

**ASHLAND PLANNING BOARD**  
**Thursday, March 20, 2025**  
**Utility Building, 6 Collins Street 6:30 PM**  
**Minutes**  
**Submitted by Linda Barnes**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Kendall Hughes, Chair, called the Public Hearings to order at 6:31 and called the roll.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kendall Hughes, Linda Barnes, Tricia Farris (absent with notice)

**ALTERNATES PRESENT:** Bethany Franz, Donna Locurto, Andy Fitch

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Fred Welch, Tony Guyotte, Mario Focareto

**MINUTES:**

Board members reviewed minutes from their March 6, 2025 meeting and submitted amendments. Bethany Franz moved to accept the minutes; Linda Barnes moved to second. The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes as amended.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Commerce Properties, LLC (Tony Guyotte, Agent) - Modification of of Site Plan, 14 Winter Street, Tax Map 110 Lot 81**

Kendall Hughes recused himself for this discussion, because the company he works for also works for this property. Linda Barnes stepped in as temporary chair.

**Tony Guyotte** proposed a modification to an existing completed and accepted site plan.

The issue involves the extremely lengthy process of getting permits from the town, the telephone company, and a cable company, and coordinating the work to move a utility pole. Moving the pole would also entail shutting down the power to the related houses, as it would require putting in a new pole with a new system. It would not be cost-effective to do so.

Mr. Guyotte is proposing instead to take one unit (Unit L) and build it on top of a

second unit (Unit K), instead of building them adjacent to each other. The proposed change has the approval of the property owner. It would not change the overall square footage of the building but would eliminate the need to move the utility pole.

The height of the proposed modification would be similar to that of an existing two-story apartment (actually slightly lower), and has almost the exact same footprint. It would free up a 28' by 30' space on the property.

Kendall Hughes observed that he has spoken with both the Building Inspector and the Fire Chief. Both agree with this proposal.

Andy Fitch moved to accept the proposed modification to Tax Map and Lot 17-5-8. Linda Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed by four in favor and one recusal. Mr. Guyotte was advised that he next needed to get approval from the Building Inspector.

Linda Barnes returned the chair to Kendall Hughes.

### **Resignations and Vacancies**

Mardean Badger and Paula Hancock have resigned from the Planning Board. There will be a need for one additional full member. Bethany Franz has submitted an application to become a full member, which will be discussed in the next Planning Board Meeting. There is now currently one vacancy for an alternate member.

As an interim measure, the Board needs to appoint a full member to represent it at meetings of the Zoning Board of Adjustments. That appointment will be revisited in May. Linda Barnes agreed to serve in this capacity until May. Kendall Hughes moved to support the appointment. Other board members seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Fred Welch and Andy Fitch will look into whether Mardean is staying on with the Lakes Region Planning Commission.

### ***Rules and Procedures***

Kendall Hughes had circulated an updated draft of the Planning Board Rules and Procedures. The board will review this draft, along with RSA, 676:4, which details the policies and procedures governing town planning boards in New Hampshire. The draft will be discussed at the April 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**Donna Locurto** raised a question about when Alternate Members are and are not to sit

at the table during public meetings, and when they are and are not allowed to comment during discussions. The board will review this point during the April 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting as well.

### **Annual Reorganization of Board**

The annual reorganization of the Board will be discussed at a Board meeting in May.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Mill Pond Development Applications - Status Update\**

Cara [. ] of the Village at Mill Pond group sent a letter to the Board asking to continue the discussion of their site-plan application to April 17<sup>th</sup>. [. ] moved to grant the request. [. ] moved to second. The Board voted unanimously to agree to the continuation to April 17<sup>th</sup>.

The Site Walk will take place on Sunday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, starting at 12:00 noon. Because of the nature of the contamination at the site, those attending were advised to wear boots that could be washed outside before going back inside, as well as N95-grade face masks.

The Board will meet with the attorney on Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

#### **Site Review of Mill Pond Lane, March 23, Sunday, noon**

The latest plans have been emailed to the members of the Board.

Bethany Franz reminded the Board that she would be going on shift 3:00 that Sunday.

Kendall Hughes observed that the Nobis group had informed the Board at a Public Meeting that the site is heavily contaminated with PFAs, as well as asbestos. The Site Walk would involve walking the Lane up to the orange gate. Beyond that point, the ground is covered with snow and mud, creating a risk of falling.

To prepare for the Site Walk, the Board looked at plans to see review where a sidewalk would go, given that the Village at Mill Pond group has requested a waiver of the requirement to put one in. Board Members also looked at the projected positioning of the expanded Mill Pond Lane.

They discussed the details of where students would wait for school busses if Mill Pond Lane did not have a sidewalk, as well as potential related safety issues. They also

113 talked about safety issues that arise on Winter Street.

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115 Linda Barnes raised a concern related to a report from Chief of Police Will Ulwick about  
116 traffic coming in and out of Mill Pond Lane if children were waiting there for a school bus  
117 and there was no sidewalk.

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119 Members of the Board raised questions as well about the projected width of the road  
120 and the proposal to install a retaining wall in relation to the location of the shoreline and  
121 of the existing water line, which falls under the Shoreline Protection Act.

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123 For the Lane to become a town road, it would have to meet town standards at a  
124 minimum of 20 to 22' wide for fire trucks to get in and out. That decision would fall not to  
125 the Planning Board, but to the Select Board. The Planning Board would only decide on  
126 the waiver to the Site Plan with respect to a sidewalk. If there were not enough room for  
127 a sidewalk, one option would be to purchase the necessary properties to give them the  
128 additional footage.

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130 Kendall Hughes observed that Mill Pond might be a "great pond", and offered to look  
131 into the question. Either way, it would still be part of the waterway and covered by the  
132 Shoreline Protection Act. He added that the issue of the sidewalk is related to the  
133 question of separating the two site plans.

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135 He reported, as well, that Fire Chief Steve Heath has recommended that the  
136 roundabout remain a circle instead of a hammerhead, because snow tends to get  
137 pushed into the ends of the hammerhead, making it more difficult for fire trucks to turn  
138 around.

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140 Mr. Hughes added that he had been told the Phase Two Environmental Report had  
141 been completed, but it had not been released to the Board. It was not clear why it had  
142 not been released.

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144 The decision about waiving the requirement for a sidewalk will come up for a vote at the  
145 Planning Board Meeting on April 17<sup>th</sup>.

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147 Bethany Franz raised a question about Chief Ulwick's report, which referred to an  
148 increase of traffic due to Ledgewood. She asked whether there was a way to determine  
149 the change in call volume before and after Ledgewood was built?

Andy Fitch said the records might not go back that far. Kendall Hughes said that his grandmother had sold the property in the 1970s.

#### **Meeting with the Select Board**

Andy Fitch asked whether the Planning Board would still be holding a joint meeting with the Select Board on Monday the 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30.

Kendall Hughes proposed that the Board wait until the meeting with the attorney on the 28<sup>th</sup>. If there seemed to be a need to have a joint meeting, it could be planned at that point.

#### **Charette - Status update**

Kendall Hughes reported that an invitation had gone out for a meet-and-greet on April 4<sup>th</sup> to start the planning phase of the Charette to update the town's Master Plan. The meeting will be at the Booster Club at 10:30 a.m. Andrew Dorsett will be leading it, assisted by someone from Plymouth. Mr. Dorsett believes he may have identified some grant funding and private money to support the Charette.

Bethany Franz informed the Board that she would be out of town that day.

Kendall Hughes has also spoken to the Economic Development Committee to explore their interest in looking at the economic development part of the current Master Plan. The EDC will take a look at it, and provide suggestions.

Kendall Hughes informed the Board that Linda Davis happened to attend an event at the Common Man, where State Representative Peter Lovett was doing a presentation with Lakes Region Community Developers. A flyer about the Village at Mill Pond development, announcing units.

The Board engaged in further discussion about concerns over residual contamination of the land surrounding Mill Pond.

#### **Discussion with Mario Focareto of Brown Engineering**

Mario Focareto reported that the Mill Pond developers had addressed some of the comments from Brown Engineering. The report on contaminants in the ground had not come in.

Kendall Hughes reminded the Board that the application has been voted on as

complete, setting in motion the review process. The only job of the Planning Board is to review the site plans in light of Zoning and Planning Board regulations.

Mario Focareto observed that the extent of contaminants and how dangerous they are is still not known.

Kendall Hughes added his understanding is that Lakes Region Planning Commission paid for the Phase Two, it is complete, they have it, and the Board does not.

Mario Focareto raised questions about the LRPC's HydroCAD model, the storm water report, and the wetlands on the property.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Planning Board will be on April 3, 2025 at the Utilities Building at 6 Collins Street, Ashland NH.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Kendall Hughes adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.