



Town Of Durham

Planning Board Minutes

Fire Station Meeting Room, 6:30 pm

September 3, 2025

1. Roll Call & Determination of a Quorum

In attendance: John Talbot (Chair), Juliet Caplinger (Vice Chair), Brian Lanoie, Brian Stickney and George Thebarger (Town Planner).

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Amendments to the Agenda:

- a) Brian Lanoie requested that the Board add discussion of the strategic planning framework to the end of the agenda.

4. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes (August 6, 2025)

Motion made by Juliet Caplinger: To accept the minutes for the August meeting as presented.

Motion seconded by Brian Stickney: Votes to approve: 4-0

5. Informational Exchange on Non-Agenda Items:

- a) Town officials: The Town Planner stated that his monthly report of work program activities will be included in future agenda packets. He encouraged Board members with questions to contact him. He also alerted the Board to the upcoming economic development discussion at the September 23 Select Board meeting and the kickoff of the Open Space project at the October 28 Select Board meeting.
- b) Residents: None
- c) Non-Residents: None

6. Continuing Business: None

7. New Business:

- a) **Conditional Use Review of a proposed Bulky Waste Pick-up Company at 28 Soper Rd., Map 4, Lot 97**

The Town Planner summarized the application and criteria the Board applies to nonresidential uses. He reminded the Board that it approved an HVAC business on the same property, and it is unclear whether that business is still operating on the site. There are multiple buildings there, but the Board would need to consider the cumulative impacts if both businesses are operating there. He stated his understanding that there will be no building construction or site improvements, so separate site plan review would not be required. Based on the applicant's submissions, he prepared draft findings and the standard approval conditions. The Board can edit and add to those findings at whatever point the Board is prepared to make a decision.

Matthew Morehouse appeared as the applicant to answer Board questions.

Juliet Caplinger asked whether all abutters were notified and whether the notices were sent out in enough time in advance of the meeting to meet Ordinance requirements.

Board discussion revealed that only two abutters had been notified, and time requirements were not met.

The Board advised the applicant to provide more details on the proposed locations of dumpsters and to address the potential need for buffering.

The Board also indicated the need to provide documentation of right, title, or interest in the proposed project property.

Motion made by Juliet Caplinger: To table the application and schedule a public hearing.
Motion seconded by Brian Lanoie: Votes to approve: 4-0

b) Sketch Plan Review of a Proposed Subdivision off Pinkham Brook Rd., Map 2, Lots 35 & 42

The Town Planner summarized the purposes of sketch plan review and the subsequent phases of preliminary and final subdivision approval.

Matthew Pelletier of Terradyn Consultants presented the application on behalf of the developers. He summarized the site inventory for the project site that contains no vernal pools other than a man-made mica pit or significant wetlands. The 13-lot cluster subdivision will create a 2400-foot long dead end road using an existing access easement. The two existing homes will continue to use the existing driveway off Pinkham Brook Rd. for access and utilities. Each of the proposed cluster lots will have a minimum of 50,000 square feet and a road frontage of at least 172 feet of road frontage. The project will create a total of just under 3 acres of impervious surfaces and developed area. The road will cross one wetland area with impacts within the Permit-by-Rule permitting by DEP, but they will need a stormwater permit and review by Army Corps of Engineers for the wetland impacts. The applicants will not be requesting any waivers.

Board members asked about the net residential area calculations for steep slopes, exposed ledge, and streams and whether there is any floodplain or Resource Protection. The percentage of open space is very near the minimum of 50 percent. The requirements for road interconnection with other abutting vacant parcels were also identified. Board discussion concluded with a request that the applicants review potential need for buffering the new road along any nearby existing homes.

8. Other Business:

a) Planning Board Update on the Codification Project

The Town Planner explained that over the summer the Planning Board reviewed the 14 minor policy issues, and he has drafted amendments to incorporate their recommendations for all but one remaining issue (Cannabis). He also indicated that the packet includes the Town staff responses to General Code's questions on technical and legal changes needed. He included drafts of the proposed regulations for accessory apartments and mobile home parks required by State law. A final draft of the amended language for the technical changes (mostly grammar & typos) won't be available from the codification consultant until after the first of the year.

If the Boards can finalize drafts for the 14 minor policy issues after a public participation process by the end of the year, the codification consultant will incorporate them into the draft Ordinance. The Planner will have all of the draft amendments and proposed public presentation materials for review at the October meeting.

The Town Planner informed the Board that the Fire Chief has requested removal of the option for underground water cisterns as a means of a fire protection water supply. He identified the challenge of initial filling, potential for leakage, and refilling after use as concerns. The Board had a brief discussion of reliability and responsibility for fire ponds.

The Planning Board will schedule the special public participation meetings at the October regular meeting. The Board asked the Planner to pull the required changes to Accessory Dwelling Units and Mobile Home Parks out of the codification questions part and treat them as policy issues for the public participation process.

b) Discussion of Strategic Coordination of Planning Projects

The Board discussed the chart prepared by the Town Planner and presented to the Select Board. Multiple planning projects are currently underway under oversight of the Conservation Commission, Select Board, Planning Board, Agriculture Committee, GPCOG, and Town staff. The chart shows how all of these initiatives can be coordinated to lead into the upcoming update of the Comprehensive Plan.

9. Adjournment

Motion made by Brian Lanoie: To adjourn the meeting.

Motion seconded by Juliet Caplinger: Motion carried: 4 – 0. Meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.