TOWN OF NEWMARKET NEW HAMPSHIRE

PLANNING BOARD

Tuesday, August 12, 2025 at 7:00 PM
Town Hall, Council Chambers
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Present: Val Shelton (Chair), Jane Ford, Jamie Bruton, Scott Blackstone (Town Council – Ex officio), Jeff Goldknopf, Michael Scully, Eric Botterman (Alternate), David Evans (Zoning Administrator)
Absent: Zachary Shollar (Vice Chair), Bill Arcieri (Alternate)

The Chair opened the regular meeting at 7:04 PM.

The voting members this evening will be: **Val Shelton**, **Jane Ford**, **Jamie Bruton**, **Scott Blackstone**, **Jeff Goldknopf**, **Michael Scully**, and **Eric Botterman** (*in the place of Zach Shollar*).

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Public Comments

(None)

3. Review & Approval of Minutes

a. July 8, 2025

Action

Motion: **Eric Botterman** motioned to approve the July 8, 2025, minutes as written.
Second: **Michael Scully**
Discussion: **None**
Vote: **Approved 7-0-0**

4. Regular Business

Val noted that the public comment was not closed for 200 New Road at the previous meeting, and closed public comment officially.

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a. Site Plan Extension Request: Applicant Chapman Block LLC is requesting a 3-year extension to an approved site plan originally approved on October 15, 2021 proposing a 28 residential unit mixed-use building with 13,000 square feet of commercial space together with a separate 4 unit residential unit building located on real property with an address of 56 Exeter Road, Tax Map U4, Lot 12 within the Village Corridor-South zoning district.

The Chair read the above into the record.

Walter Cheney introduced himself and explained that they are seeking an extension. They have been trying to secure finances and have created Chapman Block LLC as a new group in the hopes to get the project completed.

Walter Cheney continued that thus far, they have removed three previously existing structures that were on the lot. They used to be individual lots, but they are now merged for the purposes of the project. They have secured some bids from about a year and a half ago for clearing and blasting, but otherwise have only removed the old structures.

The Chair asked regarding permit status; it was confirmed that the driveway permit was renewed, and they do not need an AoT as it is under the square footage threshold. NHDOT also required them to revise and remove a set of stairs and a small retaining wall as they felt it was a safety liability for them, if the public had access from the sidewalk and up the stairs. The island is also to be removed. Otherwise, the plan has not changed except for those three items at this point.

Walter Cheney reiterated that the financial backing has been the main hardship to this point.

The Chair asked if they will come back before the board with an amended site plan; **Walter Cheney** agreed that if that is needed in resolving the NHDOT issues, then they can and will. They are not planning on further significant changes yet.

Lane Cheney commented that they will likely be back in hopefully 2-3 months with the zoning changes as that may allow for some greater changes to the plan, but they are yet to decide if they are making any significant changes. The extension in the meantime will be helpful for financing, though, to keep the value. For starting construction, they estimate that and under ideal conditions they would start next spring, with construction to take a year likely to complete. In 2-3 months, they should be able to make a decision whether or not they plan to make significant changes.

Eric asked if an extension of two versus three years would make a difference; **Lane Cheney** iterated two years should be sufficient and enough time, and if they run into issues, then they could come back before the board for further discussions.

The Chair explained that in two to three months, they would know whether the site plan is going to be amended or not, adding that they want to see the parcel developed and if the zoning changes inform that or not. The Chair also mentioned the stormwater as the plan will need to meet current regulations under MS4.

Public comment opened at 7:25 PM.
None
Public comment closed at 7:25 PM.

Eric expressed support for a two-year extension, not seeing any reason not to. If the plans change, then at that point, the stormwater will need to be reviewed further. **Jeff** agreed.
The Chair suggested a third-party confirmation that the stormwater management plan meets current stormwater management regulations.
Eric commented that a letter from the design engineer confirming that it meets current regulationswould be sufficient. **Jeff** and **Michael** agreed. **Jamie** added that two years instead of three is more comfortable.

Dave asked what would happen if the engineer states that it does not meet stormwater regulations; **Eric** replied that they would explain why, and at that point it would then need to be brought into compliance or have waivers granted and be further addressed from there with the board.

The Chair added that active and substantial development should have a threshold defined in the continuance. For the past two site plans, 3 Railroad Street and 242 South Main Street, active and substantial development was the site work and completion of the exterior of the building. **Dave** added that the lawyer has said that conditions are fine if it is related to public health, welfare or environment; the Chair explained that she spoke further with the attorney and he clarified.

Eric suggested that the 4-unit building could be completed as a condition then.

Walter Cheney suggested that the utilities and site could be done to binder grade as a condition instead of the building shell. The structure would be more difficult, and underground utilities and site to binder grade is more doable. There was board consensus that that would be sufficient.

Dave added that once a building permit is issued, there is 6 months to start and two years to complete, or the permit expires.

Action

Motion: **Eric Botterman** moved to grant a two-year extension subject to a letter from the engineer relevant to stormwater, for whether the plan meets current stormwater management regulations, with vesting to be that the site is brought up to binder grade (not paved) including stormwater systems and underground utilities.
Second: **Jeff Goldknopf**
Discussion: None
Vote: **Approved 7-0-0**

5. New/Old Business

a. Committee Reports/Planner's Report

Scott noted that next Town Council meeting is next week.

Eric commented that he spoke at Charter Commission regarding if Planning Board should be appointed by the Town Manager or if it should remain as an elected board, and spoke to his personal opinion that it should be elected.
The Chair noted she submitted a letter that was read during a Charter Commission meeting as well, regarding the Master Plan. It was mentioned that the Charter Commission also discussed the CIP Committee. The Chair commended the time being spent by the Charter Commission
Jane added that a lot of work goes into CIP, and that board does a thorough job to go through that and make recommendations with high dedication, and empowering that board makes a lot of sense. Currently, they are overridden a lot and are not empowered. If they are empowered, then the CIP will be able to do more.

Dave mentioned the variance for 200 New Road granted, and otherwise there have been smaller dimensional variances granted.

6. Adjourn

Action

Motion: **Jane Ford** moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 PM.
Second: **Eric Botterman**
Discussion: None
Vote: **Approved 7-0-0**

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Respectfully submitted,
Bridgette Grotheer
Land Use Administrator

DCAT:
https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/XSekkdEeRsk0JHQVHAvKJVka7_5VjxKP/videos