TOWN OF AMHERST
Planning Board

June 17, 2026 **DRAFT**

In attendance at the Barbara Landry Meeting Room: Tom Quinn (Chair), Gordon Leedy (Vice Chair), Joseph Broderick, Lisa Haagen, Pamela Coughlin (Board of Selectmen ex-officio); Doug Chabinsky (alternate)
Staff present: Gloria Norcross (Town Planner)

Tom Quinn called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Doug Chabinsky sat as a voting member.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. **CASE #: PZ20030-040626 – Golden Valley Way Holdings, LLC (Owner & Applicant), 30 Northern Boulevard, PIN #: 002-028-023.** Non-Residential Site Plan. To construct a contractor building and associated stockyard. *Zoned Industrial. Continued from May 20, 2026*

The Board addressed both items for this applicant concurrently.

Jason Hill, TFMoran, explained that the applicant recently met with the Conservation Commission to present the updates to the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and held a site walk. The revised plans have been sent to Keach Nordstrom for review. Revisions have been made to the plan to further reduce any environmental impacts and provide long term protections for the use of the property. The applicant has enhanced the buffer with proposed plantings by increasing the size of the white pines. The applicant also almost doubled the amount of sweet fern plantings within these areas. The applicant will provide more immediate screening and a denser buffering area. The applicant will also include a soil water treatment system for the runoff from the property. This will now pass through oil/water separators before going into the infiltration basin. The applicant will ensure that all of the runoff is captured and treated. These best management practices (BMPs) provide additional treatment by capturing sediment and any petroleum based pollutants. These additional measures provide a greater level of protection to the groundwater quality. The applicant has also committed to a long-term groundwater monitoring system utilizing the existing wells and supplemented with an additional upstream well on the property. This information would be provided to the Town annually. If the testing does identify any. concentrations attributable to the site that exceed the applicable state groundwater standards, the applicant will investigate the source and implement appropriate corrective actions if the issue is coming from on site. These commitments go beyond what is typically required for this type of a project, but the applicant acknowledges that there are environmental sensitivities.

In terms of the use of the building, Jason Hill explained that this is not an industrial facility. The primary purpose of the specified secure storage is for construction equipment and vehicles to be stored during the winter, and for equipment, as needed, to support the operation. In addition to the vehicles and tools, there will be certain materials that support the paving business and a small office for administrative staff. There will be routine maintenance on an extremely limited basis inside the building and occasional minor cleaning and adjustments of tools and equipment. This

is not a commercial body shop or motor repair operation. The business will not produce asphalt, store aggregates or milling, or petroleum storage, fuel distribution, fuel storage, diesel storage, etc. The building functions primarily as a storage staging area. The changes to the applicant show that the applicant is willing to go above and beyond to address the regulatory requirements and protect the groundwater, surface water, and water resources of the Town. This project balances the reasonable use of the operational; needs and the environmental conditions.

Jason Hill stated that the applicant also submitted a CUP upgrade. There are specific environmental commitments and habitat commitments that have been agreed to with DES regarding restoration and long term protection of the wildlife habitat on site. The letter from the Conservation Commission stated that the application does not meet the criteria for avoidance and minimization. The applicant disagrees due to the record as stated and the improvements proposed for the site, which demonstrate that the project satisfies the ordinance by avoiding and minimizing environmental impacts to the fullest extent practicable, while also incorporating the substantial environmental protections. The layout has been intentionally designed to reduce impacts to the wetlands. The outdoor storage in the operational yard has been placed outside the wetland buffer while the enclosed building is located closer inside the buffer. This arrangement places the higher impact activities, such as vehicle movements, equipment staging, and material handling, further from the wetlands. In contrast, the building, being an enclosed structure, will generate significantly less disturbance, making this configuration the most environmentally responsible option. The size of the building is 10,000 s.f., which is the minimum functional size necessary for the anticipated operations and gives the applicant enough room to store trucks inside and circulate the trucks around the site without it being too crowded. Reducing the building footprint further would compromise the safe and efficient operation of the business without meaningfully improving the effect of the site plan on the wetland buffer. The property is constrained by being surrounded by wetlands and other overlay districts along with topographical constraints. The proposed layout balances the reasonable minimal use needed by the applicant while minimizing to the most practical extent impacts to the wetland buffer. There are no direct wetland impacts. The applicant has made several enhancements to the project on record, including reducing the storage yard by approximately 25%, which decreases the amount of impervious area and the amount of runoff. This also decreases the amount of disturbance on the site. The applicant is proposing restoration plantings as mitigation and has further enhanced that mitigation based on feedback. The applicant will be improving the stormwater treatment with an oil/gas trapping device. The applicant is proposing an infiltration system which is designed to maintain the groundwater recharge levels within the aquifer protection zone. In terms of long-term groundwater monitoring, this is a commitment that the applicant would make to ensure that the operations will not degrade the groundwater on site nor contribute to any type of delinquency of the groundwater. The applicant would make corrective measures if it was determined that any increases above the ambient standards are generated on site. This project does not need a CUP for the Aquifer Protection District but is still proposing to do this monitoring. There were concerns expressed regarding future storage of prohibited materials on the site and a photograph was taken from the site more recently, which is speculative. The application must be evaluated based on the proposed use and enforceable conditions. The applicant has stated from the beginning that it is not his intention to store unregulated substances

on the property. The seal coating tank will be moved to another site. These are speculative assumptions made in the Conservation Commission's letter. The Board could make reasonable conditions to ensure continued compliance. This is an industrial property in an industrial area, and the site has been vacant for decades. Vacant commercial sites are not in the best public interest as reasonable land development is in the public interest along with bringing another contractor to the community which will generate tax revenue.

In response to a question from Pam Coughlin, Jason Hill stated that incidental leaks from equipment and vehicles, similar to any parking lot or project, would be handled by the oil/gas traps in the catch basins. Inside the building, there will be a drain that pipes to an exterior tank. This tank does not have an outlet, and the owners will be alerted when the tank is getting close to being full. This is then disposed of appropriately. There will be no heavy work on engines or hydraulic lines. Seal coasting is not proposed as a business for the site.

In response to a question from Pam Coughlin, George Stanley, applicant, stated that he has five dump trucks, three low-bed trailers, and 5-6 pickup trucks for employees. Also, two pavers, two skid steers, and three rollers.

Joseph Broderick expressed concern that the site is active in terms of wildlife and this project would wipe it out with a large driveway and paved area. He agreed with most of the report from the Conservation Commission.

George Stanley stated that there will be three bays on the building a total of 80' wide for the trucks and trailers. The depth and width of the proposed building is needed to accommodate this. There will also be office space within the building and some garage space for personal use such as storing personal vehicles. Jason Hill Stated that DES has been thoroughly involved in this application process and issued a shoreland approval. A temporary wildlife exclusionary barrier will circle the construction area. This will be installed between July 16th and May 14th. It shall be maintained between April 1st and October 15th throughout active construction. The barrier will be inspected daily for defects and possible trapped wildlife. Wildlife escape mounds will be installed from the interior project area to allow them to escape. These will be constructed from sand on site every 75' along the barrier. The catch basins will have smaller holes than normal to minimize any wildlife falling in. There are no outlet control structures. NH DES approved plaques will be mounted on posts permanently at 50' intervals around the parking areas regarding there being a wildlife protected area. A reptile nesting habitat, approximately 100' long, 4' high, and 30' wide, will be created on the site. There is also a compensatory flood mitigation area which will be reestablished as an amphibian habitat. The construction equipment footprint shall be minimized to the greatest extent possible. During and after construction, no fertilizers will be used within 75' of the wetlands. Environmentally friendly matting will be used for erosion control.

Gordon Leedy stated that he still has concerns regarding this use in this area. This use could have long-term consequences in terms of the maintenance aspect. He would like to have surety to make sure that the plan will be implemented as proposed. He stated that the drainage conditions

have not been updated on the plans that he reviewed as they are still being reviewed by Keach Nordstrom. This site is on top of an exemplary natural community of Witches Brook and he is not comfortable with the buffer impacts proposed. As indicated in the Conservation Commission's letter, a 10,000 s.f. building with an acre of parking area may not be possible based on the existing constraints. It is unclear if the locations for the proposed groundwater monitoring wells are appropriate. Should the Board choose to approve the project, yearly monitoring is not enough. This should be every six months. He was surprised with the amount of wildlife activity seen during the site walk. He is concerned regarding the permeability of soils in this area which make them susceptible to any oils or hydrocarbon runoff. He is not convinced that infiltration as proposed is the right option. Any type of spill will impact the groundwater in a critical environment.

Jason Hill noted that the Fish & Wildlife Service was contacted about the project. Gordon Leedy stated that infiltration will protect temperatures of runoff into the brook, but he expressed concern that this will be adequate protection long-term for the brook. Jason Hill stated that the abutter to the north of this site is a contractor shop with equipment parked on the site. Gordon Leedy stated that the other site does not have anything to do with this proposal. He stated that, if the project moved forward, he would like a condition that the Town's Code Enforcement Officer have unfettered access to the site.

George Stanley stated that he does not understand what kind of operation the Board thinks he is running. The equipment seen on site is 5-8 years old and not how he maintains his equipment. He does not have a drop of oil on his trailer. He plans to take 19 steps voluntarily to protect the environment. He currently has a yard in California and has no issues, though there are no wetlands in that area. Maintenance on his equipment is done at other shops. Nothing on the property will disturb or contaminate the soil. He takes great pride in his business and would conduct himself similarly on the property. He will not run a dirty business.

Tom Quinn stated that it was noted by the applicant that some of the proposed changes were due to concerns from Pennichuck, but the Board has not seen those concerns. Jason Hill stated that Pennichuck wants two rows of silt fence instead of one closest to the wetlands. There were no other significant concerns. Also, a soil stockpile was deleted from the plans and made into the turtle nesting area.

Tom Quinn stated that the applicant previously mentioned minor repairs that may occur on the site. A separate letter speaks to occasional, as needed, repairs to support routine equipment upkeep. Now, it sounds as though the owner has stated that absolutely no repairs will occur inside the building. George Stanley stated that he has the ability to do some work in the building. Greasing with a grease gun will not contaminate the ground. He does not have anyone on staff who can do mechanical or electrical work. He would like the opportunity to do routine maintenance such as for DOT inspections. The building is mostly for storage, parking, office space, and as an indoor space for employees.

Tom Quinn stated that the applicant previously made two statements, that trucks would be washed 1-2 times per year and separately that they would be washed 1-2 times per month. George Stanley stated that this would be based on the situation. He would like to be able to wash the painted portion of a dump truck or the pickup trucks on site as needed.

Tom Quinn asked about the oil/water separator proposed. Jason Hill stated that hooded catch basins are proposed. These are standard hydrocarbon trapping mechanisms that are enhancements to BMPs. There is nothing in the code that would require these to be upgraded per this use.

Tom Quinn asked the purpose of a 2,000 gallon septic tank. Jason Hill stated that he believes this is a standard commercial septic tank size.

Tom Quinn noted that the project proposes approximately ¼ acre of permanent buffer removal, or over half of the required buffer over 250-300 linear feet. Jason Hill stated that he does not know the exact amount. He believes it is approximately 13,000 s.f. Tom Quinn stated that this is about ¼ acre. Half of the 100' buffer is proposed to be permanently removed. Jason Hill stated that there is a lot of acreage on the south side of the property that will be retained and not disturbed. The applicant will restore an equally large area on the site with extra plantings.

Tom Quinn stated that Section 4.11 of the CUP ordinance states that the applicant must, to the satisfaction of the Planning Board, demonstrate that it will not significantly interfere with wetland functions and values, water quality, or wildlife habitat, pursuant to the statement of the purpose of the ordinance. If the proposed uses may impact wetland function and values, the Planning Board must determine that they are not contrary to public interest and will result in significant public benefit. Compensatory mitigation is one item that can be considered, along with the applicant demonstrating avoidance and minimization to the fullest extent practical.

Gordon Leedy stated that the applicant proposes a buffer impact and a floodplain impact which is proposed to be mitigated in some way. He does not see any compensatory mitigation for the buffer impacts. The project does not impact some of the buffer on the site, but this is not compensatory mitigation. Jason Hill pointed out areas of proposed compensatory mitigation on the plan. These areas are approximately 6,000 s.f. Gordon Leedy stated that it is unclear if this will be appropriate enough to the Board. Tom Quinn stated that a 13,000 s.f. permanent impact area, and 6,000 s.f. of compensatory mitigation area, leaves approximately 7,000 s.f. net area of buffer that will be lost. Jason Hill stated that the calculation is not that simple and there are other mitigation areas proposed on site. Compensatory mitigation is not defined in terms of a ratio.

Doug Chabinsky asked about staging for equipment and materials, as per a statement made. George Stanley stated that there will be no materials stored.

Tom Quinn asked for public comment.

Steve Lutz, Chair of the Conservation Commission, explained that the Commission is taking exception to items under Section 4.11.H.5, to demonstrate avoidance and minimization. The Commission appreciates many of the restoration aspects of the project but does not feel that the applicant has demonstrated the avoidance and minimization requirements. In terms of petroleum products, the CUP does not allow for any petroleum products on a site in the Aquifer Protection District.

Gordon Leedy suggested that the Board wait to hear back from the peer review.

Gordon Leedy moved to continue the hearing to August 5, 2026, at 7pm, at Town Hall, with the understanding that all deadlines are extended. Seconded by Lisa Haagen.
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 motion carried unanimously.

2. **CASE #: PZ20031-040626 – Golden Valley Way Holdings, LLC (Owner & Applicant), 30 Northern Boulevard, PIN #: 002-028-023.** Conditional Use Permit. To impact wetlands and buffers to construct a contractor building and associated stockyard. *Zoned Industrial. Continued from May 20, 2026*

This item was addressed concurrently with the previous agenda item for this applicant and continued to August 5, 2026.

3. **CASE #: PZ20036-050826 – Geoffrey and Lisa Jones (Owners and Applicants), 35 Thornton Ferry Road I, PIN #: 006-111-002.** Conditional Use Permit. To depict the proposed construction of a non-riverine wetland crossing and paved driveway within 50' of the WWCD buffer and proposed stormwater management for proposed barn. *Zoned Residential/Rural*. *Continued from June 3, 2026*

Tom Quinn read and opened the case.

Gordon Leedy moved to accept the application as complete and subject to the Board's jurisdiction. Seconded by Lisa Haagen.
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 motion carried unanimously.

Aspyn Kutz, Meridian Land Services, explained that her clients are trying to reach a buildable envelope in the upper portion of the site to construct a proposed barn. In order to do so, there is a wetland crossing through a wetland complex that runs to the frontage of the lot. There are two wetland crossings proposed to access the building envelope in the back of the site. This will incur 2,642 s.f. of buffer impact and to mitigate that the applicant is proposing 2,911 s.f. of reseeding using a wildlife conservation mix. In addition, the applicant is proposing to plant 11 2"-3" DBH red maples in an area of currently manicured lawn. This is to help bring back some of the naturalized community to the site. No lawn mowing or caretaking of these areas will be pursued. The current paved driveway that runs up to access the proposed barn will be the

minimum width required for vehicle use. The applicant is also proposing an infiltration trench and drip edge to mitigate stormwater management.

Tom Quinn asked about a drainage calculation. Aspyn Kutz stated that this was provided. A 24" culvert is proposed and will take into account all runoff from the site. It is sized appropriately for a 50-year storm. Tom Quinn stated that it is hard to tell information about the runoff without the calculations. He asked about the amount of permanent buffer impact. Aspyn Kutz stated that this is mostly from the driveway expansion and some grading for the driveway. A driveway permit was approved for the site. The culvert is also a permanent impact. The wetland permit was received yesterday.

In response to a question from Gordon Leedy, Aspyn Kutz explained that permanent impacts to wetlands or jurisdictional areas total 382 s.f.

There was no public comment at this time.

Gordon Leedy moved that this application satisfies the criteria of Section 4.11.1.i of the zoning ordinance addressing the findings required for approval of a Conditional Use Permit in the Wetlands and Watershed Conservation District and to approve CASE #: PZ20036-050826 for Jeffrey and Lisa Jones for a Conditional Use Permit to construct a wetland crossing and paved driveway through the Wetland and Watershed Conservation District at 35 Thornton Ferry Road 1, Tax Map 6 Lot 11-2 with the conditions subsequent and precedent in the staff memo. Seconded by Joseph Broderick.
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 motion carried unanimously.

Gordon Leedy moved that approve the findings in the staff memo. Seconded by Joseph Broderick.
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS:

5. **REGIONAL IMPACT:**
   a. **CASE #: PZ20042-060526 – Friends of Young Judaea (Owner and Applicant), 9 Camp Road, PIN #: 008-059-000**. Non-Residential Site Plan. To illustrate the improvements of Tax Map 8 Lot 59 and the proposed pavilion area improvements. *Zoned Residential/Rural.*

   Gordon Leedy moved no regional impact. Seconded by Lisa Haagen.
   Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 motion carried unanimously.

   b. **CASE #: PZ20043-060526 – Zero Rosemary Lane, LLC (Owner and Applicant), New Boston Road and Rosemary Lane, PIN #: 007-070-001**. Subdivision amendment. To amend the private road easement to allow for fire truck access to building sites on a

previously approved subdivision from 2006. To keep driveway to existing house and not build the proposed new driveway. No change in lots and only an extension of the easement for Rosemary Lane (private). *Zoned Residential/Rural*.

Gordon Leedy moved no regional impact. Seconded by Lisa Haagen.
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 motion carried unanimously.

6. **Minutes: May 20, 2026; June 3, 2026**

Gordon Leedy moved approve the meeting minutes of May 20, 2026, as amended. Seconded by Joseph Broderick.
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 motion carried unanimously.

Gordon Leedy moved approve the meeting minutes of June 3, 2026, as amended. Seconded by Joseph Broderick.
Roll Call Vote: 5-0-1 motion carried with L. Haagen abstaining.

7. **Any other business that may come before the Board**

Lisa Haagen moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40PM. Seconded by Gordon Leedy.
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude