed away. Lee enjoyed capturing wildlife photos at Ashuelot River Park. The first $2,000 in donations will be used toward an existing granite bench engraving at Ashuelot River Park, and additional donations in his memory will be used for ongoing care and maintenance of the park. Donations received from:
    - Douglas & Charlene Baxter - $100
    - Stephen & Denise Bell - $100
    - David Bulger - $100
    - Joanne Cochi & Clifford Bull, Jr. - $50
    - Geoffrey & Mary Burke - $50
    - Robert & Gayle Donahue - $50

    - William & Regina Kieckhafer - $100
    - Barry & Roberta Kirshner - $250
    - Daniel & Janet LaFleur - $50
    - Linda's Closet - $50
    - Thomas & Susan Masiello - $50
    - Phyllis Pownall - $200
    - Bill Riley & Liz Simon - $100
    - Timothy & Diane Roberts - $50
    - David Schwartz - $50
    - Jerry Slavet - $100
    - Charles & Marcy Southgate - $50
    - Charles & Sharon Stone - $100
    - Richard & Lorry Taylor, Jr. - $100
    - Michael & Jeanne Thieme - $200
    - Garry Weiner - $2,000
    - Thomas & Marcia Wessels - $50
    - Lisa Wharff - $100
    - Steven & Kimberly Willens - $200
- $500 from Cersosimo Industries, Inc. for the 2026 Keene International Festival
- $1,000 from Hamblet Electric Charitable Foundation for the 2026 Keene International Festival

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #F.3.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

Through: Paul Andrus, Community Development Director
Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager

Subject: **Gilbo Avenue Planning Charrette - Request for Letter of Support - Senior Planner**

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
Voted unanimously to suspend Section 26 of the Rules of Order to act on this item.

Voted unanimously that the Mayor be authorized to submit a letter of support for the Gilbo Avenue Planning Charrette Application to Plan New Hampshire by November 3, 2026.

A true record;

Attest:
City Clerk

Recommendation:
That the Mayor be authorized to submit a letter of support for the Gilbo Avenue Planning Charrette Application to Plan New Hampshire by November 3, 2026.

Attachments:
1. Application Narrative and Maps

Background:
The Plan NH Community Design Charrette Program is an application-based initiative that pairs selected communities with planning and design professionals for an intensive, two-day charrette. The process focuses on a designated area, such as a downtown, neighborhood, or corridor, and addresses local development or redevelopment goals. Community members collaborate with volunteer professionals to develop visual concepts and a final report with recommendations for the project area.

The City is preparing an application for a charrette focused on Gilbo Avenue, proposed for Spring

2027. The project narrative and a map of the approximate project area are attached to this memo. As a designated Housing Champion community, the City is eligible to have the full $6,500 program fee waived, provided the project includes a housing focus. Scholarship funding may also be available to offset hosting expenses for the volunteer team, including lodging and meals.

The application requires letters of support from local decision-making bodies, including City Council. Staff requests that City Council authorize the Mayor to submit a letter of support by November 3, allowing the City to submit a complete application one week before Plan NH's November 10 Board meeting.

Gilbo Avenue Planning Charrette Application

Project Overview: An Opportunity to Reconnect Downtown Keene

Gilbo Avenue runs east-west through former railroad land in downtown Keene. Laid out by City Council in the mid-20th century, the road reflects the automobile-oriented planning standards of its era rather than the traditional, walkable character of downtown. Today, wide travel lanes, limited pedestrian facilities along some sections, and extensive surface parking lots leave significant potential for a more connected, vibrant urban environment (Figure 1).

Figure 1. *Gilbo Avenue looking east, illustrating the corridor's existing street character. Image source: Google Street View, September 2023.*

The proposed charrette area, shown in the attached maps, encompasses approximately 8.6 acres of private parcels and 9.1 acres when the public right-of-way is included. Located immediately adjacent to downtown, this relatively flat, highly developable area has long been a focus of community interest and discussion. It presents a compelling opportunity to transform underutilized land into a mixed-use neighborhood that expands housing choices, supports local businesses, and strengthens connections to the downtown.

The site's existing zoning provides a strong foundation for this transformation. The form-based district allows buildings up to seven stories and 85 feet in height, with a zero- to five-foot build-to zone along Gilbo Avenue. Permitted uses include multifamily housing and ground-floor commercial space along the primary street frontage, creating the potential for a more active, pedestrian-oriented streetscape while accommodating substantial new housing.

Several existing assets further strengthen the site's potential. The well-maintained rail trail along the south side of Gilbo Avenue provides valuable transportation and recreation

connections, while an established City Express Bus stop offers transit access. The nearby downtown, cultural venues, restaurants, and businesses provide destinations that can support a more vibrant mixed-use district.

A planning charrette would help the community explore how these assets can be leveraged to create a cohesive vision for redevelopment that balances housing, neighborhood-scale commercial activity, walkability, parking, and vehicular access. Potential challenges, including the possibility of environmental contamination associated with the site's former railroad use, will also need to be considered. No contamination is currently known. By bringing stakeholders together to examine these opportunities and constraints, the charrette can help establish a practical, community-supported direction for future investment.

Community Context & Change

Keene serves as the economic and cultural hub of the Monadnock Region and the seat of Cheshire County. Its economic base includes major employers such as C&S Wholesale Grocers, Keene State College, Cheshire Medical Center, and precision manufacturing firms, alongside a diverse community of locally owned businesses.

Although Keene's population has remained relatively stable over the past three decades, the community is aging, household sizes are shrinking, and the number of children is lower than in previous decades. These demographic shifts underscore the need for a greater diversity of housing options that can serve residents at different stages of life, including young professionals, families, older adults, and smaller households.

Keene's 2023 Housing Needs Analysis identified a need for 1,400 additional housing units by 2032, assuming the city's population remains relatively stable over that period. Meeting this need will require a broad range of housing types, locations, and price points that better reflect the needs of current and future residents. Gilbo Avenue offers an opportunity to address this challenge through infill development in an established downtown setting. Thoughtful redevelopment could also bring new customers to downtown businesses, improve the pedestrian experience, and strengthen the connections between the downtown core and surrounding neighborhoods.

Community Vision & Alignment

Keene's Community Vision paints a picture of an innovative, collaborative community willing to invest in resilient, climate-smart infrastructure and welcome new residents. It recognizes the importance of attracting families and young professionals to strengthen the region's workforce and sustain its thriving manufacturing sector.

The 2025 Master Plan identifies the Livable Housing Pillar as its top priority, establishing a clear policy foundation for efforts to expand housing opportunities. The Gilbo Avenue project directly advances three goals within this pillar:

- **Goal 1: Boost Infill Development and Redevelopment.** Reimagining underutilized parcels near downtown can direct growth toward an established urban area and reduce the financial burden of new housing on the tax base.
- **Goal 4: Increase the Diversity of Housing Options and Price Points.** Exploring a range of mixed-use development concepts can help broaden the options available to Keene residents.
- **Goal 5: Address the Housing Needs of All Residents, Current and Future.** A community-supported vision for the Gilbo Avenue area can identify opportunities for housing that is accessible and connected to nearby amenities while supporting a vibrant downtown.

The proposed charrette would translate these broad goals into a tangible, place-specific vision. By exploring development scenarios, streetscape improvements, and opportunities for public space, participants can help demonstrate how Gilbo Avenue might evolve into a thriving, walkable extension of downtown that contributes meaningfully to Keene's housing goals.

This work would also build on previous community-driven planning initiatives. The Arts and Culture Corridor Study and workshop, undertaken with ArtsAlive! and the Monadnock Economic Development Corporation, explored ways to strengthen the corridor's identity and connection to downtown. More recently, the Monadnock Interfaith Project and a Keene State College architecture class developed design concepts aimed at creating new housing opportunities and attracting visitors to downtown Keene.

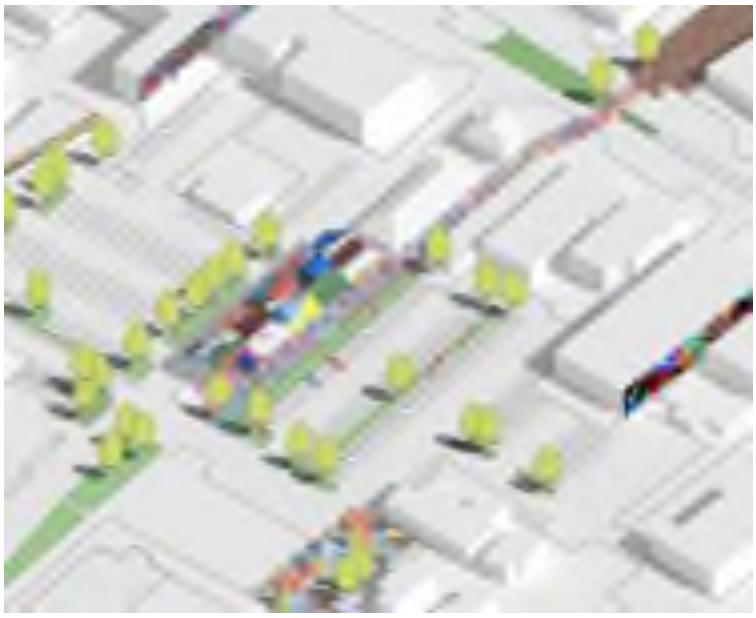


***Figure 2**. A digital model developed through the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design illustrates how public art could activate the streetscape and connect Gilbo Avenue to downtown. Image source: https://www.rural-design.org/workshops/keene-nh.*

A charrette would bring this momentum together, creating an opportunity to build on earlier ideas, engage a broad range of perspectives, and develop a shared framework for future action. It could also help make the corridor's potential more visible to property owners, developers, community organizations, and prospective investors.

Community Connections & Broader Impact

Gilbo Avenue is an important link in Keene's downtown transportation network. The corridor provides an east-west connection to downtown from the west and serves rail trail users seeking access to downtown destinations.

The project area also includes the city's transportation center, with bus stops, bicycle parking, rail trail access, and parking that serves downtown businesses and destinations, including the Colonial Theatre, restaurants, and downtown residences. These existing connections create an opportunity to plan for housing and commercial activity in ways that support walking, bicycling, and transit, while recognizing the continued need for practical vehicular access.

Reimagining Gilbo Avenue as a more connected, mixed-use corridor could generate benefits beyond the project area. New residents would help support local businesses and cultural venues, improved pedestrian facilities could make downtown more accessible, and a stronger relationship between the rail trail and the street could enhance the experience of residents and visitors alike. Coordinated redevelopment could also reinforce Keene's identity as a compact, welcoming, and resilient regional center.

The charrette would provide a collaborative setting in which community members, city officials, property owners, businesses, and other stakeholders could explore these interconnected opportunities. The resulting vision could help guide future public improvements, inform private development decisions, and build momentum toward implementation.

Letters of Support

Letters of support will be requested from City Council at its October 15 meeting and from the Planning Board at its October 26 meeting. Signed letters from the Mayor and Planning Board chair, respectively, will be provided as soon as they are available.

GIlbo Avenue in Downtown Keene

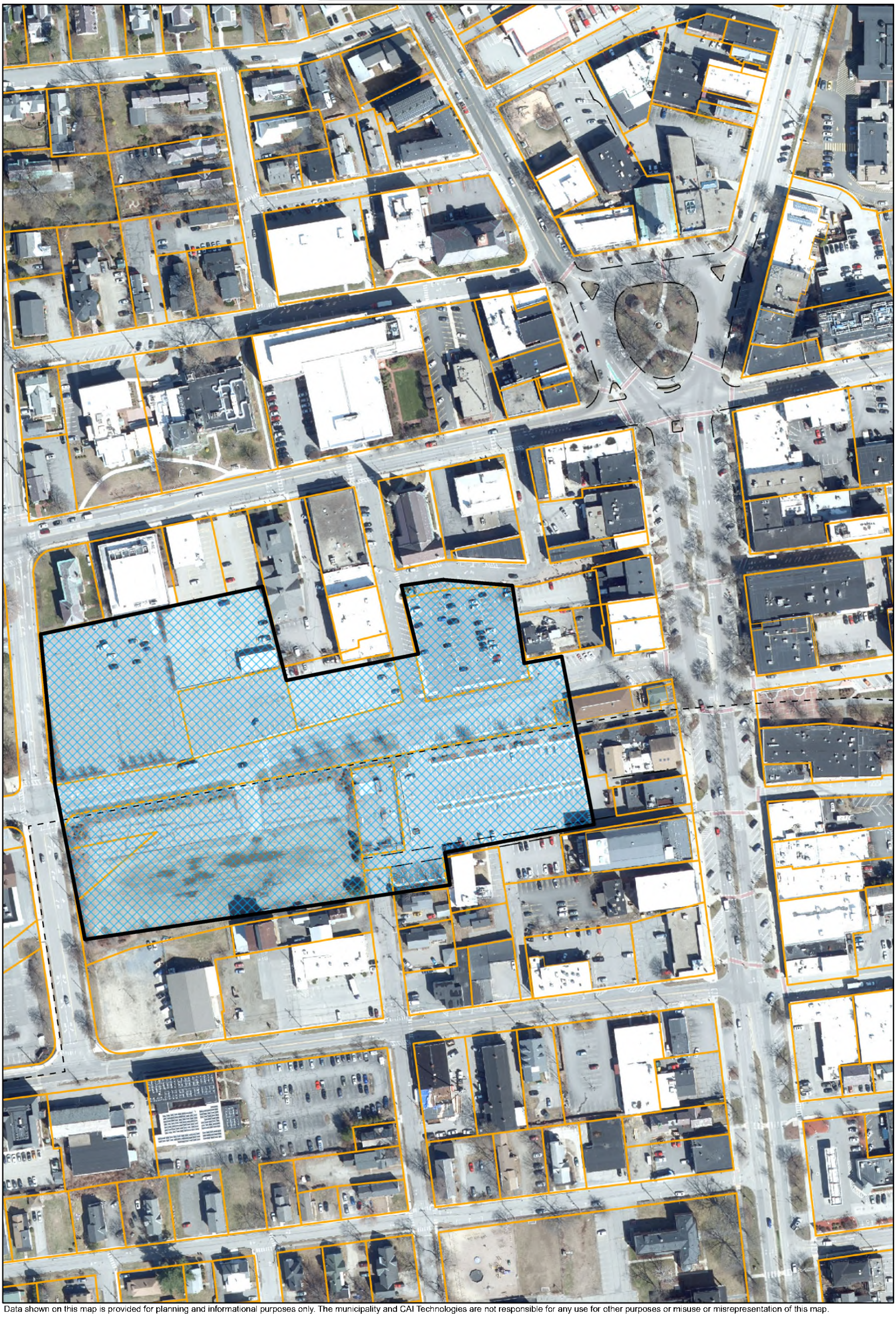
City of Keene, NH

April 30, 2025

1 inch = 150 Feet

0 150 300 450

www.cai-tech.com



Data shown on this map is provided for planning and informational purposes only. The municipality and CAI Technologies are not responsible for any use for other purposes or misuse or misrepresentation of this map.

Gilbo Avenue former Railroad Land

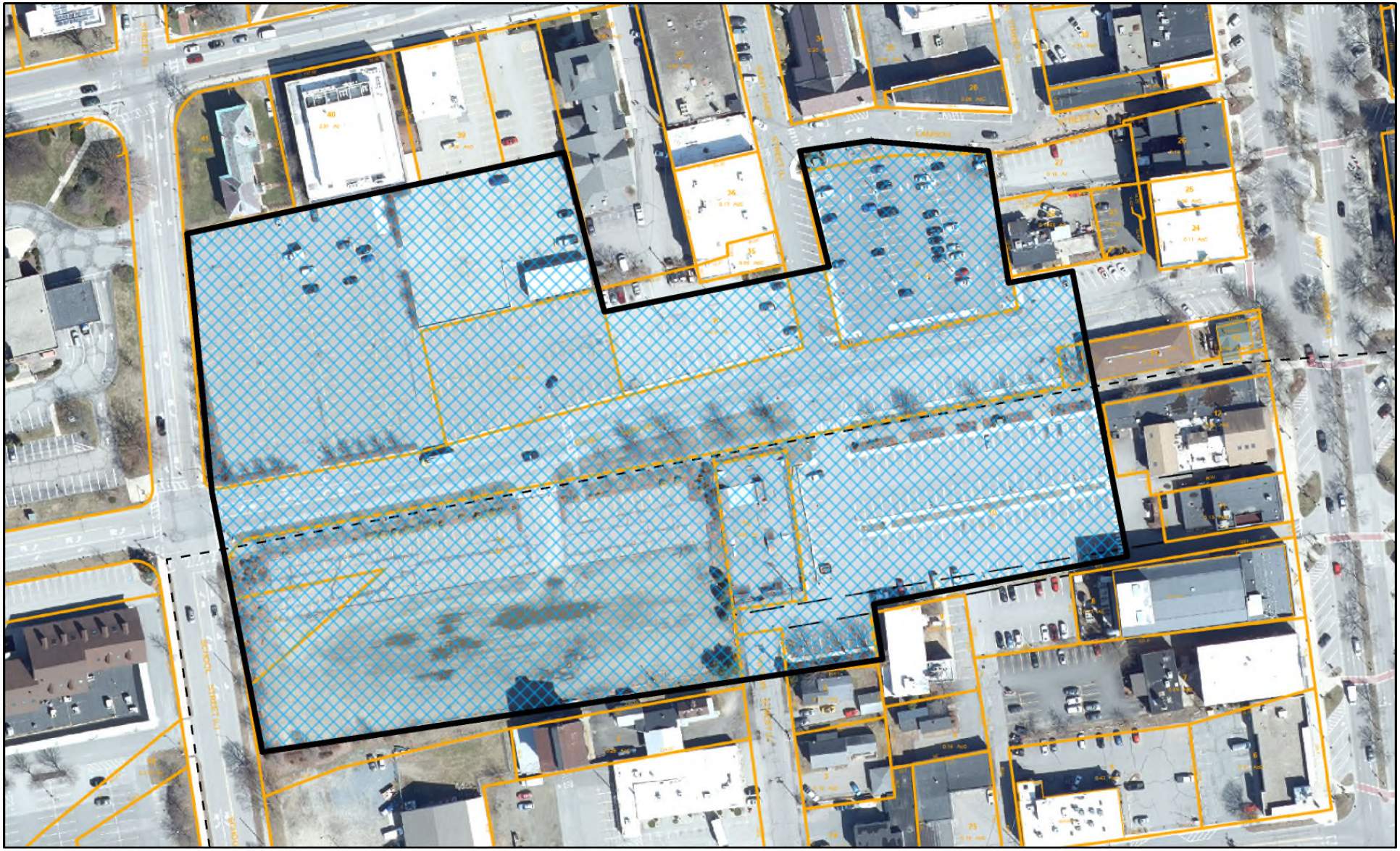
City of Keene, NH

1 inch = 138 Feet

April 30, 2025

0 138 276 414

www.cai-tech.com



Data shown on this map is provided for planning and informational purposes only. The municipality and CAI Technologies are not responsible for any use for other purposes or misuse or misrepresentation of this map.

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #H.1.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Planning, Licenses and Development Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: **Draft Ordinance Amendment Regulating Dogs at Downtown Events**

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
More time granted.

A true record;

Attest:
City Clerk

Recommendation:
On a vote of 5 to 0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that this item be placed on More Time to allow additional input from the public.

Attachments:
None

Background:
Chair Filiault introduced this item on the agenda and mentioned that they had asked the City Attorney to draft an Ordinance that basically says do not bring you dogs to the downtown event within that event footprint.

City Attorney Amanda Palmiera said there are few things that are not in the draft that she expects we will be discussing. She will talk about them as the discussion moves along and will also bring up any technical enforcement concerns. She said there is difficulty in identifying consistency through an Ordinance. For instance, how are we going to apply the Ordinance and tie it to certain Community-Funded event licenses. She clarified the Ordinance is focusing on events that in downtown and not those that are not just downtown. She intended there to be some flexibility. One of the things her office considered was having the Police Chief issue a special regulation, like how they issue special regulations for parking bans during an event. If that were how we moved forward, the same Police Department representative at a protocol meeting would issue the special regulations for no dogs at certain events based on the type of event and the footprint.

2026-478

Chair Filiault said he doesn't want to overcomplicate the Ordinance. He said he wants the Ordinance to state that during downtown events, within the event footprint, people should not bring their dogs. He said that, in his opinion, dogs do not belong at any event that has a few thousand people. He said that if the Police have that input during the protocol meetings, they can tell a dog owner during an event that the dog is not allowed in the event footprint. He also prefers that the Police have the authority to ask dogs owners to remove dogs from the footprint instead of putting that onto event coordinators.

Councilor Haas agrees that it is better to not put the responsibility onto the event coordinators.

City Manager Elizabeth Ferland spoke about this matter and noted that larger Community-Funded events with a closed footprint held downtown are more problematic for dogs because of their size and the confinements in place. She added that an event such as the Music Festival is not confined and spreads throughout downtown. In those cases, the Police Chief would not need to issue a no-dogs regulation. She said that, in comparison, an event like the Tree Lighting Ceremony is much more confined. For that event, the Police Chief would need to issue a no-dogs regulation. She added that she doesn't want to put it on the Police Chief to figure out when to issue these regulations.

Chair Filiault said he understands that the Ordinance will not be perfect. He mentioned that a spread-out event like the Music Festival is not confined and dogs would be allowed at that event. He said he knows the Ordinance will not be perfect, but it should help during those closed and confined events. He said that he saw several incidents with dogs within just one hour while attending the Taste of Keene Festival last year.

Councilor Haas said he wants to make the protocol meetings easier, and the intent of the Council is clear.

Chair Filiault asked for comments from the audience.

Michael Conway (of 51 Railroad Street) spoke how he and his very gentle 8-year-old golden retriever named Nellie would be in violation just walking out their door if there were an event where the Police Chief had issued the no dogs rule. He went on to say that he doesn't know how that could be enforced and said it is a problem because people will not know when it is in effect. He added that this strikes him as a very unwelcoming move. He said if this is put in place, it will reduce attendance at City events that the organizers work so hard to create and pay for. He said that the Taste of Keene, the Pumpkin Festival, and all the other events are events that people really enjoy. They take their family along and they consider their pet as part of the family.

Chair Filiault clarified that people at 51 Railroad Street would not be within that confined footprint. They would only be restricted to bring their dog into that downtown footprint when it applied.

Michael Conway said that he walks with his dog all over town, on the bike path, on Court Street, on the river walk along the Ashland Trail. He continued that, as you know, there may or may not be a festival on any given weekend. During the summer, I just don't see how this would be workable.

Robin Kost (of 51 Railroad Street) said she is going to talk about ADA loss. She mentioned that she was an American Kennel Club for many years and served as an officer. She also worked with the AKC attorneys creating dog legislation, including breed legislation here in New Hampshire. In that

role, she monitors legislation at the state and local levels. She continued she did pro-bono work in shelters in Virginia and Maryland as well as grant writing and special events. She mentioned more credentials such as showing at the Westminster National Dog Show, and more over 57 years, 30 of those years being professionally.

Ms. Kost continued that in her experiences of thousands of dogs, there are not very many incidents. She said that is because the people are responsible dog owners. She continued that dogs are not the problem, people are the problem. She said people who do not discipline or keep an eye on their children in crowds are the problem.

Ms. Kost said this is a bad Ordinance. She continued that people would buy service dog vests and put them on their dogs and the Police will not have time to check all of their credentials. She thinks the Ordinance is forcing people to take those measures and to lie.

Ms. Kost continued that she wants to go to events with her dog and considers dogs as part of our community. She continued that people bring parrots, snakes, and lizards to events and they are not restricted. She said we do not restrict cats. Therefore, she said this Ordinance will be a discriminatory law.

Ken Kost (of 51 Railroad Street) spoke next about how he feels if he walks out his door, he could get arrested [because of this Ordinance]. He said he believes there are 700 to 1000 apartments and condos downtown and we are a neighborhood. He felt that people chose to live here because of the pet friendliness we have.

Mr. Kost said that banning dogs from festivals won't keep pets away but will turn away the high-spending consumers. He said he has done research that says, a national industry benchmark said that pet-inclusive outings convert a single attendee into an entire family. If we lose 250 dog-owning people who decide not to come to Keene from nearby locations, that could convert into loss of 750 to 1,000 total visitors. He also mentioned research about what is called dwell time. That means that a person who must leave their animal at home will go to the event and not stay for long in order to quickly return home to feed or walk their dog. That will cause the loss of time they would have spend in stores and restaurants. Mr. Kost continued that conservative numbers are that people would spend $35 to $50 per person across retail, dining, and festival vendors. If you discourage dogs, in the scenario of a reduction of 1,000 festival visitors we could lose $35,000 to $50,000 that won't be spent downtown during that event.

Mr. Kost closed with saying this Ordinance would give our City a bad reputation. He continued that the people in N.H. can carry a gun to a festival but could possibly now not be able to bring a dog and that does not make sense to him.

Robin Kost returned to speak about vendors who sell products meant for dogs and how they would not be happy if dogs were prohibited.

Councilor Ruttle-Miller spoke about how she knew as a City Councilor she would end up being seen as a dog hater at some point. She has a 2-year-old rescue dog from Arkansas. She and her family have attended training classes through Canine Good Citizens with Humane Society. They are responsible dog owners and know that dogs are not the problem and people are the problem. She said that we must write laws in a way that we can regulate them.

Councilor Ruttle-Miller continued that she has seen some very scary situations, especially at events where there are children that will run up a dog and get bitten. She said that we cannot regulate those who are going to lie but we are not forcing them to lie, they will lie about things anyway. She said there will be [reputational] damages but the community needs these protections. We are not banning dogs from downtown; we are banning them from certain festivals.

Councilor Ruttle-Miller recounted that her dog was almost bitten on Main Street and Councilor Filiault's wife was bitten recently by a dog.

Chair Filiault said he and his wife have always been dog lovers and are dog owners. There's been events that we've looked at in other towns, and it says no dogs allowed so we don't bring them. It's as simple as that. Some dogs that are brought to downtown events are aggressive because they were brought up to be aggressive. If they are not put into a confined space, and have more room, they may not act as aggressively.

Chair Filiault thanks those who came to speak who do not favor the Ordinance. But he has been contacted by dozens of people who favor an Ordinance to ban dogs during those confined and crowded events. He knows people who will not attend events with their children because of their past experiences with aggressive dogs. To help people, we have to take this chance and write this Ordinance.

Councilor Williams said he agrees for the most part with the other Councilors but has a question for the City Attorney about how a person who lives in an apartment in downtown Keene would deal with this. Would they be stuck in their apartment during the festival?

City Attorney Palmiera said the Ordinance should probably have some exception language to cover that situation. She is not sure how the Police would manage how to determine who lives downtown in those cases, maybe they would have to check IDs.

Chair Filiault thinks this may not be an issue because most building owners in downtown do not allow dogs. He also said that the dog owners could use the back of the building entrance or exit if necessary.

Councilor Ruttle-Miller said she does not think that officers will be walking up to people and writing tickets. Instead, she believes the officers will talk to the dog owners and let them know about any current restrictions.

Councilor Jones added that he is also a dog lover. And said, we as a Council also have a responsibility to look at safety and liability. 95% of the dog owners are good. It is the 5% that don't that we have to keep our community safe from. We will always have that Police discretion and that is important. The Police will not be out there banning everyone, they are there to help us with those bad actors.

Councilor Haas said it is mostly the people and not the dogs. Although he once had a dog where it was the dog that was the issue. He said regulating behavior is tough and imitating a service dog is also a tough issue. He continued that regarding the economics; he respects what he has heard but there are many place that prohibit dogs in crowded environments. He continued that the enforcement will be difficult but comes into play because this is a liability issue.

City Attorney Palmiera said there are a few logistical things to discuss about this Ordinance. She asked the Councilors to provide her guidance about people walking through and residents who live downtown. She also mentioned that she would be adding some language for how this Ordinance will be enforced including people will not just be ticketed or arrested immediately and instead should be given a warning.

The City Attorney continued that as far as a fine, if we do not define that, it will probably default to Sec. 119 of our City Code for a fine of $125 if paid within seven days and then up to $250 if not. And, then there would be escalated penalties if you get an additional citation. If you don't want to add that, we can just say it's a warning with no penalty.

Chair Filiault said the Police Chief told them they do not want to be heavy-handed. They just want to get out the word when dogs are not allowed within an event footprint.

Councilor Williams said the fine of $125 would adversely impact people's finances and he doesn't want to do that. He would prefer a warning of a fine of $25.
Councilor Filiault said if an officer asked the person with their dog to leave and they refuse, we would be at a different level. He said these events should have messaging clearly posted that not dogs are allowed in the footprint.

City Attorney Palmiera said when we codify the Ordinance it becomes an enforceable law and that would normally come with a penalty assigned. If there is no penalty, it shouldn't go through the Police at all. If it is in City Code for Police to prosecute, she needs to know which fine the Council feels is appropriate and whether there would be a warning first.

Chair Filiault said this could be "no dogs allowed in this event footprint". That is all. And get the out word.

City Attorney Palmiera said there are three points to go through. She used the example of when the Police do a special regulation for parking, there is a conveyance, signs are put on parking meters. We need to know who would be responsible for conveying the public notification of no dogs allowed at a particular event.

Chair Filiault said most events have websites and it can be clearly posted on their website.

Councilor Haas believes we should have the protocol folks make this judgment as to whether or not to permit dogs at certain events and they will understand the economic impacts.

City Attorney Palmiera said that if that is left to protocol or the Police Chief's discretion, we could be blindsided that dogs are allowed when we do not expect them to be. She asked if the committee would rather that decision be made at the Council level instead of leaving it to the Police Chief.

Councilor Haas said that he wants this reviewed and determined at the protocol meeting where the folks who are involved in it, the license holders and Police, Fire, Emergency Services, and Public Works have the best view of it.

Chair Filiault said he has heard from protocol members asking that this is not put on their back. They want the Police to be responsible by Ordinance and to be responsible to enforce this.

City Attorney Palmiera asked how the committee thinks it should be handled if a license holder of a closed footprint event in confined areas asks for dogs to be allowed to their event. She believes the organizers do not want to prohibit dogs. If we ask these people to make the decision, they will choose whether to have dogs at their events, and then we will know whether a greater prohibition or no prohibition is justified.

Chair Filiault said he has had dozens of people contact him about their personal safety and they won't bring kids to an event downtown if there are dogs there. This is because their kids are either afraid of dogs or have almost been bitten or have seen someone almost bitten by a dog. He prefers we talk to event holders and the Police Chief and have an Ordinance in front of the committee in 30 days.

Ken Kost (of 51 Railroad Street) said he is confused because he thought this was going to be an Ordinance about no dogs at events because dogs are dangerous and they bite people. He asked if we are now saying it will be up to the event coordinator to decide if dogs are dangerous.

Robin Kost (of 51 Railroad Street) said she believes the committee has already made up their mind before hearing from the public. She feels the Ordinance is getting so convoluted that it will be challenged. She said she will reach out to the AKC Government legal division, the Granite State dog owners, and the state legislature. She said the committee is anticipating problems that have not happened, but could, and are punishing people who obey the law.

Councilor Ruttle-Miller said she is planning to vote against this at this point. Honestly not because she personally feels like it should be voted against, but because she will vote in favor of the people who showed up. She continued that we are not anti-dogs. She mentioned that within the dog ordinance at this point, there is information about where leashed dogs are allowed and where they are not, and Police are not walking up to the unleashed dog’s owners and saying anything more than please follow the laws on the books. She said that leeway is being built in and that any new Ordinance would have leeway built in as well.

Councilor Jones said he would like to recommend more time to allow staff to address the issues discussed.

Chair Filiault said we should give the City Attorney 30 days to bring back a draft Ordinance.

Councilor Haas made the following motion that was seconded by Chair Filiault.

Move to recommend the City Attorney be directed to develop a draft Ordinance following the directions provided this evening. And further, that staff seeks input from event coordinators and other interested parties.

City Attorney Palmiera said that she appreciates the elaborate motion and direction but suggests putting this on more time for her to come back with a revised draft Ordinance.

With no objections from the committee, Councilor Haas withdrew his motion and Chair Filiault withdrew his second.

The following motion by Councilor Haas was duly seconded by Councilor Jones.

On a vote of 5 to 0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends that this item be placed on More Time to allow additional input from the public.

2026-478

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #I.1.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Chelsea North, Parking Operations Manager

Through: Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager

Subject: **Relating to Wells Garage Lower Level Public Parking Ordinance O-2026-16**

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
Referred to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee.

A true record;

Attest:
City Clerk

Recommendation:
That Ordinance O-2026-16 be referred to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee.

Attachments:
1. O-2026-16-Relating to Wells Garage Lower Level Public Parking_Referral

Executive Summary:
Ordinance O-2026-16 designates certain spaces in the Wells Garage lower level open for public use at $2.00/hr.

Background:
The Wells Garage lower level has been closed to the public for pay-by-hour parking for several years and this ordinance reopens pay-by-hour (metered) parking to the public at a rate of $2.00/hr to a select number of spaces within the garage. Permit parking will still be maintained in the garage. This is to generate additional income to improve the health of the Parking Fund.

2026-487

ORDINANCE O-2026-16

CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Six

AN ORDINANCE Relating to Wells Garage Lower Level Public Parking

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

"That the City Code of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, are hereby further amended by deleting the stricken text and inserting the bolded text in section 94-211 "Meter Rates" of Chapter 94 entitled "Traffic, Parking, and Public Ways" as follows:

Sec. 94-211. - Meter rates.

(a) The meter rates set forth in this chapter pertain to all single space parking meters, multi-space meters and any other payment technologies.

(b) Parking rates.

(1) On street parking is defined as any metered space directly accessed from the roadway, except for Roxbury Plaza and Library Annex Lot.

a. Rate of parking is $ 1.00 for one hour of time.

(2) Off street parking includes Elm Street, Commercial Street, Wells Street lot, Gilbo East and West parking lots, City Hall and any other assigned location.

b. Rate of parking is $0.50 cents for one hour of time.

(3) Covered, off street parking includes the lower level of Wells Garage and any other assigned location.

a. Rate of parking is $2.00 for one hour of time.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

In City Council October 15, 2026.
Referred to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee.

City Clerk

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #J.1.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Planning, Licenses and Development Committee, Standing Committee

Through:

Subject: **Relating to Zoning Map Amendment - 0 Howard Street - Medium Density to Conservation**
Ordinance O-2026-13

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
Report filed as informational. Voted unanimously to defeat Ordinance O-2026-13.

A true record;

Attest:
City Clerk

Recommendation:
On a vote of 5 to 0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends the denial of Ordinance O-2026-13.

Attachments:
1. Zoning Map Amendment Map Attachment2
2. O-2026-13-Relating to an Amendment Zoning Map - 0 Howard Street_Defeated

Background:
Chair Filiault introduced the last item on the agenda and called Evan Clements to present to the committee.

Evan Clements, Planner and Zoning Administrator said that Ordinance O-2026-13 proposed to amend the City of Keene Zoning Map by changing the zoning designation of the parcel located at 0 Howard Street TMP 536034000 from Medium Density to Conservation. The total area of the land that would be impacted by this proposal is roughly .91 acres.

Mr. Clements continued that this Ordinance went before the Joint Planning Board and Planning, Licenses and Development Committee on September 14, 2026. The Planning Board voted to find the proposal to be inconsistent with the 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan. Then a Public Hearing was

held on October 1, 2026, in front of the City Council. Mr. Clements continued that if this moves forward this evening, it will be scheduled to be heard for a second reading and final vote on October 15, 2026, before the full Council.

Councilor Haas asked if Mr. Clements knows of any other situations like this where there's land proximate to a residential area where the residents are concerned about its future use.

Chair Filiault asked Councilor Haas if his question is about changing from residential to conservation zoning. Councilor Haas said no. Chair Filiault said we should be dealing tonight with the Ordinance and keep the questioning related to that.

Chair Filiault let the audience know that by law, they cannot take any comments from the audience since this matter was has already had its public hearing.
The following motion by Councilor Jones was duly seconded by Chair Filiault.

On a vote of 5 to 0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends the denial of Ordinance O-2026-13.

City Attorney Palmiera mentioned that per the Rules of Order for when the Council votes on the actual ordinance, the motion before the full City Council would be a motion to adopt.

Chair Filiault said he will make sure the Council understands their vote.

Councilor Haas said he respects Mr. Ringland for bringing this matter forward and for investing funds in this endeavor.

KEENE

City of Keene, NH

1 inch = 138 Feet

July 1, 2026

0 138 276 414

CAI Technologies
Precision Mapping. Geospatial Solutions.

www.cai-tech.com

Addresses	Public Road	Property TIC	Buildings 2025
Condo	Private Road ROW	TaxmapText_Arrowheads	Right of Ways
Property Line	PropNotPar	TaxmapText_Leaders	MEDIUM DENSITY

Data shown on this map is provided for planning and informational purposes only. The municipality and CAI Technologies are not responsible for any use for other purposes or misuse or misrepresentation of this map.

D E F E A T E D

ORDINANCE O-2026-13

CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Six

AN ORDINANCE Relating to an Amendment to the City of Keene Zoning Map - 0 Howard Street – Medium Density to Conservation

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That the Zoning Map of the City of Keene, as amended, is hereby further amended by changing the zoning designation of property located at 0 Howard Street (Tax Map Parcel Number 536-034-000) from Medium Density (MD) to Conservation.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

In City Council July 2, 2026.
Referred to the Joint Planning Board/
Planning, Licenses and Development Committee.
City Clerk

DEFEATED: October 15, 2026

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

ITEM #K.1.

Meeting Date: October 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Keene City Council

From: Bryan Ruoff, City Engineer
Carrah Fisk-Hennessey, Parks and Recreation Director

Through: Elizabeth Ferland, City Manager

Subject: **Relating to the Allocation of Funds for Construction of the Monadnock View Cemetery Expansion Project**
Resolution R-2026-42

Council Action:
In City Council October 15, 2026.
Referred to the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee.

A true record;

Attest:
City Clerk

Recommendation:
That Resolution R-2026-42 Relating to the Allocation of Funds for Construction of the Monadnock View Cemetery Expansion Project be referred to the Finance, Organization, and Personnel Committee.

Attachments:
1. R-2026-42 - Allocation of Funds for Monadnock View Cemetery Project_Referral

Background:
The Engineering Division, in collaboration with the Parks & Recreation Department, developed conceptual plans, obtained the necessary permits, and prepared final plans and contract specifications for bidding and construction of the Monadnock View Cemetery Expansion Project.

As proposed, the project will develop approximately 9.42 acres of undeveloped cemetery property within Monadnock View Cemetery. Improvements will include paved access roads, drainage infrastructure, dedicated hose bibs in each developed zone, landscaping, fence gates, a dedicated water meter and backflow preventer, and approximately 6,000 additional grave sites. Future development is also anticipated to include approximately 900 columbarium spaces.

2026-495

The project was originally included in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and approved by the City Council as a phased project, with construction planned over approximately seven to eight years at an estimated cost of $150,000 annually. Further evaluation determined that phased construction could increase the total project cost by approximately 30% to 50% due to inflation, mobilization, and other expenses associated with extending construction over multiple years.

To address these anticipated cost increases, the Parks & Recreation Director and City Engineer met with the Cemetery Board of Trustees to discuss an alternative approach. The Board authorized the City to proceed with bidding the full scope of the proposed improvements, up to the engineers' estimated construction cost of $1.4 million. The meeting minutes documenting this authorization are included as an attachment.

The project is currently being advertised for bids, with bids scheduled to open on October 27, 2026. Following the bid opening, the Parks & Recreation Department and Engineering Division will review the proposals and prepare a recommendation for award to the selected contractor. The recommendation will be presented to the Cemetery Committee for authorization before a construction agreement is executed.

Construction is expected to take approximately one year. The City will oversee the bidding process and administer, manage, and inspect the project throughout construction. Contractor payment requisitions will be submitted to the City for review and verification. Once the City verifies the work completed and the amounts due, it will process payments to the contractor. The Cemetery Trustees will reimburse the City for eligible project expenses paid on their behalf.

R-2026-42

CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Six

A RESOLUTION Allocation of Funds for Construction of the Monadnock View Cemetery Expansion Project

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

WHEREAS, The City has a planned Capital Improvements Project, planned to start construction in FY27 for the Monadnock View Cemetery Expansion Project as part of the Cemetery Improvements and Expansion Program (65J0016A); and

WHEREAS, The City and the Cemetery Trustees desire to execute the most efficient and cost effective project and maximize the benefits of the available funding for our residents and the community;

WHEREAS, the most cost effective and efficient option to the City is to bid, award, and to construct the full scope of the Cemetery Expansion Project as one project in lieu of multi year, phased projects as previously planned;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED That the sum of One million, four hundred thousand dollars ($1,400,000) is hereby appropriated in fiscal year 2027 for the purpose of funding the Monadnock View Cemetery Expansion Project (65J0016A) scope, which will be reimbursed by the Cemetery Trustees, based on the actual costs necessary and paid by the City for the scope of the improvements for the project.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

In City Council October 15, 2026.
Referred to the Finance, Organization, and
Personnel Committee.

City Clerk