



Town of Hopkinton Planning/Building Department

330 Main Street, Hopkinton NH 03229-2627 - (603) 746-8243 -planzone@hopkinton-nh.gov

HOPKINTON PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

MARCH 17, 2026

Members Present: Chair Michael Wilkey, Ex-Officio Jeff Donohoe, Emily Bouchard, Rob Dapice, Molly Hardenbergh, and Jane Bradstreet. Members Absent: Vice Chair James Fredyma, and Alternates Dean Owens and Sam Durfee. Staff Present: Planning Director Karen Robertson.

I. Call to Order/Roll Call.

Chair Michael Wilkey called the meeting to order, introduced members, and confirmed the presence of a quorum. With six members present, all were designated as voting members.

II. Review of Minutes and Notice of Decision.

MOTION was made by Jeff Donohoe and seconded by Jane Bradstreet to approve the minutes of December 8, 2025, as presented. Motion carried unanimously (Donohoe, Dapice, Hardenbergh, Bouchard, Bradstreet, and Wilkey).

MOTION was made by Jeff Donohoe and seconded by Rob Dapice to approve the minutes of February 10, 2026, as presented. Motion carried with five voting in favor (Donohoe, Dapice, Hardenbergh, Bouchard, and Wilkey) and one abstention (Bradstreet).

III. Conceptual Consultations.

Stockwell Property (Jewett Road) – Ron Klemarczyk, Chair of the Hopkinton Conservation Commission and member of the Open Space Committee, presented a conceptual proposal involving two parcels owned by the Stockwell family.

The property consists of two parcels: Lot 4 (approximately 6 acres), located on the west side of Jewett Road and surrounded by Town Forest and adjacent conservation land, including the Chase Bird Sanctuary (NH Audubon), and Lot 17 (approximately 115 acres), located on the east side of Jewett Road. The Stockwell family proposes to convey Lot 4 to the Town for conservation purposes and to subdivide Lot 17 into three (3) approximately 30-acre lots, utilizing approximately 1,800 feet of existing frontage. The remaining portion of Lot 17, estimated to be between 20 and 25 acres, would also be conveyed to the Town for conservation purposes. When combined with Lot 4, the total conservation land would be approximately 26 to 31 acres.

Subject to PB review and approval.

The conservation land contains significant natural features, including wetlands, Boutwell Mill Brook, steep slopes, and a historic mill site.

Discussion continued on whether the subdivision could be treated as a three-lot (minor) subdivision rather than a four-lot (major) subdivision, given that the fourth lot would be non-buildable and conveyed for conservation. This approach would reduce submittal requirements and associated costs. In exchange for the conveyance of conservation land to the Town, the Conservation Commission has agreed, at the request of the Stockwell family, to fund the subdivision costs.

Board members expressed concern regarding precedent, particularly if the Conservation Commission were to fund subdivision costs for private landowners. A surveyor present at the meeting, unrelated to this project, estimated subdivision costs in the range of \$20,000 to \$25,000.

Additional concerns included the potential for future subdivision of the resulting 30-acre lots and the implications of future development. It was noted that physical constraints, including wetlands, steep slopes, and the presence of Boutwell Mill Brook, may significantly limit future development potential and increase costs.

Planning Director Karen Robertson noted a similar case in which the Board treated the application as minor subdivision for review purposes. The Board expressed general openness to this approach; however, a formal determination would require submission of an application.

IV. Applications/Public Hearings.

2026-2 Baystone Properties LLC – Conservation subdivision proposing seven (7) residential lots and one (1) lot for open space conservation. The property is located on the corner of Stumpfield Road and Sugar Hill Road (Tax Map 231, Lot 6), within the R-4 Zoning District.

The applicant, represented by Dan Higginson of Higginson Land Services and Shaun Geary, principal of Baystone Properties, LLC, presented revised plans addressing comments outlined in the Planning Director's report. The proposal includes seven residential lots, although the plan was eligible for an eighth lot under a bonus provision that the applicant elected not to utilize.

The plans were updated to include building envelopes, well and septic locations, and to demonstrate compliance with the required 125-foot separation between lots. A shared driveway was introduced for two of the lots to address sight distance concerns at the intersection of Stumpfield Road and Sugar Hill Road. The applicant indicated that drainage had been reviewed with a wetland scientist and was not expected to present issues.

Mr. Higginson explained that, as required by the Zoning Ordinance, the plan depicts building envelopes and driveway locations to demonstrate that the lots are capable of accommodating development. He further noted that the Ordinance permits construction

outside of those envelopes, provided that structures comply with conventional subdivision setback requirements. As such, the final locations of homes and driveways may differ from those shown on the plan.

Planning Director Robertson reported that the Department of Public Works (DPW) reviewed the proposal and did not recommend an exaction fee, noting that the fee would be minimal. She further stated that DPW may independently pursue improvements to the intersection, including potential reconfiguration to a “T” intersection and vegetation clearing within the right-of-way to improve sight distance. Such improvements may be undertaken in conjunction with future work on Stumpfield Road; however, the timing of this work is currently unknown.

MOTION was made by Rob Dapice and seconded by Jane Bradstreet to accept the application as complete and for consideration. Motion carried unanimously (Donohoe, Dapice, Hardenbergh, Bouchard, Bradstreet, and Wilkey).

MOTION was made by Jeff Donohoe and seconded by Rob Dapice determining that the proposal does not constitute a Development of Regional Impact (RSA 36:55). Motion carried unanimously (Donohoe, Dapice, Hardenbergh, Bouchard, Bradstreet, and Wilkey).

Planning Board Member Rob Dapice recused himself for the remainder of the meeting.

Chair Wilkey opened the public hearing.

Anthony Alario – 670 Sugar Hill Road

Mr. Alario stated that the proximity of the proposed shared driveway to the intersection would further exacerbate existing hazardous conditions at the intersection worse due to limited sight distance and the presence of a blind corner. He suggested that a traditional subdivision with an internal road would provide a safer design and said that the conservation subdivision does not provide sufficient benefit to outweigh the safety concerns. He further noted that the proposed driveway for Lot 6.2 is approximately the same distance to the intersection (Sugar Hill Road/Stumpfield Road) as the driveway that was once proposed on Lot 6.1. He questioned whether this distance is adequate. In response, Mr. Higginson estimated the driveway for Lot 6.2 to be approximately 130 feet from the intersection, noting that DPW had reviewed the plans and is agreeable to the location.

Mr. Alario noted his objection to the applicant’s requested waiver of phasing standards.

Mr. Alario further stated that, although he would benefit from the proposed open space buffer adjacent to his property, he would be willing to forgo that benefit and would not object to the subdivision if it were redesigned as a traditional subdivision with an internal road, rather than individual driveway access points directly onto Stumpfield Road and Sugar Hill Road. He stated that an interior road serving the lots would provide a safer and more appropriate design.

Erin Tullar – 860 Sugar Hill Road

Ms. Tuller echoed concerns raised by Mr. Alario, citing frequent near misses, high vehicle speeds, and risk to pedestrians, including children, as well as impacts to nearby residents. She emphasized that multiple driveways along this section of Stumpfield Road could exacerbate existing safety issues. Ms. Tuller urged the Board to consider alternative designs with fewer access points.

Chair Wilkey thanked the abutters for their input and indicated that concerns would be forwarded to DPW and the Police Department for consideration of potential mitigation measures.

The public hearing portion of the meeting was closed.

During deliberations, Board members emphasized that the application must be reviewed in accordance with the ordinance as currently adopted and based on input from Town officials, including DPW and the Fire Department, who did not express concerns with the proposed design.

Chair Wilkey noted that, as part of the Planning Board's 2026 Work Plan, the Board intends to review and potentially revise the Conservation Subdivision Ordinance to address design issues such as roadway layout and development patterns. Members of the public were encouraged to participate in future work sessions and hearings.

The Board then considered the requested waiver from the standard phasing schedule to allow construction of four (4) units between April 1, 2026 and March 31, 2027, and three (3) units between April 1, 2027 and March 31, 2028. Discussion noted that phasing is intended to manage the pace of development when multiple projects are underway and constructed simultaneously; however, given current conditions, the Board found the requested waiver to be reasonable. Accordingly, strict adherence to the standard phasing schedule (3-3-1) was not deemed necessary.

MOTION was made by Jeff Donohoe and seconded by Emily Bouchard to **approve** the phasing waiver to allow construction of four (4) units between April 1, 2026 and March 31, 2027, and three (3) units between April 1, 2027 and March 31, 2028. Motion carried unanimously (Donohoe, Hardenbergh, Bouchard, Bradstreet, and Wilkey).

MOTION was made by Jeff Donohoe and seconded by Molly Hardenbergh to **grant conditional approval** of the Conservation Subdivision proposing seven (7) residential lots and one (1) lot for open space conservation under Section VII of the Zoning Ordinance, subject to the following conditions, based on the application materials submitted, findings contained in the Planning Director's report, and testimony presented at the hearing:

a) **Conveyance of Open Space to the Town**

At the time of recording the final subdivision plat, the designated open space lot shall be conveyed to the Town of Hopkinton. The Planning Board finds that an acceptable deed to the Town may be used in lieu of a formal conservation easement, provided the deed permanently restricts further development and subdivision of the open space lot. The deed specifies that the land is to be used for conservation purposes,

including, but not limited to, timber and forest management, passive recreation by the general public, wildlife habitat improvement, watershed protection, and outdoor and environmental education. The open space shall be managed by the Hopkinton Conservation Commission.

b) **Costs Associated with Open Space Conveyance**

All legal costs associated with the review of the deed, title work, and any other documents related to the conveyance of the open space to the Town shall be the responsibility of the applicant.

c) **Posting Restrictions**

At the discretion of the Hopkinton Conservation Commission, the open space lot, or portions thereof, may be posted against hunting or trapping, consistent with conservation management objectives and public safety considerations.

d) **Boundary Monumentation**

All house lot corner bounds (Lots 6.1 through 6.7) abutting the designated open space lot (Lot 6) shall be set upon approval of the subdivision. Boundary lines between the bounds shall be clearly blazed and painted.

e) **Identification of Conservation Land and Vegetated Buffer**

Plastic or metal tags identifying the 100-foot vegetated buffer and conservation land shall be installed periodically on trees along the buffer and the boundary lines of the open space lot, in a manner acceptable to the Hopkinton Conservation Commission.

f) **Deed References for Residential Lots**

The deeds for Lots 6.1 through 6.7 shall reference the open space deed restrictions and identify the abutting land, owned by the Town, as permanently protected conservation land.

g) **Deed Reference for 100-foot Vegetated Buffer**

The deed for Lots 6.1 through 6.7 shall state: A 100-foot vegetated buffer shall be maintained along the existing public road, measured from the edge of the public road right-of-way onto the property. The buffer area shall remain free of buildings, parking areas, and other structures, as well as lawns, leach fields, and detention basins, and shall be maintained in mature forest cover.

Motion carried unanimously (Donohoe, Hardenbergh, Bouchard, Bradstreet, and Wilkey).

V. Other Business/Discussion Items.

Planning Board Work Plan 2026 – Project Updates

The Board postponed discussion regarding revisions to the **Conservation Subdivision Ordinance**. Members were asked to provide their availability for a meeting in the coming weeks.

Committee and Staff Reports

The Board postponed cross-committee updates and staff reporting, as the Planning Board representatives were not present.

VI. Adjournment.

Chair Wilkey adjourned the meeting at 6:55 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2026, at 5:30 PM, at the Hopkinton Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Robertson
Planning Director