

3-13-24: These minutes are subject to possible revisions/corrections during review at a subsequent Planning Board Meeting.

**Town of Chester
Planning Board Meeting
Wednesday, March 13, 2024
Approved Minutes**

The meetings are broadcast live on Comcast Channel 6, and streamed on Government <https://reflect-chesterctv-from-nh.cablecast.tv/CablecastPublicSite/?channel=1> - click "Watch Now".

Members & Staff Present:

Brian Sullivan, Chair
Evan Sederquest, Vice Chair
Elizabeth Richter, Member
Richard Snyder, Member
Eric Swanson, Alternate
Chuck Myette, Selectboard Liaison
Andrew Hadik, Town Planner

Members Absent:

Mike Weider, Member

Guests and Members of the Public Present:

Selectboard Member Dana Theokas
Chris Hickey, Project Engineer, Keach-Nordstrom Associates
Amber Ragnarsson, Owner, Map 4 - Lot 58
Chester PACT

Meeting Agenda

7:00 PM – General Business

1. Review & approve invoices, sign documents etc.
2. Review & approve the minutes of the 2/28/24 PB meeting.
3. Review and approve the request from Chester Academy for the release of \$30,000 in accrued impact fees for several Capital Improvements Program (CIP) projects.
4. Review second draft of proposed Zoning Article 7B – Fair Market Rental Housing.

7:00 PM – Appointments - None scheduled

Public Hearings

1. Proposed zoning amendment for Section 4.6 - Recreational Vehicles.
2. Adopt the annual update of the Capital Improvements Program (CIP).
3. Subdivision application by 192 Chester, LLC (owner), PO Box 396, Chester, NH 03036, for a 1-lot subdivision located at 192 Chester Street in Chester, NH (Map 4, Lot 58).

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Non-Public Sessions - None scheduled.

Meeting Minutes

Chair Sullivan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He announced that Mr. Swanson would be sitting in for Mr. Weider.

7:00 PM – General Business

1. Review & approve invoices, sign documents, etc.

Documents and/or invoices were reviewed and signed.

2. Review & approve the minutes of the 2/28/24 PB meeting.

Vice Chair Sederquest moved to approve the minutes of the 2/28/24 Planning Board meeting as written. Ms. Richter seconded the motion. A vote was taken. All were in favor, except Mr. Snyder, who abstained. The motion passed 5-0-1.

3. Review and approve the request from Chester Academy for the release of \$30,000 in accrued impact fees for several CIP projects.

Mr. Hadik reviewed a request from Chester Academy for the release of \$30,000 in impact fees for several CIP projects, including upgrading and reconfiguring the Main Office to provide a more secure building entry. The Board discussed the ability of the School District to request reimbursement for funds already spent.

Mr. Snyder moved to release \$30,000 in accrued impact fees to the Chester School District per their letter dated March 6, 2024. Vice Sederquest seconded the motion. A vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Planning Board budget reduction.

Mr. Hadik explained he had received an email from the Town Administrator passing on a request from the Selectboard to all departments to seek additional budget reductions. He note the Planning Department's Administrative Assistant is not using the full number of hours budgeted for. He has discussed this with her, and, as a result, recommends reducing the budget by \$5,000, which will bring the Department to almost a flat budget. The Board concurred.

Public Hearings

1. Proposed zoning amendment for Section 4.6 - Recreational Vehicles.

Mr. Snyder moved to open the public hearing to review the proposed zoning amendment for Section 4.6 - Recreational Vehicles. Vice Chair Sederquest seconded the motion.

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Mr. Hadik noted the amendment had not changed since it was presented at a public meeting for review two weeks ago. The Board agreed the amendment resolves the problems noted earlier by the Building Inspector.

Chair Sullivan asked for public comment.

Amber Ragnarsson, 72 Trillium Lane, asked if this amendment would be voted on by the Board at this meeting or presented to the legislative body at the Annual Town Meeting. The Board clarified it will go on the ballot for Town Elections (May 14, 2024).

Ms. Richter moved to close the public hearing on the consideration of the proposed zoning amendment for Section 4.6 - Recreational Vehicles, and take it to a public hearing on March 27, 2024, with a backup date of April 3, 2024, and deliberate and vote. Vice Chair Sederquest seconded the motion. A vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Snyder moved to move the proposed zoning amendment for Section 4.6, Recreational Vehicles, to the ballot for Town Elections. Ms. Richter seconded the motion. A vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Adopt the annual update of the CIP.

Ms. Richter moved to open the public hearing to discuss and decide on adopting the update to the proposed CIP. Vice Chair Sederquest seconded the motion. A vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hadik described the CIP and how it is used. The Board noted that the CIP has been discussed and reviewed extensively.

Chair Sullivan asked for public comment.

Selectboard member Dana Theokas, 9 Muskat Circle, asked how the impact fees are calculated, based on the seven-year plan in the CIP.

Mr. Hadik explained the CIP does not drive the impact fees. The fees have different calculation methodologies depending on the stakeholders. For example, the Library's fees is calculated based on the value of the inventory of books, CDs and other media. Highway fees are related to the number of vehicle trips based on a national transportation manual. Mr. Snyder noted the CIP is a guide to how the impact fees can be spent. He clarified if the question was how the impact fees are calculated. He explained that the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) goes through a process to come up with formulas and spreadsheets that identify the funding that is required to support Town infrastructure. Mr. Hadik said impact fees were adopted in 2011, 2015, and 2016 for specific departments. Selectman Myette noted impact fees are paid by developers as they develop lots which impacts Town services/stakeholders.

Ms. Theokas asked if general government and administration costs for municipal buildings come from the declared inventory. Chair Sullivan said the Board has asked the same question, and it is extremely complex. Mr. Hadik said one has to read SNHPC's fee methodology.

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Ms. Theokas asked if the impact fees are a "ticket to entry" for new residents to enjoy the level of service the Town provides. Mr. Snyder clarified this occurs indirectly, as the developer is paying the impact fees; however, they pass these on to the buyer.

Ms. Theokas noted the CIP is a list of Departmental "wants and needs," and that sometimes these are put off to a later year or eliminated completely. She said it would be useful to have a more robust list of wants and needs so that the community can provide input. Chair Sullivan explained during CIP workshops, Departments present and discuss their wants and needs. Mr. Hadik noted they have to be realistic as to what can be proposed to the taxpayers. There are already many more projects listed than can be reasonably funded. Selectman Myette clarified that Departments may request the release of impact fees for specifically listed projects. The Board concurred that maintaining a list of projects not included in the CIP would be informative.

Mr. Snyder moved to close the public hearing on the update to the proposed CIP and formally adopt it per the document reviewed on March 13, 2024. Ms. Richter seconded the motion. A vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Subdivision application by 192 Chester, LLC (owner), PO Box 396, Chester, NH 03036, for a 1-lot subdivision located at 192 Chester Street in Chester, NH (Map 4, Lot 58).

Mr. Hadik advised the application and plan were complete enough for acceptance.

Ms. Richter moved to accept the subdivision application by 192 Chester, LLC (owner) for a 1-lot subdivision located at 192 Chester Street in Chester, NH (Map 4, Lot 58) and to open the public hearing. Vice Chair Sederquest seconded the motion. A vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Project Engineer Chris Hickey of Keach-Nordstrom Associates appeared before the Board to describe the proposed one-lot subdivision, which will subdivide the existing house from the 17-acre property, creating a 2.4-acre lot. They were granted a variance by the Zoning Board of Adjustment to create a new substandard frontage lot of approximately 15 acres.

Mr. Hadik reviewed the conditions of approval. Amber Ragnarsson (owner) asked for clarification on a few of the conditions, which Mr. Hadik provided.

Chair Sullivan asked for public comment; there was none.

Mr. Snyder moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Richter seconded the motion. A vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Snyder moved to approve the subdivision plan with conditions as amended on March 13, 2024. Ms. Richter seconded the motion. A vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

General Business (continued)

5. Review second draft of proposed Zoning Article 7B – Fair Market Rental Housing.

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The Board reviewed the second draft of proposed Zoning Article 7B. Mr. Hadik noted the previous term "attainable housing" might be too ambiguous and suggested it be called "Fair Market Rental Housing" because the article is based on the HUD Fair Market Rental Housing guidelines for the area Chester is located in. The Board decided the title "Fair Market Rental Housing" would be the most appropriate terminology to use.

Mr. Hadik explained the rental rates for these properties will meet HUD fair market rent guidelines. The current published HUD monthly rates are \$1,483 for a one-bedroom unit, and \$1,917 for a two-bedroom unit. The mix of units will have to be 50/50 one- and two-bedroom units to qualify as Workforce Housing under NH's Workforce Housing law.

The Board discussed suggested edits to the proposed zoning article. They asked about specific requirements and restrictions noted in the article, and why they are included. Mr. Hadik offered explanations.

Mr. Snyder moved to bring the proposed zoning amendment Article 7B to a public hearing on March 27, 2024, with a backup date of April 3, 2024. Ms. Richter seconded the motion. A vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Richter moved to adjourn the meeting. Chair Sullivan seconded the motion. A vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned.

Future Meeting Dates

- April 3 – PH for Fair Market Rental Housing
- April 10 –
- April 24 –

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Hanggeli, Recording Secretary