



Planning Board Minutes Town of Belmont

Monday, August 31, 2026 6:00 P.M.
Belmont Mill 4th Floor Tioga Room
14 Mill Street & Zoom

Present: Chairman Peter Harris; Vice Chairman Ward Peterson; Gary Grant and Michael LeClair
Absent: Kevin Sturgeon; Richard Pickwick; and Selectmen's Rep Jon Pike.
Alternates: Tyson Morrill
Staff: Karen Santoro, Town Planner
Zoom: Jamie O'Hara; Georgina

Chairman Harris opened the meeting at 6:00 pm and welcomed those in attendance. He announced that any party experiencing any difficulty in accessing the meeting through Zoom at any point, should call 603-267-8300 x 101, and the meeting will be recessed until access can be restored for all parties.

Plan Submission and Public Hearing – Belmont Landing, LLC: Applicant is seeking Site Plan Approval to construct 36 residential units on the upper floors of an existing mixed use commercial building. Property is located at 171 Daniel Webster Highway, Tax Lot 101-022-000-000, in the Commercial Zone. Planning Board Case # 20-26P

Attorney Philpot was present to discuss this application. Jamie O'Hara was on Zoom. Attorney Philpot stated that the Board had requested a traffic study by a traffic engineer. He stated that he would like to come to a consensus of what the Board is expecting from this independent review. The engineer he spoke with outlined a proposal. The engineer indicated that he will be able to use the count that they took from Memorial Day weekend and extrapolate that from other sources. He would like some input from the Board as to what he is laying out will meet the expectations of the Board.

M. LeClair stated that he understood what the applicant was asking, if they really needed to go through a whole third-party traffic review. He would like to know if the applicant was willing to reduce the number of units? Attorney Philpot stated that he would have to have that discussion with the applicant. K. Santoro stated that even with the reduction of units, the issue is still parking. The applicant already received a waiver for parking with what is currently in use now. They are currently at a deficit in parking spaces on that lot. K. Santoro stated that at this point they haven't even seen the new proposal. M. LeClair asked if the lease agreement with the restaurant notes anything about how many parking spaces they are allowed? Attorney Philpot stated that he has not seen the lease, but he's been told that the restaurant has no assigned spaces. M. LeClair stated that if this project ends up taking spaces away from the restaurant, that might create a hardship for the restaurant, possibly giving them a reason to break their lease. Attorney Philpot stated that one of the proposals was to create a gated area for the apartment tenants with a parking kiosk.

M. LeClair stated that at this point, after hearing from the other Board members, the applicant needs to provide the information that Staff has requested, discuss adding that to the plan, and show whatever segregated parking area he is proposing, and think about reducing the number of units in order to conform with the regulations.

P. Harris stated that his concern is that when this application was first in front of the Board, the applicant noted that it wasn't going to be workforce housing, because of the regulations tied to that, but rather these would be studio apartments. His other concern is that the original building was built for commercial, and all the specs were based on that building being commercial. This is basically enlarging the building. There are more people and things to be protected.

Attorney Philpot asked the Board to clarify the parameters of the requested traffic study. W. Peterson stated that they would like an engineer to look at each business, what their uses are, what the parking need is and what it's like at different times of the day.

K. Santoro stated that the Fire Department had concerns regarding the addition of units and the lack of a fire lane. They were concerned with not being able to get around to the back of the building. At the last meeting, the comment from the Deputy Fire Chief was that if you gate off 36 parking spots, they will have to allow room for the turn radius of Laconia's biggest truck, which is 40 feet in length.

Discussion continued about the parking issues and the Board's concern.

MOTION: M. LeClair moved that the application be continued to September 28, 2026
Second: W. Peterson
Vote: All in favor, motion carried. (4/0)

Plan Submission and Public Hearing – IDH Realty, LLC: Applicant is seeking a conditional use permit to build a two-bedroom home as a subordinate dwelling unit in the Commercial Zone. Property is located at 121 Laconia Road, Tax Lot 205-069-000-000. Planning Board Case # 22-26P

LOT HISTORY:

04-25-2018 - Site Plan Violation
 05-14-2018 – ARC Application
 04-26-2026 – ARC Application
 07/27/2026 – Site Plan application (approved w/conditions)

COMPLETENESS OF APPLICATION

MOTION: W. Peterson moved that the application be accepted as complete for the purposes of proceeding with consideration and making an informed decision. However, additional information shall be requested as necessary and must be submitted in a timely manner to complete review and act on the application. The Board shall act on this proposal by 10/28/2026 subject to extension or waiver.

Second: G. Grant
Vote: All in favor, motion carried. (4/0)

Conditional Use permit is to be part of Site Plan approved on July 27, 2026. Application is considered complete. CUP was part of the approval conditions. The variance was granted on August 26, 2026.

DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT

Chairman Harris stated that in order to provide timely notice, provide opportunities for input and consider the interests of other municipalities, the Board shall act to determine if the development has a potential regional impact as defined by RSA 36:55. Impacts may include, but are not limited to: relative size or number of dwelling units as compared with existing stock; proximity to the borders of a neighboring

community; transportation networks; anticipated emissions such as light, noise, smoke, odors, or particles; proximity to aquifers or surface waters which transcend municipal boundaries; shared facilities such as schools and solid waste disposal facilities.

MOTION: M. LeClair moved that the proposal does not have a potential regional impact.

Second:

Vote: All in favor, motion carried (4/0)

MERITS OF APPLICATION:

DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSE:

Fire: No concerns

Police: No concerns

Water/Sewer: No comments

Public Works: No comments

Town Administrator: No comments

Code Enforcement Officer: No concerns

Conservation Commission: No concerns

Land Use Technician: No issues with the proposed development.

Assessing Administration: No issues or concerns.

Notes:

For Subordinate Dwelling Unit a conditional use permit application and findings shall be in compliance with these Regulations Article 15. Definitions-Single-family subordinate dwelling unit of the Zoning Ordinance and shall be subject to the following conditions:

- a. The subordinate dwelling unit use permit expires upon termination of the primary non-residential use.
- b. Owner of the property must complete and record in the Belknap County Registry of Deeds a Restrictive Covenant provided by the Planning Board stating the restrictions for occupancy of the dwelling.

Chairman Harris opened the public hearing. There were no public comments.

MOTION: M. LeClair moved that the Conditional Use Permit be granted Final, conditional approval as it appears to meet all of the technical requirements of the Ordinances and Regulations of the Town of Belmont with the following conditions:

Conditions (precedent) to be complied with or secured (as appropriate) prior to plan being signed and decision recorded. No site improvements or approved uses shall commence and no building permit shall be issued until plan is signed and decision recorded.

1. This action is based on a plan dated 5/30/2026 (Site Plan approved 7/27/2026).
2. Approval is contingent upon receiving relief (Variance) from the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA). If a variance is not granted by the ZBA, the conditional use permit is no longer valid.
3. Payment of decision recording fee. Check made payable to BCRD in the amount TBD.
4. Evidence of any other agency permits obtained as applicable.
5. For Subordinate Dwelling Unit a conditional use permit application and findings shall be in compliance with these Regulations Article 15. Definitions-Single-family subordinate dwelling unit of the Zoning Ordinance and shall be subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The subordinate dwelling unit use permit expires upon termination of the primary

non-residential use.

b. Owner of the property must complete and record in the Belknap County Registry of Deeds a Restrictive Covenant provided by the Planning Board stating the restrictions for occupancy of the dwelling.

6. Declaration of Restrictive Covenants must be filed at the Belknap County Registry of Deeds prior to the issuance of a building permit.
7. Conditions precedent shall be completed no later than 8/24/27. Active and Substantial development of the approved improvements shall occur no later than 8/24/28 and improvements shall be substantially completed by 8/24/30.
8. Compliance hearing shall be held by Board as necessary.

Second: G. Grant

Vote: All in favor, motion carried. (4/0)

Meeting minutes of July 27, 2026

MOTION: P. Harris moved to approve the meeting minutes of June 22, 2026.

Second: W. Peterson

Vote: All in favor, motion carried. (4/0)

Lot Merger

Lot Merger – Tax Lots 107-041 & 107-042

MOTION: M. LeClair moved to approve the merger of Lot 107-041-000-000 and Lot 107-042-000-000.

Second: G. Grant

Vote: All in favor, motion carried. (4/0)

154 Main Steet -former bank building

K. Santoro stated that the Board of Selectmen is seeking input from the Planning Board regarding the demolition of the former bank building located at 154 Main Street, pursuant to RSA 41:14-a. She stated that Ruth Mooney, Chair of the Select Board was present if any of the Planning Board members had questions.

Chairman Harris asked if demolition was the only consideration. R. Mooney stated that it was. She stated that the Town has owned this building for many years now. Since the Town acquired it, nothing has been brought forward, nor has there been any interest in the building. It's been sitting with no utilities, and it is deteriorating. It was originally constructed as a post office, with a small satellite bank location on the second floor. The consensus among the Select Board is that it will be very expensive to rehab the building, and they really have no use for it.

P. Harris asked if they had any estimates to tear the bank building down. R. Mooney stated that they have received two quotes to demo and remove the materials. She stated that an asbestos study was completed, and nothing was found. They are working with DES to have someone come in and inspect the building as it stands now.

Travis O'Hara (Select Board member) stated that his concerns about selling the building rather than tearing it down was that the Town would lose the ability to control what happened on that lot since it is so central to the Town greenspace. He would like to protect the Village district.

R. Mooney stated that at this point, they can only kick this can down the road for so long. It is becoming a liability, and there is concern that the insurance company might not be very happy about the condition of the building.

W. Peterson stated that it was a shame that they couldn't fix or repurpose the existing building. R. Mooney stated that of course the building could be fixed or repurposed, but that would require a bond, and the voters didn't even approve a \$200,000 bond to work on the Mill Building. If the voters want to save this building with a petition warrant, then they should have another petition that will give them the money to do something with it.

P. Harris stated that he will put his faith in what the Select Board decides.

R. Mooney stated that the Board understands that \$38,000 is a lot of money, but they feel that if they hold off on this, it will be even more costly in the future.

Edward Williams voiced his concern about spending money to demo the building.

Susan Roache voiced her concern that a structural engineer report will not be done before the demolition.

MOTION: M. LeClair moved to support the Town of Belmont Select Board's recommendation to tear the bank building down.

Second: G. Grant

Roll Call Vote: Mike LeClair – Yes

Peter Harris – Yes

Gary Grant – No

Ward Peterson -Yes

Staff Report

K. Santoro presented the Board with the proposed 2027 Zoning Amendments. The Board discussed the proposed language.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: On a motion made by M. LeClair, seconded by R. Pickwick, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:08 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Susan M. Austin, Land Use Assistant