

Town of Hancock, Maine
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 11, 2024 PLANNING BOARD MEETING

Board Members: Doug Kimmel, Ken Emerson, Scott Dyer, Deb Foster, Ant Blasi; CEO Don Baker, Assistant CEO Nick Branca

Doug Kimmel called the meeting to order at 6:01.

1. Conflict of Interest Recusals & Quorum Call

Ant Blasi was appointed a voting member. Quorum present; no conflicts or recusals.

2. Approval of Minutes of November 13, 2024 Planning Board Meeting

Scott Dyer moved to approve the minutes, Deb Foster seconded, motion passed 4-0. (Scott abstained because he had been absent.)

3. Introduction of persons in attendance: town resident Carol Lowrie

4. Public Comment

None.

5. CEO Report

Retiring CEO Don Baker reported that in November he issued 5 plumbing permits (3 for new subsurface systems and 3 for new internal plumbing) and 7 building permits (1 new home, 2 new driveways, 1 addition to original structure, 1 demolition, 1 new storage garage, and 1 shoreline repair for erosion damage). Total amount received: \$2,295.89.

Owners at Sunset Hill complained that the development's road had not been hot-topped. Don investigated and informed them that the signed copy of the plan the developer submitted to the Registry of Deeds does not stipulate that the road be paved. He explained that the road approved by the Planning Board had to be 18 feet wide, with a 35-foot radius at the cul-de-sac.

Don issued a stop work order at the Sunset Hill subdivision (Map 223, Lot 1) after work started on a new driveway without a permit.

Don, accompanied by an attorney for David Stockard, paid a site visit to 125 Ferry Road (Map 112, Lot 022) to help the lawyer understand the contentious situation there, and subsequently visited Margaret Atherton's property on Bay Avenue (Map 101, Lot 049). The Athertons want to build an addition to their original non-conforming cottage. Don clarified the location of the property lines and the required 30-foot setback, which do not permit an addition to the cottage where they had originally planned. Work has already

begun to remediate excessive clearing and widening of the paper road to facilitate that plan.

Don visited the Goodwin pit on Nov. 29 and confirmed that work was continuing there despite a stop work order. A second stop work order will be filed, with applicable fines.

Asked about Coastal Estates, Don said he had approved the development's community building, and would check whether an overall plan had been filed with the Registry of Deeds. He said the dispute over erosion on Alden Bunker's adjacent property had not yet been resolved, but that Coastal Estates' Randy Sinclair had told Don it would be settled shortly.

Ken Emerson moved that board officially thank Don for his service to Hancock, Deb seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

6. Old Business: Richard Zerrien/Patriot Homes: Lot #217-001 Annex for storage (fee paid)

A complete application requested at a previous Board meeting was still not available. Questioned by Planning Board members, Don expressed concern that Richard Zerrien was continuing to expand the nature and location of his business without applying for the necessary permit(s). Don said he would follow up on this immediately and shut the business down. Absent any applications, the board tabled further consideration.

7. Old Business: Forms and procedures for Site Plan Applications and Planning Board review

Reviewing checklists drafted in 2016 and 2017 of Planning Board procedures to be completed before and after each monthly meeting, the board agreed they were unclear and outdated. Ken volunteered to rewrite them for consideration at the January 2025 meeting.

The board received corrected Site Plan Applications and other forms and agreed to review them at the January meeting.

8. Old Business: Addition of Solar Energy Systems in the ECO Table of Uses

Ken moved to add solar energy systems to the ECO Table of Uses, Ant Blasi seconded, and the motion passed, 5-0.

9. New Business: Review of recent approved amendments to ECO for final printing

Ken questioned the recently approved addition on p. 37 of the ECO – Section 5: Land Use Standards (General) B. 7. Dimensional Requirements c. Additional Dimensional Requirements 6) – stating that an additional dwelling unit in any area in which housing is permitted “is exempt from any density requirements in the area in which [it] is located.” He said the wording was unclear and overly sweeping.

Ant moved, and Ken seconded, a motion to add a clear definition of “density” to the ECO. The motion passed, 5-0. Deb volunteered to present a definition of housing density for the board to consider at its next meeting.

10. New Business: Discussion of revisions to the Sign Ordinance in the ECO

The board reviewed ordinances governing electronic signs in Bangor, Ellsworth, Lamoine, and Sullivan. After considerable debate, Scott moved to add electronic message boards to the ECO ordinances governing signs, to the ECO’s definitions, and to its Schedule of Uses. Electronic message boards require Planning Board approval. They must be illuminated by LEDs, the lights must not flash, and each message must have a minimum duration of at least 30 seconds. Ant seconded, and the motion passed, 4-0. (Ken abstained.) Doug will draft these revisions for consideration at the next Planning Board meeting.

11. New Business: Clarification of whether revisions to the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance in the ECO are necessary, and if so, how to proceed.

Ant moved that the board review and discuss at its next meeting the stand-alone Shoreland Zoning Ordinance prepared by a previous Planning Board and presented by Nick Branca. Deb seconded, and the motion passed, 5-0.

Carol Lowrie pointed out some problematic features of the current shoreland ordinance, particularly with regard to non-conforming structures. She also said that keeping shoreland ordinances separate from other ordinances was helpful to residents because it made it clear which ordinances applied to their properties.

12. Adjourn

Ant moved to adjourn, Deb seconded, and the motion passed, 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:34.