

## Town of Hancock

### MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 19, 2026 PLANNING BOARD SPECIAL MEETING AND WORKSHOP MEETING

Board Members In Attendance: Doug Kimmel, Scott Dyer, Deb Foster, Antonio Blasi; Meredith Akerstein; CEO Kevin Brodie

Town Residents and Interested Parties in Attendance: Lisa and Gerald Sinford; Connor Coggins (attorney for the Sinfords); Steve Salsbury; Brian Jordan; Adam Foster; George Moon; Ruth Franzius; Judy Josey; Robin Stratton

Doug Kimmel called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

#### **Conflict of Interest Recusals and Quorum Call**

No conflicts of interest; quorum present; consisting of voting members Doug Kimmel, Scott Dryer, Deb Foster and Meredith Akerstein. In Ken Emerson's absence, Alternate Ant Blasi was appointed as a voting member and Meredith Akerstein volunteered to take Minutes.

There were no public comments.

#### **I. Old Business: Subdivision Amendment Application Hillside Terrace Subdivision, Peaslee Road, Hancock**

The matter before the Board at the Special Meeting was review and approval of the **Finding of Fact and Decision** regarding Hillside Terrace Amended Subdivision; Tax Map 218, Lot 005-001. The application of Gerald and Lisa Sinford to subdivide this lot and create a new Lot 13, was approved by the Board on February 11, 2026, based on the evidence presented: including the application materials; amended subdivision plan, and the Planning Board's previous findings and approval of the subdivision plan and amendments.

The Board reviewed the Finding of Fact and Decision and found it complete. Ant Blasi moved to approve the Finding of Fact and Decision; Deb Foster seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

The Board then reviewed the Amended Subdivision Plan Amending Plan File 42-7 and found it complete. Deb Foster moved to approve the Amended Subdivision Plan, seconded by Ant Blasi and the motion carried 4-0.

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Both the Findings of Fact and the Amended Plan were signed by the Board and notarized by the Sinfords' attorney, Connor Coggins. (Member Meredith Akerstein recused herself as she was not present at the February 11, 2026 meeting.)

Copies of the Finding of Fact and Decision and Amended Subdivision Plan are attached hereto as Exhibits A and B, respectively.

Connor Coggins, attorney for the Sinfords, will have both documents recorded and provide the Town with stamped copies.

On another note: CEO Kevin Brodie asked about 2 (two) other lots in the same subdivision that were in possible violation of the previous Subdivision Amendment. Chair Doug Kimmel emphatically stated that it is, according to Town Attorney Dan Peliggi, NOT the Planning Board's but rather the Code Enforcement Officer's responsibility to determine any violation.

#### **WORKSHOP MEETING FOR MEO AND SIGN ORDINANCES**

The Board continued its review of the Draft MEO Ordinance, taking up from where it left at the January 12, 2026 workshop: with definitions.

Doug recapped the purpose is pull current MEO language from the Environmental Control Ordinance (ECO) and create a free-standing MEO Ordinance.

Meredith Akerstein expressed concern that in doing so many applicable definitions would be left out, creating confusion and uncertainty. Kevin Brodie and Doug Kimmel will search the MEO for the following and add definitions as needed: buffer; coastal wetlands; Code Enforcement Officer; conservation easement ; construction; cross-sectional area; drainage; flood plain; flowing water; fresh water wetland; great pond\*; ground cover; ground water impact analysis; recurrent flood plains; rip-rap; stream; sustained slope; tributary stream; upland edge of wetland; vegetation; water body; water extraction; wildlife; wildlife management; woody vegetation; and zone.

\*great pond: Kevin Brodie offered that under new State law, any pond is now considered a "great pond."

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It was agreed that, at least, definitions for the following will be added: buffer; CEO; construction; ground water analysis; vegetation and zone.

Resident Adam Foster asked to what extent George Colwell's suggestions in his email of February 18, 2026 at 7:58 am to Chair Doug Kimmel, Members of the Planning Board and Members of the Select Board will be considered.

Chair Doug Kimmel responded that Mr. Colwell's comments will be taken into account but at this time no further changes will be made to the draft MEO.

Further discussion resulted in a motion by Deb Foster and seconded by Scott Dyer for Chair Doug Kimmel to send a letter to Selectboard Chair Jack Bridges requesting both Boards meet to discuss the recommendations of Mr. Colwell. The motion passed 4-0.

A copy of Mr. Colwell's letter, which he requested be included in the record, is attached as Exhibit C.

Road Commissioner George Moon expressed disappointment and concern that he has not been kept in the loop about proposed changes to the MEO that would require Road Commissioner input. Doug apologized for the unintentional oversight, and Meredith requested Mr. Moon's e-mail information. It was agreed that as a duly elected Town Official, Mr. Moon should be informed of any pertinent information affecting his role as Road Commissioner.

#### **WORKSHOP MEETING RE SIGN ORDINANCE**

Doug recapped the purpose is to pull current sign language from the Environmental Control Ordinance (ECO) and create a free-standing Sign Ordinance.

Ant questioned the need to update the Sign Ordinance and Meredith responded that we should move with the times, since the way we use lighting has changed so much.

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Resident Judy Josey expressed concern about seasonal signs affecting her small, summertime "cottage" business. It was pointed out that her concern was addressed in the "Exceptions" section, which in part, addresses temporary signs. She was satisfied that she would be allowed to place her signs.

The Board further agreed to clarify language in Article III - Signs, C1-Exceptions to include language that the public right of way (ROW) is five (5) feet from the edge of the road. This language would also be included in the Definitions section of the Ordinance.

Other possible definitions to be added include set-back; structure; and zone.

There was much discussion about the brightness of lights and lighting and the Board's authority to require dimming of lights, especially new internally illuminated lights. A need to protect "dark sky" is important. It was acknowledged a compromise between dark sky and business advertisement is preferable.

The Board recommends dimming between 9 pm and 5 am. This would affect advertising signs only and not canopy lights, at gas pumps for example.

Resident Robin Stratton requested that abandoned and damaged signs be addressed.

Meredith volunteered to research: 1) local and state dark sky laws; and 2) abandoned/damaged signs

Doug informed that Board that he will not be available to Chair the March 11, 2026 meeting and Ant Blasi volunteered. Doug appointed Ant as Chair and voting member for the March meeting. Board members expressed thanks to Ant for stepping up.

Deb Foster moved to adjourn, Meredith seconded and the motion passed 4-0. The Special Meeting and Workshop adjourned at 7:10 pm.