

Town of Hancock, Maine

MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2026 PLANNING BOARD MEETING

Board Members: Ken Emerson, Scott Dyer, Deb Foster, Ant Blasi; CEO Kevin Brodie, Asst. CEO Nick Branca

Others attending: Selectpersons Carol Lowrie and Robin Stratton, Road Commissioner George Moon, Steve Salsbury and Mike Deyling (representing Harold MacQuinn), Ruth Franzius

Ant Blasi, presiding (and voting) in the absence of Chairman Doug Kimmel, called the meeting to order at 6:00.

I. Approval of Minutes of Planning Board Regular Meeting Feb. 11, 2026

Deb Foster moved to approve, Scott Dyer seconded, and the motion passed, 4-0.

II. Approval of Minutes of Planning Board Special Meeting & Workshop Feb. 19, 2025

Deb moved to approve, Scott seconded, and the motion passed, 4-0.

III. Discussion of Harold MacQuinn's Joy Road Quarry

Steve Salsbury and Mike Deyling, a licensed geologist and the president at Lewiston-based Summit Environmental Consultants, Inc., outlined MacQuinn's proposal to excavate below the seasonal high water table. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection granted MacQuinn a variance permitting such excavation on May 6, 2013. They said that in 2025 they conducted a 72-hour pumping test using four monitoring wells installed for that purpose and found that seepage rates were not excessive and commercial quarrying would be feasible with a pumping system and an adequate discharge area to temporarily lower the local groundwater level.

Although the DEP and other local jurisdictions allow quarrying below the seasonal high water table, Hancock's current Mineral Extraction Ordinance does not permit it.

Ken Emerson asked what the DEP, local jurisdictions, and excavators had learned about such projects in the 13 years since the DEP issued MacQuinn a variance. Have technological progress and good or bad experiences led them to revise and update requirements and procedures? How many variances has the DEP issued, and what have been the results? Mr. Deyling said he has worked directly with the

Christian Hill Quarry in Auburn, and there have been “minimal changes in requirements over the years,” chiefly in how an excavation is monitored. Ant said a public meeting should be held before the Planning Board amended the MEO or granted a variance (which only the Board of Appeals can grant).

Carol Lowrie said a town was entitled to uphold a stricter standard than the state. She asked how quarrying might affect well water. Mr. Deyling said the effect would “negligible,” and that the residential well nearest to the MacQuinn site is about 2,500 feet away, while the state requires that quarrying must be 300 feet away. He added that the MacQuinn excavation might be 40 or as much as 100 feet deep. Eventually it would create (and leave behind) a considerable body of water.

Mr. Deyling said it was too early in the MacQuinn project’s design and there are too many variables to predict confidently the effects of the water it would discharge into nearby bodies of water (e.g., Kilkenny Stream). He agreed this would have to be determined and taken into account in any permit or waiver.

Ant asked if MacQuinn could prepare a second, more detailed summary of the proposed project and of this meeting’s discussion. Mr. Salsbury said, “Sure.”

The board agreed to take four steps:

1. MacQuinn will provide an informational sheet describing the project and a copy or summary of the tests it conducted in 2025.
2. After Ken completes the minutes of this meeting, Ant will arrange a joint call with the managers of the Christian Hill Quarry to discuss their experience with quarrying below the seasonal water table.
3. The board will arrange a conversation about quarrying below the seasonal water table with a representative of the state.
4. The board will consider whether a.) to revise the MEO to permit quarrying below the seasonal water table, b.) only to entertain the possibility of granting a waiver or variance, or c.) to continue not to permit it under any circumstances. Making an informed decision will entail reviewing local ordinances and operations quarrying below the seasonal water table elsewhere in the state (e.g., Pike Industries).

IV. Old Business: Signing of Paper Maps and Mylar for Amended Hillside Terrace Subdivision (if available)

Maps and mylar were not available.

V. CEO Report

Kevin Brodie reported building permits for 1 structure, 1 sign, 1 driveway, and 1 solar installation, for a total \$1,032.65, and plumbing permits for two internal installations and 1 septic system, totaling \$690.

VI. Public Comment

George Moon inquired about excavating a pond on his residential property on Pomroy Road that could serve as a renewable water source for the Hancock Volunteer Fire Company. The board said it foresaw few difficulties and asked Kevin to investigate and report back if he discovered any problems.

VII. Adjourn

Ant moved to adjourn, Scott seconded, the motion passed, 4-0, and the meeting adjourned at 7:35.