

HAMPTON PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES September 2, 2026

PRESENT: Sharon Mullen, Chair
Ward Galanis, Vice Chair
Richard Snetsky
Keith Lessard
John Tirrell
Jeff Grip, Select Board Representative
Alex Loiseau, Alternate
Jason Bachand, Town Planner

ABSENT: Ryan Pope, Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Mullen commenced the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. The Planning Board introduced themselves.

II. ATTENDING TO BE HEARD

III. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

26-025 559 Winnacunnet Road

Map: 223 Lot: 167

Applicant: Michael and Ciji Santella

Owners of Record: Same

Wetlands Permit: Demolish existing structure and construct a 1038 SF single family dwelling.

Michael and Ciji Santella appeared before the Board. Mr. Santella explained the existing structure has been torn down, and they plan to build a new single-family dwelling.

BOARD

Ms. Mullen asked if the applicant was in receipt of, and in agreement with, the Conservation Commission letter. Mr. Santella confirmed they were.

Mr. Galanis noted he attended the Conservation Commission meeting and site visit, and everything was fine.

PUBLIC

Ms. Mullen opened the hearing for public comment.

There was no public comment.

BOARD

MOTION by Mr. Snetsky to approve the Wetlands Permit per the stipulations in the Conservation Commission letter dated August 27, 2026.

SECOND by Mr. Tirrell.

VOTE: 7-0-0

MOTION PASSED.

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26-026 Hobson Avenue, Keefe Avenue, Mooring Drive, Johnson Avenue, Riverview Terrace, Bragg Avenue, Tuttle Avenue, and Briar Road (included in the scope of work, but has no wetlands impact)

Map: 289, 290, 292, 293, 295, 296, 115 & 116 Lots: N/A – ROW

Applicant: Aquarion Water Company of NH (C/O Amanda Keyes, P.E.)

Owners of Record: Town of Hampton (ROW)

Wetlands Permit: Replacement of existing water mains and services. No permanent impacts are planned. All paved and non-paved surfaces will be restored to existing conditions after the water main installation is completed.

Amanda Keyes, Aquarion Water Company, appeared before the Board. Aquarion has several streets, mostly off of Ashworth Avenue (abutting the marsh) that they will be doing water main replacements on. They are still working on the scheduling of the projects as this will take several years to complete.

BOARD

Mr. Bachand noted the Wetlands Permit is good for two years, the applicant would need to request an extension, if needed.

Mr. Lessard asked for clarification on how the streets were decided upon. Ms. Keyes explained that main replacements are prioritized by age, integrity, material, and frequency of breaks.

Ms. Keyes clarified they will be replacing the mains and the service lines up to the curb stops.

It was noted that Aquarion will be working with DPW to coordinate work.

Ms. Mullen asked about notification to property owners. Ms. Keyes stated they aim for at least one month's notification.

PUBLIC

Ms. Mullen opened the hearing for public comment.

Stan Wojcik, 6 Bragg Avenue, appeared before the Board. Mr. Wojcik asked about the paving after the water main is replaced. Ms. Keyes explained that Aquarion typically works with the Town to see what will be required, just the paving of what they dug up or repaving of the entire street. Mr. Wojcik asked if this will cause the water rates to go up. Ms. Keyes explained there can't be a rate increase without a rate case, and they do not have one planned at this time.

Pamela Auch, 8 Bragg Avenue, appeared before the Board. Ms. Auch stated that when previous work was done on the street dirt was put in the marsh and never removed causing the water level to rise on the street, impacting her property. Ms. Auch also stated that when the road was previously repaved there was a mistake with the grading that caused ponding in front of her property and can this be fixed with the new paving.

Ms. Keyes explained that Aquarion is not allowed to put any excess materials in the marsh. Ms. Keyes explained that Aquarion will restore the street to how it is now, they will not get into redesigning the drainage. Ms. Snetsky suggested coordinating with DPW if they will also be working on this road.

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Susan Gonchar, 12 Riverview Terrace, appeared before the Board. Ms. Gonchar asked about the timing of the work. Ms. Keyes said the streets off of Ashworth would be done after Seafood Festival and before Memorial Day.

MOTION by Mr. Galanis to approve the Wetlands Permit per the stipulations in the Conservation Commission letter dated August 27, 2026.

SECOND by Mr. Lessard.

VOTE: 7-0-0

MOTION PASSED.

IV. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

V. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES of August 19, 2026

MOVED by Mr. Galanis.

SECOND by Mr. Lessard.

VOTE: 5-0-2 (Mullen, Loiseau)

MOTION PASSED.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

- Coastal Resilience Roadmap (Ben Ritt, Coastal Resilience Coordinator)

Dr. Ben Ritt, Coastal Resilience Coordinator, appeared before the Board to review the [Coastal Resilience Roadmap](#) and how the compensatory flood storage amendment relates to it.

- Conserving areas for potential marsh migration & flood storage.
 - #6 Review zoning and land use regulations:
 - This amendment is the direct deliverable. High readiness, short timeline, low cost.
 - #1 Conserve areas for marsh migration and flood storage.
 - The regulatory compliment. #1 protects storage through acquisitions, this stops the permitted erosion of it.
 - #11 Funding strategy.
 - Where a payment or credit mechanism would live, and where the CRIZ overlap gets resolved.

Ms. Mullen asked Dr. Ritt to clarify compensatory flood storage. Dr. Ritt explained that when building occurs in an area and water comes into that area (rain event, storm surge, tidal event, etc.) the water wants to be at that same elevation, but something is now blocking it, and the water now needs to go somewhere else. This can push water into neighboring properties or further into neighborhoods. Compensatory flood storage refers to storage, either on the property or on a secondary location nearby, that needs to be of either equal or greater amount to take on that water. Ms. Mullen asked how someone would understand what their responsibilities were if they were considering a project. Dr. Ritt explained they would work with Mr. Bachand and himself and possibly the Conservation Coordinator.

The Board and Dr. Ritt reviewed the types of projects that would trip this type of mitigation.

Mr. Lessard asked what would happen if the compensatory flood storage cannot be achieved on the property. Dr. Ritt reviewed the concept of credits.

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- Credits are not fungible across elevations.
 - A credit is not a volume, it is a stage-storage curve. Tracking it means volume by elevation increment, per site, revalidated against current datum.
- Cross-program stacking.
 - The same excavation could earn a storage credit here, a CRIZ tax credit under RSA 79-E, and a wetland mitigation credit at the state or federal level.
- There may be a funding strategy here: Road Map #11
 - If the Town wants a market or payment-based instrument, it belongs in the funding strategy as a program with a ledger and a fee structure, not inside a zoning standard.

Dr. Ritt reviewed replacement ratio options:

On Site – 1:1

Storage replaced on the same parcel, at the same elevations. Directly verifiable, and the applicant carries the risk of their own design.

Off Site – 1.5:1 or 2:1

Storage replaced elsewhere in the reach. More uncertainty, less verifiable, harder to enforce overtime so it should cost more.

What other communities require:

- Keene, NH: No net loss of storage
- Newton, MA: 110% of displaced volume
- Salem, NH / Dedham, MA: 2:1 – twice the encroachment

Mr. Snetsky asked how the permitting for this would be managed. Dr. Ritt explained it would be managed by the Floodplain Manager and Planning, if it required site plan approval or wetland permitting. This would most likely impact large projects and would not likely impact single-family dwelling projects.

Brianna Hagan, Conservation Coordinator, clarified that just because compensatory flood storage is met, doesn't mean that the other floodplain requirements don't need to be met.

Mr. Grip asked if credits can be sold. Dr. Ritt recommended they be purchased into a town-owned project.

Ms. Mullen asked how an applicant will know if their project would trip this requirement. Dr. Ritt explained that an engineer working on the application process would review the ordinance and determine if the project is decreasing capacity, if the answer were yes, the applicant would need to do compensatory flood storage.

Ms. Mullen asked about the cost of credits. Dr. Ritt reviewed some of the discussions that would need to be had in order to set up a credit system.

Dr. Ritt advised creating a separate fund for the credit system. The Board discussed what the credit cost could be based upon. Dr. Ritt will provide models of other communities' credit programs as examples.

Mr. Bachand and Dr. Ritt will come back to the Board with a further refined draft of the ordinance.

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- Anticipated 2027 Zoning Amendments
 - Impervious Surface (Conservation Commission)

Brianna Hagan, Conservation Coordinator, appeared before the Board. Ms. Hagan reviewed the existing language for the impervious surface definition. She noted that permeability is a spectrum and there was a discussion in the Conservation Commission about decks falling under the impervious surface definition.

Impervious Surface Definition – Proposed Language Option 1:

An impervious surface (also referred to as “sealed surface” or “lot coverage”) is any modified surface that cannot effectively absorb or infiltrate water. Examples of impervious surfaces include, but are not limited to roofs and the following unless designed and maintained to effectively absorb or infiltrate water: decks, patios, and paved, gravel, or crushed stone driveways, parking area, and walkways.*

A deck may be considered pervious if it is **constructed with planks not greater than 8 inches in width with a minimum ¼ inch space between each plank or with suitable pervious material, not covered by a roof or enclosed above or below, and the area underneath remains entirely pervious (with no use as a storage area).*

Impervious Surface Definition – Proposed Language Option 2:

An impervious surface (also referred to as “sealed surface” or “lot coverage”) is any modified surface that cannot effectively absorb or infiltrate water. Examples of impervious surfaces include, but are not limited to roofs and the following unless designed and maintained to effectively absorb or infiltrate water: decks, patios, and paved, gravel, or crushed stone driveways, parking area, and walkways. *A deck may only be considered pervious if it is **constructed with planks not greater than 8 inches in width with a minimum ¼ inch space between each plank or with a suitable pervious material, not covered by a roof, and the area underneath remains entirely pervious (with no use as a storage area).***

- a. **A deck that is 6 ft or lower off of the ground, located within the Groundwater Protection District or the Wetland Conservation District that is greater than 160 square feet in size, but otherwise meets the requirements above, shall be subject to 100% of the total surface area above 160 square feet being considered impervious.***

The Board reviewed and discussed the two definition options.

Mr. Bachand explained this will simplify the definition in the Zoning ordinance and move the standard out of the definition and into a more appropriate place in the ordinance, per the recommendation of the Zoning audit.

It was the consensus of the Board to move forward with proposed definition one.

- Clarification: Replacement or Repair of Existing Structures in the Wetland Conservation District

Ms. Hagan reviewed the existing language of Section 4.1.3.A.8 (a) Replacement or Repair of Existing Structures in the Wetland Conservation District

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Proposed new language Section 4.1.3.A.8 (a) – Option #1

a. The structure has a previously approved Town Wetlands Permit that aligns with all aspects of the proposed replacement or repair. The structure shall also have received a Town Building Permit, if one was required, and have been constructed in compliance with all applicable regulatory requirements at the time of the original application. This provision applies to all Town Wetlands Permits that are not more than five years old, or, if greater than five years old, are supported by an updated delineation showing the wetlands in the same location.

Proposed new language Section 4.1.3.A.8 (a) – Option #2

Replacement or repair of an existing accessory building or structure, including but not limited to, sheds, decks, patios, fences; provided that:

a. The structure has a previously approved Town Wetlands Permit that aligns with all aspects of the proposed replacement or repair. The structure shall also have received a Town Building Permit, if one was required, and have been constructed in compliance with all applicable regulatory requirements at the time of the original application. This provision applies to all Town Wetlands Permits that are not more than five years old, or, if greater than five years old, are supported by an updated delineation showing the wetlands in the same location.

The Board reviewed and discussed the two options.

Ms. Hagan proposed another option, extending the expiration period for the Town Wetlands Permit to 5 years and including the replacement and repairs within that 5-year period. It could also include language to the effect that the bulk of the work must be concluded within the first 1-2 years of the permit.

It was the consensus of the Board to move forward with this new proposed idea.

- Clarification: Definition of “Frontage”

Mr. Bachand noted this is an amendment he has been working on with assistance from the Building Inspector.

New language:

Contiguous: *A continuous unbroken line that forms a single connected path, regardless of its geometric shape.*

Frontage: *The linear distance measured along the front lot line adjoining a Class V (or better) highway which has not been discontinued, or is shown on a plat approved by the Planning Board, between the points of intersection with the side lot lines. For corner lots, frontage shall be the total length along the roadway which is the legal address of the subject property. Footage requirements specified in Section 2.2., Dimensional Requirements, of this Ordinance shall be contiguous as defined in Section 1.5.*

It was the consensus of the Board to move forward with this wording.

- Business Seasonal / Business Seasonal 1
 - Option One: Combine the two zones into one and allow for 70 feet from Nudd to Duston with the submittal of a successful shadow study.
 - Option Two: Combine the two zones into one allow (50 feet) and allow for 70 feet only with a Conditional Use Permit.

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The Board reviewed and discussed the two options. Mr. Bachand suggested moving this proposed amendment to consideration in 2028. It was the consensus of the Board to move this to 2028.

- Planning Board Alternates - Open Seats

MOTION by Mr. Lessard to appoint Thomas Jones as a Planning Board Alternate for a 3-year term (to expire March of 2029).

SECOND by Mr. Galanis.

VOTE: 7-0-0

MOTION PASSED.

MOTION by Mr. Galanis to appoint William McEvoy as a Planning Board Alternate for a 3-year term (to expire March of 2029).

SECOND by Mr. Grip.

VOTE: 7-0-0

MOTION PASSED.

- Planning Board Member Reports (re: Select Board, Conservation Commission)

General Updates from the Planning Board

Ms. Mullen noted that on October 7th there will be an initial meeting with Nate Bernitz from the UNH Extension Community Business Engagement Program.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Mr. Galanis.

SECOND by Mr. Tirrell.

VOTE: 7-0-0

MOTION PASSED.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 10:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Novotney, Office Manager

****PLEASE NOTE****

ITEMS NOT CALLED OR IN PROGRESS BY 10:00 P.M.

MAY BE CONTINUED TO THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

Please note that Active Applications to the Planning Board can be viewed at hamptonnh.gov/720/Active-Applications-to-the-Planning-Boar