



Town of Hopkinton

Planning/Building Department

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HOPKINTON PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

AUGUST 11, 2026

Members Present: Chair Michael Wilkey, Ex-Officio Alyssa McKeon, Molly Hardenbergh, Jane Bradstreet, Emily Bouchard, James Fredyma, and Alternate Dean Owens. Members Absent: Vice Chair Rob Dapice, and Alternates Sam Durfee, Jeff Donohoe. Staff Present: Planning Director Karen Robertson

I. Call to Order/Roll Call.

Chair Michael Wilkey called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM at the Hopkinton Town Hall, 330 Main Street, Hopkinton, NH. Members, alternates, and staff were introduced. A quorum was confirmed.

II. Review of Minutes and Notice of Decision.

MOTION was made by Alyssa McKeon and seconded by James Fredyma to approve the Minutes of June 9, 2026. Motion carried, with Fredyma, Bradstreet, Bouchard, Hardenbergh, McKeon, and Wilkey voting in favor and Owens abstaining (6-0-1).

MOTION was made by James Fredyma and seconded by Jane Bradstreet to approve the Minutes of July 14, 2026. Motion carried unanimously (Fredyma, Bradstreet, Bouchard, Hardenbergh, McKeon, Owens, and Wilkey (7-0).

III. Conceptual Consultations.

There were no conceptual consultations.

IV. Applications/Public Hearings.

2026-2 Genesis Systems, LLC – Conservation subdivision proposing eight (8) residential lots with designated open space. The property is located at 167 Branch Londonderry Turnpike (Tax Map 266, Lot 62), within the R-3 Zoning District.

Joe Wichert appeared on behalf of the applicant. He was accompanied by John Wichert, engineer, and identified JR Hoell as the client, who was also present.

Mr. Wichert explained that the applicant had previously appeared before the Board to discuss the project conceptually and that this was the first formal submission of the subdivision application.

Subject to PB review and approval.

The subject parcel consists of approximately 21.1 acres and has approximately 290 feet of frontage on Branch Londonderry Turnpike. An existing residence formerly located at 167 Branch Londonderry Turnpike was in the process of being removed. The property is located in the southeastern portion of Hopkinton near the municipal boundaries of Hopkinton, Bow, and Concord.

The applicant proposed an eight-lot conservation subdivision. Mr. Wichert explained that the conventional yield plan resulted in six lots. The applicant proposed utilizing the density incentive available for **senior housing** by designating two of the proposed residential lots for such housing. Because more than 20 percent of the proposed units would qualify under that provision, the applicant represented that the ordinance provides a **25 percent density bonus**. Applying the 25 percent bonus to the six-lot conventional yield results in 7.5 lots, which the applicant indicated may be rounded to eight lots pursuant to the ordinance.

The applicant clarified that the two designated senior housing units would be primary single-family residences and not accessory dwelling units.

The applicant discussed changes made since its earlier discussions with the Board. The previous concept contemplated the use of two accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in connection with the proposed density incentive. Based upon questions and concerns raised during the prior discussion, the applicant determined that using ADUs for the affordable/workforce housing component unnecessarily complicated the proposal.

Accordingly, the applicant removed the ADU component from the density-bonus proposal and substituted two age-restricted/senior primary residences. The applicant believed this approach more clearly satisfied the applicable density incentive provisions.

Board members confirmed that the ADUs previously proposed as part of the density incentive had been removed from the application. The applicant confirmed that they had and that the two senior housing units would instead be primary residences.

The subdivision would be served by a **new internal roadway**, tentatively identified on the plans as **Liberty Court**, approximately 900 feet in length.

The applicant explained that an earlier concept contemplated a gravel road. In response to previous Board discussion, the plans had been revised to provide a paved roadway. The applicant stated that use of a paved road simplified issues associated with vehicle counts, trips, and additional curb cuts onto Branch Londonderry Turnpike. The proposed internal roadway would provide access to the subdivision rather than creating additional individual access points onto Branch Londonderry Turnpike.

The applicant advised that the formal submission consisted of an approximately 21-sheet plan set. A modification had also been made in anticipation of the Alteration of Terrain (AOT) submission. The applicant had not yet formally submitted the project to the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services because it wanted to first receive direction from the Planning Board and confirm that the proposal was proceeding appropriately.

A Board member asked about a pond shown toward the front of the property and whether it remained part of the proposal.

The applicant explained that the pond was not shown on the colored overview sheet distributed at the meeting but remained on the complete plan set. The discussion clarified that this was the proposed **fire pond** and that its location had been selected in response to a request from the Fire Chief.

The Board discussed the location of the fire pond in relation to the required **100-foot roadside buffer** along Branch Londonderry Turnpike. A concern was raised that the purpose of the roadside buffer appeared to be visual screening and preservation of vegetation.

The applicant noted that a significant portion of the existing 100-foot area had already been cleared because it included the former residence and yard area. The applicant acknowledged the purpose of screening the development from the public roadway and stated that it would be amenable to adding plantings within the 100-foot area. If additional screening were required outside the buffer and within the designated open space, the applicant indicated that it would also be willing to consider such plantings.

The Board asked the applicant to identify the **waivers** and other relief being requested as part of the application.

The applicant stated that a waiver was being requested from the **subdivision phasing** requirement. The applicable provisions would otherwise require the development to be constructed over three years based upon the number of proposed units. The applicant requested permission to complete the project in two years instead.

The applicant explained that the relatively short length of the proposed roadway and a desire not to unnecessarily prolong construction supported the requested two-year phasing schedule.

It was also noted that relief was being sought concerning the location of stormwater management ponds within the designated open space.

The Board subsequently noted that the written phasing waiver still contained references to the applicant's former ADU proposal. The applicant acknowledged that the waiver had been drafted while the ADU proposal remained under consideration and agreed that the document would need to be revised to reflect the current proposal.

The Board discussed which lots would be designated as the two **senior housing** lots. Following clarification, the applicant identified **Lots 2 and 7**.

A Board member asked when those two residences would be constructed if the Board approved the requested two-year phasing plan. The applicant explained that, from a construction standpoint, it would make sense to initially develop the four lots closest to Branch Londonderry Turnpike. The applicant anticipated that the two senior housing lots would likely be included in the first phase.

The Board discussed the importance of ensuring that the residences relied upon to obtain the density bonus are actually constructed. The applicant indicated that it would not object if the Board ultimately required the two senior housing units to be constructed as part of the first phase.

The applicant was also asked why Lots 2 and 7 had been selected for senior housing. The applicant explained that those lots had relatively limited grade changes between the front and rear portions of the proposed building areas. This would make the lots more suitable for residences with minimal stairs, such as ranch-style homes, without requiring extensive grading or earthwork.

Board members indicated that the explanation was reasonable.

The Board discussed whether the applicant intended to prohibit **ADUs** within the subdivision through homeowners' association documents or other private restrictions.

It was noted that although ADUs had been removed from the applicant's density-incentive proposal, the question was separate from whether a future property owner might otherwise have the right to construct an ADU.

The applicant indicated that it was not necessarily proposing to prohibit ADUs. There was discussion regarding whether an HOA or similar private legal document could restrict ADUs and whether existing developments containing such restrictions may predate changes in State law.

The Board clarified that designation of two lots as senior housing for purposes of obtaining the density bonus did not, by itself, necessarily prohibit a future ADU on one of those lots. The discussion was intended to clarify the applicant's intent rather than establish a requirement at that time.

Following the discussion, the Chair asked Board members whether there were any additional questions regarding application completeness.

MOTION was made by Jane Bradstreet and seconded by Alyssa McKeon to **accept** the application of Genesis Systems, LLC for an eight-lot conservation subdivision at 167 Branch Londonderry Turnpike, Tax Map 266, Lot 62, as complete for purposes of beginning formal review pursuant to RSA 676:4. Motion carried unanimously (Fredyma, Bradstreet, Bouchard, Hardenbergh, McKeon, Owens, and Wilkey (7-0)).

The Chair emphasized that acceptance of the application as complete did **not** constitute approval of the subdivision and merely commenced the formal review process.

Following acceptance of the application, the Board considered whether the proposed subdivision constituted a **Development of Regional Impact** pursuant to RSA 36:54–58. The Board reviewed the relevant considerations for determining regional impact, including:

- proximity to neighboring municipal boundaries;
- potential effects upon transportation networks;
- the size and nature of the proposed development;
- environmental effects that could extend beyond Hopkinton; and
- potential effects upon shared facilities or services.

The Board discussed the unusual location of the property at the Hopkinton municipal boundary adjacent to both the City of Concord and the Town of Bow. It was noted that several of the proposed subdivision lots are located directly along municipal boundaries and that Branch Londonderry Turnpike serves as a transportation corridor used by more than one community.

The proposed subdivision also includes construction of a new roadway and associated drainage and stormwater infrastructure.

Board members asked what would occur if the Board determined that the project had regional impact.

It was explained that Concord and Bow would receive abutter status and would be provided an opportunity to review and comment upon the application. The Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission would also be provided the application and related materials. The determination would provide an additional 30 days in the statutory review period to permit regional review and comment.

The Board discussed the role of the neighboring municipalities and clarified that Bow and Concord would have the right to provide comments and recommendations but would not assume decision-making authority over the application. The Hopkinton Planning Board would remain responsible for making the ultimate decision on the subdivision.

Comments from the neighboring municipalities would be treated in a manner similar to other abutter comments. The Board could consider and agree or disagree with recommendations submitted by Bow or Concord. However, any identified substantial adverse impact upon a neighboring municipality would warrant careful consideration as part of the Board's review.

It was further clarified that the applicant would not necessarily be required to appear separately before the Bow or Concord land use boards as a consequence of the regional impact determination. Representatives of those communities could attend the continued Hopkinton public hearing and provide comments.

The Board also discussed the statutory review period. It was explained that the Development of Regional Impact determination provides an additional 30 days for review to accommodate participation by affected municipalities and the regional planning commission.

MOTION was made by Molly Hardenbergh and seconded by Alyssa McKeon to determine that the Genesis Systems, LLC eight-lot conservation subdivision at 167 Branch Londonderry Turnpike, Tax Map 266, Lot 62, constitutes a **Development of Regional Impact** pursuant to RSA 36:54–58, and to identify the City of Concord and Town of Bow as potentially affected municipalities. Motion carried unanimously (Fredyma, Bradstreet, Bouchard, Hardenbergh, McKeon, Owens, and Wilkey (7-0)).

The Board discussed the next steps in the technical review process.

The proposed roadway, drainage, stormwater facilities, and related infrastructure would require outside engineering review on behalf of the Town. The applicant indicated that it

wished to have the reviewing engineer selected and the required escrow amount established so that technical review could begin.

The Board discussed whether it would be more productive to undertake a detailed substantive review of the plans that evening or defer the detailed review until comments were received from the Town's engineer, the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission, Bow, and Concord.

The Chair recommended waiting until those comments were available. This would allow the Board to consider the entire project and the technical and regional comments together rather than conduct a detailed review that might need to be repeated if significant changes resulted from outside review.

The applicant indicated that it had no objection to deferring the detailed presentation.

The Chair also explained this approach to members of the public who were present, noting that it would likely be more useful for everyone to review the complete record once regional and engineering comments had been received.

The Board initially discussed September 8 as the date of its next regular meeting. It was then recognized that September 8 was the date of the State Primary Election and that the regular meeting date would therefore need to be changed.

The Board discussed notification requirements and noted that if a continued hearing date were changed because of the election schedule, appropriate notice would be provided.

MOTION was made by Jane Bradstreet and seconded by James Fredyma to **continue** the public hearing on the Genesis Systems, LLC subdivision application to the Planning Board's September meeting, with the date and time to be announced, to allow for review and comment by the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission, City of Concord, and Town of Bow pursuant to RSA 36:54–58, and to allow completion of the Town's engineering review of the proposed roadway, drainage, and related infrastructure. Motion carried unanimously (Fredyma, Bradstreet, Bouchard, Hardenbergh, McKeon, Owens, and Wilkey (7-0)).

Following the vote, the Planning Director summarized anticipated responsibilities resulting from the Board's actions. These included, but were not necessarily limited to:

- providing the required Development of Regional Impact notifications to the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission, City of Concord, and Town of Bow;
- providing the application, plans, and other necessary materials for regional review;
- coordinating completion of the Town's engineering review;
- incorporating regional and engineering comments into the materials for the continued public hearing; and
- tracking the additional 30-day statutory review period resulting from the Development of Regional Impact determination.

The applicant asked whether the necessary engineering escrow arrangements could also proceed. It was confirmed that the process for establishing the review escrow and coordinating the outside engineering review could move forward.

The representatives of Genesis Systems, LLC, concluded their presentation.

V. Other Business/Discussion Items.

A) Planning Board Work Plan 2026 – Project Updates

1) Natural Resources Master Plan Chapter

The Planning Director reported that work on the Natural Resources Chapter of the Master Plan continued to move forward, although progress was somewhat behind the preferred schedule.

It was noted that summer scheduling can be difficult because boards and committees may meet less frequently as members may be unavailable. Despite the delay, the Planning Director anticipated that the project would remain manageable and continue to progress.

2) Zoning Amendments 2027

The Board discussed the ongoing preparation of proposed zoning amendments.

The Planning Director reported that updated drafts had not yet been completed following the Board's prior discussion but that work had begun on preparing the amendments in redline/strikeout format.

The amendments being prepared included the Housing Committee's recommendations and the changes to the **Table of Uses** previously discussed by the Planning Board.

The Planning Director reported that additional legal clarification was being sought from the New Hampshire Municipal Association regarding recent State legislation addressing **multifamily housing on commercially zoned land**.

The discussion focused particularly on how the State requirement applies to zoning districts that permit both residential and commercial uses and whether a district that is primarily residential but allows certain commercial uses must also permit multifamily housing by right.

The Board also discussed the VB-1 District, where multifamily housing presently requires a special exception in certain circumstances. The Planning Director indicated that changes would be necessary to comply with the new State requirements.

An additional question concerned the number of units that must be permitted by right. The ordinance contains references to both 12-unit and 24-unit multifamily buildings. Clarification was being sought as to whether the municipality must allow the maximum multifamily density presently allowed elsewhere in its commercial zoning provisions or whether a lower number of units could be established.

The Planning Director noted that these questions appeared to be issues other New Hampshire municipalities were also addressing and that further guidance was awaited before finalizing the proposed language.

The Board briefly discussed another proposed zoning amendment relating to **solar energy systems**.

The proposed change resulted from an earlier ordinance audit and concerned removal of the height restriction as applied to roof-mounted solar installations.

3) Site Plan Review Regulations

The Planning Director also identified proposed amendments to the Site Plan Review Regulations related to **parking requirements**, specifically the distinction between a requirement of one parking space and one-and-one-half parking spaces.

It was clarified that these changes would be amendments to Planning Board regulations rather than zoning ordinance amendments. Accordingly, they would not require approval by Town Meeting voters. They would instead require the appropriate public hearing and adoption by the Planning Board.

4) Zoning Amendments 2027 (Continuation)

The Board discussed continuing its review of proposed amendments to the **Conservation Subdivision** provisions.

The Planning Director recommended scheduling another work session and estimated that approximately two weeks would be sufficient to prepare updated materials. The intention was to provide the Board with an updated redline/strikeout draft of the Conservation Subdivision provisions together with drafts of the other proposed amendments.

It was anticipated that most of the other zoning amendments would be relatively straightforward. The Conservation Subdivision amendments were expected to require more extensive discussion and potentially more than one additional review.

The Board asked whether any zoning amendment requests had been received from parties other than the Housing Committee. The Planning Director stated that none had been received at that time.

Board members then discussed possible dates for the work session. Scheduling was complicated by summer vacations, the start of the school year, Labor Day, the State Primary Election, Zoning Board of Adjustment meetings, Conservation Commission meetings, and other municipal committee schedules.

After discussing several dates, the Board reached a **tentative** consensus to hold the **Planning Board work session** on Wednesday, September 2, 2026, subject to confirmation of member availability and meeting-space availability.

B) September Planning Board Meeting Schedule

Because the regular September meeting date of September 8 conflicted with the State Primary Election, the Board discussed moving the regular Planning Board meeting to the following week.

The Board tentatively identified Tuesday, **September 15, 2026**, as the date for the next regular Planning Board meeting.

It was noted that the Conservation Commission also meets that evening, which could create scheduling and meeting-space issues because members and staff participate in both boards. The Board discussed beginning the Planning Board meeting at approximately 5:00 or 5:30 p.m. and concluding by 7:00 p.m. if the Town Hall was needed for the Conservation Commission.

C) Committee and Staff Reports

Brief updates were requested from members associated with other boards and committees. No substantive additional business requiring Board action was reported.

VI. ADJOURNMENT.

MOTION was made by Jane Bradstreet and seconded by Molly Bouchard to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 PM. Motion carried unanimously (Fredyma, Bradstreet, Bouchard, Hardenbergh, McKeon, Owens, and Wilkey (7-0)).

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Robertson
Planning Director