

Town of Hancock, Maine

MINUTES OF JANUARY 29, 2026 PLANNING BOARD

WORKSHOP MEETING

Board Members: Doug Kimmel, Ken Emerson, Scott Dyer, Deb Foster, Ant Blasi;
CEO Kevin Brodie

Others attending: Selectperson Robin Stratton, Ruth Franzius

Doug Kimmel called the workshop meeting to order at 5:07.

I. Review of Revised Signage Ordinance, draft dated Dec. 30, 2025

Kevin Brodie said he was still seeking information from the Department of Transportation about new state regulations that may affect the Town Signage Ordinance.

P. 2: Article I, Section 2 Purpose. Ken Emerson recommended rewriting the first sentence to read: “The purpose of this Ordinance is to establish minimum standards and municipal procedures regulating outdoor signs.”

Article I, Section 2 Purpose C. Remove the concluding “and” and add “; and” at the end of D.

P. 3: Article II, Section 4 Applicability, B. Preservation of scenic resources. Ken recommended rewriting the sentence to read “The scattering throughout the Town of outdoor signs, especially commercial signs not located on the site of the business they advertise, is detrimental to the preservation of those scenic resources, and thus to the economic base of the Town and the quality of life therein.”

P. 3: Article III, A. Signs Requiring a Permit. Rewrite the first sentence to read: “All permanent signs, ~~new or existing,~~ seen from the public way and erected after the enactment of this Ordinance shall require a permit and will fall under this Ordinance.”

P. 3: Article III, B. Restrictions, 1f. Rewrite the end of this sentence to read “...height from the ground.”

P. 4: Article III, C. Exceptions, 1. Here and/or in the Definitions, the board agreed to define and differentiate “public right of way” as it applies to Town roads and to

State roads—and how and where to determine what the public right of way is on a particular stretch of a State road. The Board agreed to define the public right of way on a Town road as five feet from the edge of the road.

P. 4: Article III, C. Exceptions. Ken asked whether Maine’s time limits on temporary political signs in public rights of way could be overturned in court as infringing on freedom of speech, especially when people sometimes declare their candidacies a year in advance of elections. The board’s consensus was that this was a state, not a local problem, and that the Town should comply with state statutes until and unless they are overturned.

P. 4: Article III, C. Exceptions, 5. Rewrite the beginning of this sentence to read: “Signs advertising temporary events at... the same requirements ~~of~~ as other temporary signs.”

P. 5: Article III, D. Regulations, 2 a. iii. Rewrite to read “...nine (9) feet above ground or pedestrian level...”

P. 6: Article III, D. Regulations, 2 b. ii. Board members did not note that the state requires that “changeable signs” display a single message for no less than one minute, whereas the revised Town ordinance says “no less than thirty seconds.” The Board and the Town will have to decide which they prefer. _

P. 7: Article III, D. Regulations, d. Requirements vi. Location in relation to public way. Here is a second spot where it would be helpful to define and differentiate public rights of ways on Town and State roads.

P. 7: Article III, D. Regulations, e. Non-conforming signs. Rewrite to read, “...if they are properly ~~the property is maintained.~~”

Ken provided Kevin with a detailed copy-edit of this iteration of the revised Signage Ordinance.

Doug pointed out that the Ordinance should incorporate requirements for signage in the Shoreland Zone on pp. 63-64 of the ECO.

II. Other Business

After concluding review of the Signage Ordinance, the board turned briefly to other matters. Doug agreed to write a letter to the Selectboard requesting its

guidance as the Planning Board extends its review of the Sinford/Hillside Terrace Subdivision application, especially with regard to who should bear the costs of the review and its requests. The Board will conduct a review of the entire subdivision amendment and schedule a public hearing for its March meeting.

Kevin noted that the Town's lack of software coordinating deeds, permits, tax assessments, and other data contributed to the confusion in this case and in others.

III. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:18.

