Planning Board
Town of Sandwich
PO Box 194
Center Sandwich, NH 03227

Minutes August 20, 2026

Members Present: Mike Babcock, Alix Coolidge, Julie Dolan, Brewster Lee, Maureen Westrick, *ex officio* Joanne Haight, Alternate Ben Fullerton
Absent with notice: Ray Cameron, Alternate Gerry Ives
Also Present: Susan Bryant Kimball, Chip Kimball, Dwight Emery, Katy Holmes, Rick Van de Poll, Nancy Walser, Lee Warren

Call to Order: Chair Babcock called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

New Business: Public Hearing: **Adoption of 2026 Town of Sandwich Master Plan**: Ms. Coolidge **Motioned** to Open the Public Hearing. Ms. Haight seconded. All in favor. Mr. Babcock opened the floor for comments. Points made: The Plan was well crafted to include all the special interests and varied perspectives that may be in conflict and closely referenced the survey results. It was important to acknowledge all that may be in conflict and include all recommendations to be worked on balanced approaches to meet the needs of the community. Good job in integrating all the different voices in the writing. The extensive public outreach was noted as an effort over the last year. A submitted comment was that it was an enjoyable read. Many comments of thanks to the committee, writers and editors for a locally produced document that reflects the community. The committee was thankful for the participation in the two listening sessions where the audience was engaged and invested in the Plan.

Ms. Dolan **Motioned** for the Planning Board to adopt the 2026 Master Plan. Ms. Coolidge seconded. All in favor.

Question was asked about the next steps. The Plan is a "living document" and the Implementation Guide is the blueprint for the actions. The next step is for the Planning Board to form a subcommittee and set its mission statement, goals and procedures. It will track the progress of all the recommended actions and periodically report to the Board and annually report to the community in the Annual Town Report. Initial work has been done to set up a spreadsheet as a tool, thanks to Dwight Emery who has been recruited to serve on the committee. Ms. Dolan and Susan MacLeod will continue. The intent is to guide all the identified responsible parties to prioritize actions, examine options, consider budgets as necessary and provide updates in a transparent process.

With no further questions or comments, the hearing was considered closed.

6:19 pm: Mr. Babcock **Motioned** to go into a nonpublic session "RSA 91-A:3, II (l) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present". Public left the room. Roll call vote to enter nonpublic session: Mr. Babcock, yes; Ms. Dolan, yes; Ms. Coolidge, yes; Mr. Lee, yes; Ms. Haight, yes; Ms. Westrick, yes; Mr. Fullerton, yes. Session began at 6:20 pm.

6:33 pm: **Motion** by Mr. Babcock to leave nonpublic session. Second by Ms. Westrick. All in favor. Mr. Babcock **Motioned** to seal the minutes for 90 days, seconded by Ms. Coolidge because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this Board. Roll call vote to seal the minutes: Mr. Babcock, yes; Ms. Dolan, yes; Ms. Coolidge, yes; Mr. Lee, yes; Ms. Haight, yes; Ms. Westrick, yes; Mr. Fullerton, yes.

6:34 pm: public meeting resumed.

Member status: Mr. Babcock reported that he had received an email from Alternate Gerry Ives who, due to health issues, is stepping off the Board for now. Mr. Babcock has offered his support.

Case 2026-19 Home Occupation (HO) for Ms. Westrick for use of barn space for events. Ms. Westrick recused herself and Alternate Mr. Fullerton appointed to vote. Ms. Westrick presented the proposal and noted that another approved HO is currently on the property, an architect's office. Ms. Dolan made a point of order that the need for approval for more than one HO is not a requirement in the zoning ordinance. Discussion that it is good process to recognize each HO so submitting a form for a second one is appropriate. The new HO form is now online and answering all the questions should suffice without necessitating coming before the Board to explain the occupation.

Ms. Dolan **Motioned** to approve the form. Mr. Babcock seconded. All in favor. Further discussion on a need to distinguish event venues as beyond what has been considered a home occupation – low impact offices, studios, and farmstands. The question on number of employees for an event space came up with homeowner technically not employing anyone, but event organizers, caterers and the like may have many employees onsite for an event. Before changing the zoning ordinance, it should be the Select Board to set standards for traffic, assembly numbers, and health & safety issues (sanitation) for permitting events. It can be addressed with a local ordinance by the Select Board to be more flexible and responsive to changing when necessary. Generally agreed that it should be explored to require a site plan review for event venues.

Minutes of August 6, 2026: Ms. Westrick **Motioned** to approve as written. Mr. Fullerton seconded. 6 in favor, 1 abstained. Ms. Dolan had a question triggered by the reference in the minutes to add a suggestion by Jim Hambrook, "*Where required, the applicant shall provide (at the applicant's expense) a report of a licensed engineer, **surveyor**, or certified soil scientist demonstrating that the lot contains sufficient contiguous unrestricted area to satisfy the Structures Envelope minimum and accommodate a compliant ISDS and principal structure with all required setbacks".* She wanted clarification that this is not a new, costly requirement for someone with a lot who now wants to build on it. Explanation: All lots of record were surveyed to meet requirements of the time, and if passed, this amendment would apply to new subdivisions. On existing lots, the Building Permit process addresses this and it would not come to the Planning Board. Mr. Lee reported that he is still waiting for feedback from Noah Hodgetts at OPD, the NH Association of Natural Resources Scientists, and a response from Greg Howard. He spoke with Shanna Saunders at LRPC and she offered assistance as a consultant and the question was asked whether the HOP grant funds could be used to pay for this service. Mr. Babcock will follow up on relating need for this information to addressing creating opportunity (lot size) for affordable housing. Ms. Haight suggested keeping Ms. Delaney and Ms. Cox in the loop on these zoning issues.

Other: Revised Scenic Tree cut application form. Mr. Babcock drafted a revised form to clarify terms and process for utility applicants and Ms. Dolan set up a fill-in form to be reviewed at the next meeting.

Adjournment: 7:24 pm

Scheduled Meetings: Regular meeting September 3, 2026; September 17, 2026 work session

Respectfully submitted,

Susan MacLeod, Land Use Secretary