

1 MILFORD PLANNING BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES - **DRAFT**

2 September 2, 2025 Board of Selectmen Meeting Room, 6:30 PM

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4 **Planning Board Members Present:**

5 Doug Knott, Chairman
6 Janet Langdell, Vice-Chairman
7 Paul Amato, Member
8 Pete Basiliere, Member
9 Tim Finan, Member
10 Tina Philbrick, Selectman’s Representative
11 Justin DeMontigny, Alternate
12 Susan Robinson, Alternate

Staff:

Terrey Dolan, Town Planner
Nate Addonizio, Videographer

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14 **Via Zoom:**

15 Camille Pattison – Community Development Director

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17 **Excused:**

18 Andrew Ciardelli, Member
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24 **1. Call to order:** Chairman Knott called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Planning Board members
25 that were present and staff were introduced by D. Knott.

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27 **2. Souhegan River Local Advisory Committee (SoRLAC)-Presentation on the Souhegan River**
28 **Corridor Management Plan-2025**

29 Cory Ritz, Chair of the Advisory Committee, Rob Clemens, representative from Amherst, Eric
30 Doberstein, from Amherst and Celeste Barr, representative from Milford to the committee were called
31 forward to present. She noted the committee could have 2 more members from the town of Milford on the
32 committee and if anyone was interested should contact the committee. C. Ritz began by noting the
33 Souhegan River is one of 19 designated to receive special management considerations which is done by
34 the local advisory committees. SoRLAC consists of members of various towns and conservation
35 commission and planning board members. They review state permit applications and support
36 municipalities on river related management items along with supporting education and research. The team
37 likes to keep track of what’s happening with the river. The river also infiltrates into the aquifers used by
38 citizens and municipal wells, including Pennichuck. To keep the water clean they must design rainfall and
39 snow runoff from industrial sites, paved surfaces, lawns and farms. E. Doberstein continued by stating the
40 Souhegan River recharges the Merrimack River, which is where Pennichuck gets its water from. The
41 Souhegan used to be very polluted, and significant improvements have been made. It’s a great river and
42 should be cherished. J. Langdell noted the current master plan highlights the river as an asset to the
43 downtown and should be cherished. C. Barr noted 93% of the town’s water supply comes from the Curtis
44 Well and is right next to the river.

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46 C. Ritz continued by defining what a river corridor plan was. It protects the Souhegan River’s natural and
47 cultural resources, addresses threats to water quality, improved river ecological health, provides watershed
48 towns with goals and recommendations that can be adopted into master plans and is required by NH
49 statutes – RSA 483:8. They come up with goals, do watershed audits that incorporated new data, gather
50 feedback and come up with a plan with NRPC data. R. Clemens stated they look at all the town ordinances
51 to compile this plan, which includes several maps of the various watershed items. One map shows the
52 entire Souhegan River, and all the towns (17) associated with it. The watershed is all the water that drains

53 into the river from the Souhegan Valley. The river is 34 miles long, covers 220 square miles of watershed
54 which has 271 miles of rivers and streams and 103 miles of intermittent streams. D. Knott asked if this
55 was part of the shoreland protection ordinance. C. Ritz replied it was; they look at all the applications
56 submitted to the state that have shoreland protection impacts. They also look at threats to the river such as
57 flooding and erosion, water quantity and quality, aquatic connectivity and development. C. Barr noted
58 Milford has one of the highest threats of erosion along with Merrimack. C. Ritz noted with flooding, if
59 the river doesn't have access to the floodplain, it can develop the power to rip through the banks and cause
60 street flooding. He also noted contamination is an issue with the river and the one that is most frequent is
61 E. coli. It occurs naturally but they are concerned mainly with the bacteria that comes with runoff and
62 human activity. They and the state monitor the levels. C. Barr noted they went to a more abbreviated
63 testing schedule recently due to lab availability. She noted levels increase between the Pine Valley location
64 and the Boston Post Road – they are keeping an eye on that. C. Ritz noted levels increase at all sites every
65 time it rains.

66
67 C. Ritz continued noting that they are continually working to improve the aquatic connectivity by
68 replacing culverts to allow for more wildlife flow. The challenge is for them to be sized right to handle
69 the floods and to allow for the travel of wildlife plus the cost of replacement. The plan recommends
70 slowing down stormwater (water gardens and buffers), improving water quality by reducing pollutants,
71 protecting the buffer zone along the river and tributaries (monitoring tree removal and stumping), maintain
72 public access, balancing habitat protection and municipal priorities, supporting land conservation in these
73 areas, remove barriers to aquatic connectivity, improve fish and wildlife habitat, strengthening
74 coordination among the watershed towns. C. Barr noted the PCB levels in the fish of the river are going
75 down but won't be at safe levels for another 5 years or so.

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77 C. Ritz spoke about recommendations for town watershed audits: strengthen water resource protection in
78 town master plans and conservation land programs, expand wetland protections with wider buffers and
79 no-cut zones, reduce impervious surfaces by narrowing low travel road and clustering development,
80 preserve open space in natural condition to protect habitat and wildlife, improve stormwater controls with
81 maintenance agreements and best management practices, minimize pollutants by managing salt, fertilizers
82 and pesticides responsively. They are asking the town to help them preserve and conserve this natural
83 resource, consider adopting or integrating the plan as part of the master plan, examine town ordinances,
84 land use and stormwater regulations and compare to others in the watershed audit, continue to coordinate
85 with SoRLAC and gather more volunteers.

86
87 J. Langdell asked if this report was submitted to DES. C. Ritz replied it was submitted and approved. J.
88 Langdell suggested the approval date and DES be noted on the report. Chris Labonte, Marcy's Way, asked
89 about the potential plan for dam removal in town. C. Ritz replied they do recommend removing the dams
90 due to lack of aquatic connectivity and high maintenance costs. He noted pollutants gather behind the
91 dams as well. The river will be lower without the dams but there is a benefit with the stream flow being
92 unhindered by the dams. C. Labonte noted EDAC had put forth the idea of promoting the river as a
93 highlight of the town. The BOS had a conversation last week on purchasing one of the dams. P. Basiliere
94 asked about the dam discussion. C. Labonte said it was a decision to purchase the dam for \$1. J. Langdell
95 asked about the site in Merrimack where the dam was removed; has it improved over time. C. Barr replied
96 nature has a way of filling voids (like the shock of a timber harvest) and it is much improved.

97
98 J. Langdell noted S. Robinson arrived at approximately 6:50pm.

100 **3. First Public Hearing for Consideration of the Draft (2026-2031) Capital Improvement**
101 **Program (CIP)**

102 C. Pattison pointed out a few changes from the last time the board saw the draft. Page 5 still lists the 7
103 projects recommended by the committee but after review by the BOS, the additional funding (\$300,000)

104 for the reconstruction of town roads was added because it still requires a warrant article. It will remain
 105 until it gets increased in the budget. C. Labonte noted the money is not going into a fund; it will be used
 106 and is not lapsing. The intent is to get the DPW road budget up to \$1.1 million a year to maintain them.
 107 P. Amato felt this was a budget item and not a capital improvement plan item, since it shows up every
 108 year. C. Pattison said the CIP committee was of the same opinion as P. Amato. Ultimately it is the planning
 109 board's plan, and they can make the decision to remove it. T. Finan noted the warrant article needs to be
 110 worded in a way that adds that amount of money to the budget the following year. P. Basiliere noted this
 111 money is for a maintenance project and not a capital improvements project. The point of the plan is to be
 112 able to plan for the big projects that come up. J. Langdell said the BOS needs to write the warrant article
 113 in a way that allows that money to be in the budget for the next year, as T. Finan stated. Mike Thornton,
 114 North River Road, noted heavily traveled roads last around 5 years. You'd need to pave 18 miles a year
 115 to keep up and not fall behind.

116
 117 C. Pattison continued with the water line replacement project in the north end of town on page 9. The
 118 planning board wanted to know what roads were included. They are north of Amherst Street including
 119 Myrtle, North, Granite, Shady Lane and fire hydrants will be replaced as well. The asbestos pipes are a
 120 risk for breakage and no longer supported and will be replaced. C. Labonte noted the asbestos lines were
 121 near the water storage tank on Mayflower and if they break, the water tank will drain. P. Basiliere
 122 suggested that information be included in the report. P. Amato asked if the pipes were asbestos or if the
 123 cement connecting the pipes has asbestos in it; it wasn't clear. D. Knott clarified it was in the pipes. P.
 124 Basiliere asked about the statement on page 3 saying there will be no cost for the school until 2028; he
 125 thought it will be earlier than that. C. Pattison noted that it had been changed at the BOS meeting. P.
 126 Basiliere noted the table said the first year of tax impact is 2027 on pg. 5. C. Pattison will check with the
 127 finance director on what year the tax impact for this project will fall.

128
 129 P. Basiliere had a question about the Swing Bridge project that was approved in 2025. C. Pattison noted
 130 this was the increase in the cost of the project; the number is the local match for the project. She noted
 131 the explanation is in the project description. She would add a sentence that clarified that it was approved
 132 last year and due to a project construction cost increase was on the ballot again. She said the design should
 133 be completed by December to have an accurate cost for the town warrant. P. Basiliere commented on page
 134 6 notes: he noted the values in the tax rate column were dollars, not tax rate. C. Pattison will check the
 135 wording. P. Amato replied it was the tax dollar impact. P. Basiliere noted he had heard a presentation
 136 about all the work required to repair the town hall, including brick work and chimneys, totaling almost \$1
 137 million. He felt there should be a CIP project for each of the next five years. T. Finan felt the DPW should
 138 have included that information. J. Langdell noted this information is not new and the project was broken
 139 apart to smaller pieces. J. DeMontigny said the roof was listed as urgent and that might be why it was
 140 broken out. D. Knott made the point if the committee isn't aware of a need, it won't get into the report. P.
 141 Basiliere felt it should be added. T. Philbrick felt it shouldn't be added because Leo Lessard, DPW
 142 director, doesn't have an accurate estimate. She felt the board should act on what was presented and
 143 someone should reach out to him on what is required for all projects. C. Pattison said they need to be
 144 cognizant of the department heads' opinions on the importance of projects; it's too late to add anything.

145 She said they could add a sentence stating the needs for the town hall in the future. There was a discussion
 146 on the threshold for projects and whether the number should be increased from \$75k to \$100k. M.
 147 Thornton felt the finance director should recommend the level. C. Pattison said it was something that
 148 should be discussed once this year's process is complete. D. Knott said if everyone can agree, they can
 149 increase the value to \$125k and asked C. Pattison to note that the planning board is aware of potential
 150 significant town hall repairs. The board also agreed to remove the \$300,000 for road repairs.

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 152 **4. Milford Development Regulation Revisions: Continued discussion**
 153 T. Dolan noted all the changes that have been made have been given to the board and all errors from the
 154 2017 document have been cleaned up. P. Amato had some changes beginning with page 65: they've

155 always done 2.5 inches of base coat of pavement and 1.5 inches of wear coat; now it's 3 inches and 2
156 inches. He felt this was too restrictive. D. Knott noted this was not just on the developer; it was municipal.
157 C. Pattison noted this was a DPW recommendation. C. Labonte noted that DPW does follow these
158 recommendations. P. Basiliere felt something of this magnitude should have come to the planning board
159 first. J. Langdell replied that these changes have to come from a department head and the planning board
160 should implement them and note the reason why. P. Amato asked how many times the town has pulled a
161 bond in 25 years; now they are making it much more expensive to put a bond in place – why?
162

163 D. Knott asked if there were any more substantive changes; T. Dolan replied there were none. C. Pattison
164 continued with page 9 – the definition of abutter has changed per the RSA. Page 18 is site plan and
165 extension approval to be consistent with the state statute – 3 years from 2 and 7 years for substantial
166 development, consistent with the state. P. Basiliere noted engineering firms aren't mentioned, but they are
167 listed on the list of abutters. T. Dolan replied they are sometimes the applicants, who are also notified. J.
168 Langdell noted the engineer usually represents the applicant, so they need to make sure they are present.
169 C. Pattison noted it was a courtesy to notify all, not a mandate. T. Dolan noted the storm water management
170 ordinance is now correctly referenced throughout the document. J. DeMontigny asked if there was still a
171 reference to stormwater management and erosion control plan. T. Dolan replied it was a regulation. P.
172 Amato asked about requiring lot and street information in development construction. T. Dolan said they
173 need to provide an appropriate location for the inspectors and emergency services. P. Amato asked who
174 was policing it; J. DeMontigny replied the fire department was, most likely.
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176 C. Pattison moved on to page 41 and the off-street parking table. T. Dolan noted the state decreed that it
177 was one parking space per all types of developments – single family, multi-family, elderly, and mixed
178 use. D. Knott asked that the RSA be listed. Page 43 was to prevent ADA criteria from coming back for
179 approval for every change in the future. C. Pattison noted on page 56, the numbering was corrected.
180 “Insures” was changed to “ensures”. T. Dolan asked if the board needed the DPW director to discuss the
181 above-mentioned change. P. Amato felt that it was a lot to ask developers to do. He asked about the change
182 of bonding requirement. T. Dolan noted the town engineer sent that change. T. Dolan noted page 66,
183 bonding, was suggested by the board and RSA change. There was a discussion regarding securities for
184 unaccepted roads. T. Dolan said that projects must be bonded. He would work with the town engineer to
185 tweak the wording. He continued with page 69, which was wording the board had approved; the town will
186 provide an estimate of the final cost of engineering.
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188 T. Dolan noted on page 75, 5000 feet was change to 43,560 feet; the same on page 78 and 81, per the
189 stormwater management ordinance. Page 84, the table will paginate better. C. Pattison noted the changes
190 will make it appear better. D. Knott stated they needed more information from L. Lessard before they
191 approve it. T. Dolan asked if they wanted to schedule the first public hearing in October. C. Pattison said
192 they will get the required information for the 7th October worksession so they can schedule the public
193 hearings for October.
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195 **5. Milford 2026 Zoning Ordinance Revisions: Continued discussion (including ADU potential**
196 **revisional language**)

197 T. Dolan said this will be postponed to the September 16th meeting.
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199 **6. Master Plan Committee Update**

200 C. Pattison had an update to the membership list with 2 new people: Chris Barnes and Tracy Steele. She
201 felt it was worthwhile for the board to approve the current state of members, which should only be running
202 through January, at the latest. J. Langdell thought Chris Costantino was a member and not staff. C. Pattison
203 thought the opposite. P. Amato made the motion to approve the membership list; T. Philbrick seconded.
204 ROLL CALL VOTE: J. Langdell – yes, S. Robinson – yes, P. Amato – yes, T. Finan – yes, T. Phibrick –
205 yes, P. Basiliere – yes, D. Knott – yes. Motion approved.

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7. Meeting Minutes Approval: 08/19/2025

D. Knott asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. T. Finan made the motion with T. Philbrick seconding. ROLL CALL VOTE: T. Philbrick – yes, J. DeMontigny – yes, P. Amato – yes, D. Knott – yes. P. Basiliere abstained, J. Langdell abstained. Motion passed.

8. Other Business

P. Basiliere referenced an email to allow planning board comments on the voter’s guide. If they are not allowed, they need to submit a warrant article to allow such information. T. Philbrick was concerned that other groups will want to weigh in on the warrant article and increase the price from \$7000 to \$14,000. She felt they could have a majority and minority report like the BOS does. C. Pattison will get a town council opinion on it before discussion.

9. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m. on a motion made by P. Amato and seconded by T. Phibrick. All were in favor with none opposed. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by: Kathryn Parenti

Date: _____

Signature of the Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson:

