

**BOLTON PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**7:30 PM, WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2025**  
**BOLTON TOWN HALL, 222 BOLTON CENTER ROAD**  
**In-Person and Via Zoom**  
**MINUTES**

**PZC Members Present In-Person:** Chairman Tom Manning, Marilee Manning, Thomas Robbins, Alternates Tom Crockett and Diane DeNunzio

**PZC Members Present Via Zoom:** Arlene Fiano, Alternate Kawan Gordon

**PZC Members Absent:** Vice-Chair James Cropley, Jeremy Flick, Steven Clark

**Staff Present Via Zoom:** Patrice Carson, AICP, Consulting Director of Community Development, Michael D'Amato, Zoning Enforcement Officer, Kacie Cannon, Recording Secretary

**1. Call to Order:** T. Manning called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. T. Crockett was seated for Jeremy Flick, D. DeNunzio was seated for Steven Clark, and K. Gordon was seated for J. Cropley.

**2. Approval of Minutes: April 9, 2025**

T. Crockett MOVED to approve the minutes as written. D. DeNunzio SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6:0:1 (K. Gordon Abstained).

**3. Residents' Forum:** None

**4. Staff Reports:** P. Carson reported another meeting on the drive-in property will be held.

**5. Old Business**

**a. Other:** There was no old business.

**6. New Business**

**a. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE DECISION: Site Plan Application for New House, 25 Vernon Road, James Read (#PL-25-3)**

The PZC reviewed the Site Plan Application and map of the proposed house. P. Carson noted that James Read and Engineer Andrew Bushnell of Bushnell and Associates were present to answer any questions.

James Read explained that he plans to build an 18 x 32 sq. ft. two-story cottage with an 8 x 32 sq. ft. deck on a vacant lot he purchased near the lake. The lot is approximately 7,500 sq. ft., pre-dates zoning regulations, and is consistent with other lots in the area. The property has been approved for septic and will be connected to the sewer system. Both the Inlands Wetlands Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals have approved the plans, including a setback variance.

T. Crockett asked if the sewer would be connected immediately, whether there will be any impervious surfaces, and whether neighbors are aware of the building plans. Mr. Bushnell confirmed that it will be connected immediately and added that the septic system is compliant with the State Health Code and includes both a primary and reserve leach field. He added that the roof will be the only impervious surface. A. Fiano asked Mr. Read if the neighbors are aware they are encroaching on his property. Mr. Read stated that the neighbors are aware of the project and the encroachment and noted that he prefers to overlook the encroachment in an effort to maintain good relationships. P. Carson asked if the property has been

surveyed. Mr. Bushnell replied that the property boundaries have been staked according to the boundaries established by the previous owners. K. Gordon asked about the deck height, and Mr. Bushnell replied that it would be 36 inches above ground and will include railings.

The PZC reviewed Section 450-3.7 Wetlands conservation of the Zoning Regulations, which prohibits structures within 50 feet of any lake, pond, or flood zone, with the exception that the PZC may allow it with IWC approval if it can be shown that the building or structure will not cause pollution or compromise the ecology of the area. P. Carson added that Mr. Read's property is not in the flood hazard area. T. Manning noted the IWC's approval but requested assurance that the project will not cause pollution or other issues. P. Carson stated that a Riparian buffer between the lake and the house is included in the approved plan. Mr. Read added that the shoreline will be undisturbed and the plantings will improve the property.

D. DeNunzio MOVED to APPROVE the new house proposed by James Read for 25 Vernon Road in the Site Plan application #PL-25-3, finding that it is in compliance with the requirements of section 450-3.7 Wetlands conservation of the Bolton Zoning Regulations. T. Crockett SECONDED. MOTION PASSED 7:0:0.

**b. Other:** There was no new business.

## **7. ONGOING DISCUSSION: Bolton Subdivision and Zoning Regulations**

**Removal of Minimum Floor Area Requirements:** P. Carson stated that case law prohibits towns from enforcing a minimum floor area and added that requirements of the State Building, Public Health, and other codes must be met. She suggested removing the minimum floor area requirement and including a statement requiring compliance with health and safety requirements instead.

**Next Steps Toward Affordable Housing:** P. Carson noted that staff is involved with CRCOG on the regional housing plan, and they are considering model regulations that may differ based on whether the towns run on septic and well or sewer and water. M. D'Amato added that he is working on organizing a panel featuring a developer and policy advocate focused solely on affordable housing to discuss civil design, construction, and policies to create more consistency among towns. P. Carson stated that Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU) limits for residential cannot be removed since they are controlled by the Bolton Lakes Regional Water Pollution Control Authority (BLRWPCA), and they are unlikely to remove them. She noted that the PZC would need to meet with the BLRWPCA to discuss the matter further.

P. Carson asked about the discussion the PZC wants to hold with Connecticut Water Company. T. Manning replied that there is interest in bringing water up Route 44 and was curious about development on the water line. P. Carson stated that the Town of Manchester would provide the water hookup, and they have been working with Bolton and Coventry to determine whether enough water is available, whether more wells need to be re-opened on the Manchester side, and whether a pump station would be required. She added that if the towns come to an agreement, they will seek funding from legislators for the project.

P. Carson asked about land leases that were mentioned at the previous meeting. T. Crockett explained how land leases work and suggested using land leases to make homes more affordable.

**Discuss the Districts and Table of Uses in the Zoning Regulations:** P. Carson confirmed that the PZC is interested in allowing two-family dwellings in the R-1 Zone and leaving three to four-family dwellings in the R-2 Zone. She added that she will gather examples from other towns to simplify the table of uses.

**Revisit Rear Lots:** The PZC discussed potential modifications to the current regulations, house size restrictions, shared driveways, and lot configurations. M. D'Amato noted that some towns are considering allowing flexibility in lot configurations but limiting the house size to reduce housing costs, discourage large homes, and maintain the scenic landscape. T. Crockett asked if existing properties would be grandfathered in. M. D'Amato stated that would likely be based on when the subdivision was created. He also noted the limited market in Bolton for those interested in transitioning to smaller homes.

**More Flexibility in Lot Shape/Size Around Natural Restrictions of Water/Septic:** The PZC discussed allowing more flexibility in the lot shape and size to maximize the use of the land, take advantage of the natural conditions, and reduce infrastructure costs. M. D'Amato suggested looking at older subdivisions to determine whether they had flexible lot configurations. T. Manning suggested looking at Rosedale and similar communities. P. Carson said staff will review older subdivisions including areas around the lake.

**Reduce Exactions for Open Space:** T. Manning asked for the status of the open space goals and available funding. P. Carson noted that there is currently no money in the open space fund because it was used for other projects surrounding the school. She added that she will research the current status of the goals.

**Upcoming Site Application:** P. Carson noted that another application is coming similar to Mr. Read's that will be within 50-feet of the lake, except the foundation already exists and asked if the PZC will need to review it. T. Manning stated only if additional structures or impervious surfaces are being proposed.

P. Carson noted previous consideration of removing the 50-foot regulation since it is redundant with IWC requirements. She asked what would happen if the PZC denied an application that the IWC approved. T. Manning stated that the PZC would still want to see the plans. T. Crockett added that there may be occasions when the PZC would send plans back to the IWC with concerns or requests for clarification.

A. Fiano asked if the property with the existing foundation would be grandfathered in regardless of whether the lot has too much impervious area. M. D'Amato stated that the owner has a vested right to put the house back where it was. He added that there is case law on wetlands, and a public hearing would be held for anything within 50 feet of a wetland or watercourse to determine if there are any feasible alternatives. M. D'Amato noted that the PZC no longer needs to include the 50-foot rule in the zoning regulations; however, if it is kept in, it must have a very narrow scope pertaining to flood control. A. Fiano suggested that if there is too much impervious area on the lot, the PZC can only ensure the stormwater is being managed appropriately. M. D'Amato agreed and added that the PZC could also prevent any permanent improvements in the flood zone and require a Riparian buffer.

T. Manning requested that staff work on text to eliminate the minimum floor requirements. T. Manning will send the use of new septic systems Thad for review.

**8. Correspondence:** There was no correspondence.

## **9. Adjournment**

T. Crockett MOVED to ADJOURN the meeting at 8:59 p.m. D. DeNunzio SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 7:00.

Respectfully submitted by Kacie Cannon

*Kacie Cannon*

*Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for the approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.*