

**TOWN OF EXETER
PLANNING BOARD
NOWAK ROOM
10 FRONT STREET
APRIL 10, 2025
APPROVED MINUTES
7:00 PM**

I. PRELIMINARIES:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT BY ROLL CALL: Chair Langdon Plumer, Vice-Chair Aaron Brown, Gwen English, John Grueter, Jen Martel, Alternate Marty Kennedy, and Alternate Dean Hubbard

STAFF PRESENT: Conservation & Sustainability Planner Kristen Murphy

II. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Plumer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and introduced the members. Alternates, Marty Kennedy and Dean Hubbard were activated.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Continued public hearing on the application of StoneArch Development for site plan review of a proposal for the redevelopment of the property located at 112 Front Street. The proposal includes the demolition of the existing buildings and new construction of seventeen (17) townhouse style condominium units and associated site improvements. The subject property is located in the C-1, Central Area Commercial zoning district and identified as Tax Map Parcel #73-14. PB Case #24-17.

Chair Plumer read the Public Hearing Notice out loud.

Ms. Murphy read Town Planner Dave Sharple's comments out loud noting that the applicant originally appeared before the Board on January 23, 2025. A site walk was conducted on February 6, 2025. The applicant returned to the Board on February 27, 2025, March 13, 2025 and March 27, 2025 requesting a continuance to tonight's meeting to address comments and concerns. She noted in his memo that Mr. Sharples expressed concerns about the 54-day statutory timeframe being exceeded due to the applicant's request for a continuance until this meeting and recommended working with the applicant to record an extension in the event the Board does not reach action on the application at this meeting. The applicant submitted revised plans and supporting documents dated April 2, 2025. The applicant originally requested three waivers from the Site Plan Review and Subdivision Regulations as outlined in the request letters dated January 21, 2025 and February 19, 2025. She noted that Mr. Sharples did not believe the waiver from Section 9.3.6.4 for grading within 5' of the exterior property line was necessary any longer given revisions to the site plan. Proposed Conditions for Approval are provided.

Christian Smith noted that John O'Neil was present. He reviewed calculations for the driveway and three-unit building, and 30.75' separation to the parcel at 114 Front Street. He noted the lighting plan was provided, snow storage plantings were relocated as shown on sheet 8B. The mail kiosk was

relocated out of snow storage. Trash will be handled privately by the condominium association. No handicapped parking is required as access is through the garages. The detail on sheet 10 was erased. He reviewed the removal of curbing and extension of pervious pavement to the property line eliminating the need for a stormwater waiver. He reviewed the temporary concrete washout depicted on sheet 5 while paving foundations with details on sheet 10. He reviewed the enhanced landscape buffers and specimen tree to be located to the northwest of the first building, unit 6 which he described as a forest eastern red bud which will be partially visible from Front Street. He provided elevations for all five buildings and noted all fencing on the landscape plan was added to sheet 6. He discussed the need for a 22' drive aisle waiver, rather than the 24' required.

Chair Plumer noted that an email was received from Charlie French of 9 Gill Street which he read out loud concerning the promise by the developer of a 6' cedar fence. Chair Plumer provided a copy to Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith referenced the fence called out on the landscaping plan and that it is vinyl.

Ms. English asked about damage to roots of trees during construction. Mr. Smith noted there are some breaks in the fence on the northwest boundary specific to not damaging tree roots and there will be no grading within the 5' of the property line.

Mr. Kennedy noted that he liked the reduction to three units up front but questioned if the units got larger. Mr. Smith indicated the units got larger, the original building was four 22' units and was reduced to three 26' units.

Mr. Hubbard noted that the driveway was still close to the property line, at 5.5'. Mr. Smith indicated they were not grading the soil. Mr. Hubbard questioned the proximity of the existing tree roots and Mr. Smith noted if the system is maintained the tree has a good chance of surviving. Ms. Martel recommended adding the tree protection plans to the drawings and noting the critical zone during construction. Mr. Smith noted he would discuss that with the landscape architect. Vice-Chair Brown recommended going ahead with the waiver for grading within 5' of the property line in the event it was needed.

Mr. Grueter asked about the two parking spots in front of the garage of building 4, and whether there was enough room to get in and out. Mr. Smith noted the parking space is 19' deep and driveway is 20'.

Ms. English asked about the snow storage area and whether pedestrian access to the walkway would be blocked. Mr. Smith noted that the maintenance company would clear the walkways and any snow accumulating near the drive aisle would be trucked off.

Adele Robertson asked about treatment when the snow melts and becomes a sheet of ice. Mr. Smith explained that the infiltration system would take care of that.

Mr. Hubbard asked about the easement to the northern end. Mr. Smith noted there is now a walkway at 114 Front Street that encroaches on the property and Mr. O'Neil will provide an easement and it will be part of the recordable condominium site plan as each unit obtains their certificate of occupancy.

Ms. English asked about the UEI comments on April 2 and response concerning gutters being large enough to capture water without a downspout or underground piping. Mr. Smith noted that UEI was satisfied and noted the latest architectural plans provide comment.

Chair Plumer noted that a letter was received dated April 2, 2025 from the Garskas of 111-113 Front Street.

Ms. Martel asked about parking with a two-car garage and two spaces outside not included in the parking count and whether all that pavement was necessary. She counted 51 spaces on the plan., four spaces per unit. Mr. Smith described the 19' length and standard depth and goal to give each unit two additional spaces and room to access their garages. He noted the need for turnaround space and emergency vehicles.

Rory Morrisette, the Exeter Cemetery Trustee, asked about additional screening for 13-12 Parker Street. Mr. Smith reviewed the plan on sheet 5 the northwest side and some breaks for the trees and existing chain link fence on the cemetery property. He noted they can't have two fences adjacent to each other that would leave an unsightly weeded area between that could not be maintained. Ms. Martel reviewed the planting plan which had Hick's Yews, a naturalistic, living fence.

Ms. English questioned the distance to Gill Street entering and exiting and whether the proximity would cause conflicts. Mr. Smith described the sight distance and noted that the traffic engineer was good with both directions.

Mr. Hubbard questioned the landscaping plan and deciduous tree comment of UEI near the porous pavement is used. Mr. Smith explained the stormwater inspection and maintenance manual, condominium documents, use of non-steel plow, no sanding and blowing out of the system twice a year and noted it would not be an issue.

Jeff Garska of 111-113 Front Street asked about adequate parking and green space. He stated that if all buildings were only three units there would be adequate room for both. He questioned the density, character of the neighborhood, surrounding property values and not saving the existing historical house. He indicated concerns with traffic, noise, parking and snow. He stated that traffic studies are useless and doesn't believe there is no impact. He questioned the zoning of the parcel which changed after a vote on a bifurcation article. He noted that the tax card showed the property zoned as R2, but the tax map shows something else. He asked if they could check this with the town attorney as the information is incorrect and misleading.

Adele Robertson of 106 Front Street asked for an explanation of the waivers and why the cement proposed at the entrance was changed to pervious. She stated concerns with privacy and impacts to her property. She questioned the red and blue flagging and noted that there was additional traffic and parking from the church and vocational-ed. She noted concerns with sight and snow banks and there being no sun on the driveways because of the height of the buildings.

Mr. Smith explained the waivers and movement of the driveway away from her boundary. He explained the engineer wanted to keep water off Front Street and to tie into the catch basin which is prohibited without a waiver. He noted the Board wanted the curbing to go away. There will be a lot less runoff to Front Street as a result. He explained that a 24' drive aisle is required and it will be 22' which was reviewed by the traffic engineer.

Kristen of 5 Gill Street stated that the project is too dense, out of character for the neighborhood, out of scale and inappropriate for the neighborhood. She agreed that the issues would be solved if the project was a lower density.

Chair Plumer closed public comment at 8:32 PM.

Ms. English stated that she agreed with abutters that the historic character was being lost, especially with the historic home being gone but the owner has a right to do what they want with their property and there is a limitation to what the Board can do.

Mr. Grueter asked whether the Board was comfortable with the zoning question and Vice-Chair Brown noted that Dave Sharples and Doug Eastman already weighed in on that. He noted in his own experience maps take precedence, but a condition could be made. He noted that having variety is healthy, people have different tastes and some prefer modern. Mr. Kennedy asked what the condition would be specifically, and Vice-Chair Brown recommended verifying the question with town counsel.

Ms. Martel noted that she agreed with the density already stated and would like to see more green space and parking spaces were exceeded. Vice-Chair Brown noted that the two outside spots are also access to their garage. Mr. Grueter noted there is no guest parking anywhere else. A condition could be additional landscape aisle between B and C. Chair Plumer noted he would like to see less units as well. Mr. Smith noted the minimum parking spaces are 36. Vice-Chair Brown noted the only way to reduce it is to reduce the garage spaces, but he is not suggesting it.

Chair Plumer asked about the weight limit data on the porous pavement. Mr. Smith noted that tractor trailer turning would damage it but not a box truck or passenger cars. (unidentified from the public asked about fire trucks).

Ms. Smith indicated that the Board could vote on the stormwater waiver although Mr. Sharples indicated it was no longer necessary, but he hasn't discussed it with him since he left. He read the letter requesting a waiver from 9.3.2.7 and the minimal impact and prohibited discharge to the municipal stormwater system and that public works felt it had no negative impact. He noted it would not threaten public health, welfare or safety or be injurious to other property. He noted the uniqueness and not wanting stormwater flow into Front Street and that the waiver doesn't vary zoning or the master plan.

Vice-Chair Brown motioned after reviewing the criteria for granting waivers that the request of Stonearch Development, Planning Board Case #24-17 for a waiver from Section 9.3.2.7 of the Site Plan Review and Subdivision Regulations regarding stormwater management be approved. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

Mr. Smith discussed the criteria for the waiver for the 22' drive aisle. He noted that the Fire Chief, DPW and UEI had no objection at TRC.

Ms. English motioned after reviewing the criteria for granting waivers that the request of Stonearch Development, Planning Board Case #24-17 for a waiver from Section 9.1.4.9 of the Site Plan Review and Subdivision Regulations for a waiver to permit the proposed drive aisle and fire lane width to be 22' rather than 24' be approved. Mr. Grueter seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

Mr. Smith discussed the criteria for the waiver for grading within 5' of the property line and the relocation of the driveway to 5.5'. He noted there may be some disturbance for fence, screening and vegetation, trees and shrubs which would be beneficial to the abutters directly.

Mr. Kennedy asked if this would allow him to move the driveway and Ms. Murphy indicated no.

Vice-Chair Brown motioned after reviewing the criteria for granting waivers that the request of Stonearch Development, Planning Board Case #24-17 for a waiver from Section 9.3.6.4 of the Site Plan Review and Subdivision Regulations for grading within 5' of the property line be approved. Mr. Grueter seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

Ms. Murphy reviewed the additional conditions of approval:

1. Tree protection during construction.
2. Easement in favor of 114 Front Street to allow continuance of existing walkway.
3. Applicant shall add a landscape island between units B and C of Building 1.
4. Town Attorney to verify the zoning is accurate as presented by the developer.

Ms. Murphy reviewed the standard conditions of approval:

1. An electronic as built plan with details acceptable to the Town shall be provided prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy. This plan must be in a dwg or dxf file format and in NAD 1983 State Plane New Hampshire FIPS 2800 feet coordinates;

2. A preconstruction meeting shall be arranged by the applicant and his contractor with the Town engineer prior to any site work commencing. The following must be submitted for review and approval prior to the preconstruction meeting:

- i. the SWPPP (storm water pollution prevention plan), if applicable, be submitted to and reviewed for approval by DPW prior to the preconstruction meeting; and
- ii. A project schedule and construction cost estimate.

3. Third party construction inspection fees shall be paid prior to scheduling the preconstruction meeting.

4. The inspection and maintenance manual log form and inspection checklist and maintenance guidance infiltration pond inspection checklist in the stormwater management and bmp inspection and maintenance plan dated December 20, 2024 shall be completed and submitted to the Town Engineer annually on or before January 31st. This requirement shall be an ongoing condition of approval.

5. The annual report section of the stormwater best management practices inspection and maintenance plan shall be revised to be consistent with condition #4 above. The annual report section currently states that the annual report will be prepared and submitted to the town engineer upon request.

6. All condominium documents including declaration and by laws shall be submitted to the Town Planner for review and approval prior to signing the final plans. The documents submitted to the Town shall include language regarding the maintenance requirements of the pervious pavers and all other stormwater practices shown on the plans and other applicable conditions of this approval. In the event the Town Planner deems necessary, the condominium documents shall be reviewed by the town's attorney, at the applicant's expense.

7. All applicable state permit approval numbers shall be noted on the final plans.

8. All applicable fees to be paid including, but not limited to sewer/water connection fees, impact fees and inspection fees (including third party inspection fees) prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

9. All landscaping shown on plans shall be maintained and any dead or dying vegetation shall be replaced, no later than the following growing season. as long as the site plan remains valid. This condition is not intended to circumvent the revocation procedures set forth in state statutes.

10. All outdoor lighting (including security lights) shall be down lit and shielded so no direct light is visible from adjacent properties and/or right of ways.

11. The applicant shall submit the land use and stormwater management information about the project using the PTAPP online municipal tracking tool. The PTAPP submittal must be accepted by DPW prior to the preconstruction meeting.

Ms. Martel motioned that the request of Stonearch Development, Planning Board Case #24-17 for a multi-family site plan be approved with the conditions read by Kristen Murphy. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Mr. Hubbard voted aye, Ms. Martel voted aye, Mr. Kennedy voted aye, Chair Plumer voted aye, Vice-Chair Brown voted aye, Mr. Grueter voted aye and Ms. English voted nay. The motion passed 6-1-0.

2. The application of StoneArch Development for a multi-family site plan review for the proposed construction of a six (6) unit townhouse style residential condominium development along with associated parking and site improvements. The subject property is located at 57 Portsmouth Avenue, in the C-2, Highway Commercial zoning district. Tax Map Parcel #73-14. PB Case #25-1.

Chair Plumer read the Public Hearing Notice out loud and asked if the case was ready to be heard. Ms. Murphy indicated the case was ready for review purposes.

Ms. English motioned to open Planning Board Case #25-1. Mr. Grueter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

Ms. Murphy read the comments from Town Planner, Dave Sharples indicating that the application was originally scheduled for the March 27, 2025 meeting, however due to time restrictions the Board voted to table the presentation to tonight's meeting. The Board held a site walk this morning at 8 AM. The applicant submitted plans and supporting documents dated January 28, 2025 and a Technical Review Committee meeting was held on February 20, 2025. Underwood Engineering (UEI) provided a comment letter dated February 18, 2025. The applicant obtained several variances for the proposed construction and the notices of decision and minutes were provided from the November 19, 2024 meeting. The applicant is requesting two waivers in their letter dated January 28, 2025. The applicant submitted revised plans and supporting documents dated March 19, 2025.

Christian Smith presented the application for townhouse style condominiums at 57 Portsmouth Avenue and posted the proposed plan showing the driveway entrance and extended sidewalk. He noted the Fire Department expressed no objection to the 22' wide aisle. There will be underground utilities and municipal water and sewer. He noted landscape plantings. He noted a second comment letter from UEI.

Mr. Grueter asked about the walkway for the back of building two. Mr. Smith indicated the location on the architectural drawing and noted the service door is in the garage. Architect Robert Baldwin explained the slope grade and two visitor spots with granite steps to the walkway.

Vice-Chair Brown asked if there could be any balconies or decking.

Ms. English questioned the purpose of the lighting up in the eaves facing Portsmouth Avenue.

Ms. Martel asked about the sidewalk on Portsmouth Avenue and asked if the curb cut could be tightened because it is not in line with the road. Mr. Smith noted the tip down for handicapped access and that it could be adjusted.

Chair Plumer opened the hearing to public comment at 8:40 PM and being none closed public comment.

Mr. Smith discussed the second UEI review concerning retaining walls which will be part of the foundation and recommended design by a structural engineer.

Ms. Martel noted it would be helpful to see the grading on plan and asked if there were any fall protection. Mr. Baldwin indicated the height of the wall.

Ms. Martel asked about snow storage and Mr. Smith depicted the areas on the plans.

Vice-Chair Brown motioned to table Planning Board Case #25-1 to the Planning Board's April 24, 2025 meeting at 7 PM at the Nowak Room and revised plans and supporting documents shall be submitted to the Planning Office at least 8 days prior to the scheduled meeting or the application may remain on the table until a future meeting. Mr. Grueter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

3. The application of Dade Auto Holdings Realty Trust (Volvo Cars of Exeter) for a minor site plan review and Wetland Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the for the proposed construction of a 6,200 SF addition to the rear of the existing Volvo dealership at 140 Portsmouth Avenue along with associated site improvements. The subject property is located in the C-2, Highway Commercial zoning district and is identified as Tax Map Parcel #52-108 and #51-1. PB Case #25-2.

Chair Plumer read the Public Hearing Notice out loud and asked if the case was ready to be heard. Ms. Murphy noted the application was complete for review purposes.

Vice-Chair Brown motioned to open Planning Board Case #25-2. Mr. Grueter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

Ms. Murphy read Town Planner, Dave Sharple's comments. She noted that The applicant submitted plans and supporting documents dated February 19, 2025. A Technical Review Committee meeting was held on March 20, 2025. The applicant is requesting a waiver from Section 9.2.4-1a regarding the pitch of the roof. The applicant submitted revised plans and supporting documents dated April 2, 2025 and presented their wetlands Conditional Use Permit application to the Conservation Commission at their April 8, 2025 meeting. Mr. Sharples provided standard conditions of approval if the Board decides to forego a site walk and act on the application.

Corey Belden of Altus Engineers presented the application and noted that Jonathan Smith was present from Warren Street Architects. He posted the proposed plan of the expansion of the auto service center in the rear of the existing building. He noted no increase to impervious area because the addition is being constructed over the existing parking area. Mr. Belden reviewed stormwater treatment on site and the 2020 wetland pond constructed. He noted that Dade Auto also owned the adjacent property. He noted that roof runoff is collected by underground downspouts and the system drains to the wet pond which has the capacity for the additional flow. The outlet structure would be raised by 1.'

Mr. Belden noted that they met with the Technical Review Committee on the 20th and displayed the wetland buffer and noted 210 SF of disturbance which may be exempt because of the existing pavement in the buffer. He noted 165 SF of disturbance for the new pipe to the wet pond

Mr. Belden reviewed the waiver request for the roof pitch which was necessary to tie into the existing building which also had a 1:12 pitch not matching the 3:12 required.

Mr. Belden reviewed the additional building mounted light fixtures and noted that the solar on the existing building will be expanded onto the new roof.

Chair Plumer opened the hearing to the public for comments and questions at 10:03 PM and being none closed public comment.

Vice-Chair Brown commented that it was an excellent use and the CUP was warranted with minimal impact and no additional impervious surface and is out of sight of the general public. Chair Plumer noted they would make use of the existing stormwater management plan and match the pitch of the existing roof.

Ms. Martel asked if a photometric plan should be required, and Mr. Belden noted there is no additional lighting on the wetland side. Ms. Martel indicated she was satisfied that a photometric plan was not necessary to provide but is always a good practice to complete.

Ms. English asked about the vegetation on the front of the building on the Portsmouth Avenue side and Mr. Belden described the existing vegetation. Ms. English asked about snow plowing and Mr. Belden described the snow stakes.

Mr. Belden reviewed the criteria for the roof pitch waiver under Section 9.2.4-1a and read the waiver request letter into the record. He noted it was not detrimental to public, health, welfare and safety or injurious to other property and noted the unique conditions and noted the hardship was the existing pitch tie-in and that the request would not alter zoning or the master plan.

Vice-Chair Brown motioned after reviewing the criteria for granting waivers that the request of Dade Auto Holdings, Planning Board Case #25-2 for a waiver from Section 9.2.4-1a of the Site Plan Review and Subdivision Regulations for roof pitch of 3:12 or greater, be approved. Ms. English seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

Mr. Belden presented the required for a wetlands Conditional Use Permit with 375 SF of disturbance from 210 SF of existing pavement and 165 for the new drain to the existing wet pond to collect runoff. Ms. Murphy noted the Conservation Commission had no objection to the CUP as presented.

Vice-Chair Brown motioned after reviewing the criteria for granting wetland CUP that the request of Dade Auto Holdings, Planning Board Case #25-2 for a wetland Conditional Use Permit. Mr. Grueter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

Ms. Murphy read out loud the proposed conditions of approval for the minor site plan:

1. An electronic as built plan with details acceptable to the Town shall be provided prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy. This plan must be in a dwg or dxf file format and in NAD 1983 State Plane New Hampshire FIPS 2800 feet coordinates;

2. A preconstruction meeting shall be arranged by the applicant and his contractor with the Town engineer prior to any site work commencing. The following must be submitted for review and approval prior to the preconstruction meeting:

- 392 i. the SWPPP (storm water pollution prevention plan), if applicable, be submitted to and
393 reviewed for approval by DPW prior to the preconstruction meeting; and
394 ii. A project schedule and construction cost estimate.
395

396 3. Third party construction inspection fees shall be paid prior to scheduling the preconstruction
397 meeting.
398

399 4. The annual operations and stormwater maintenance report in the stormwater management
400 operation and maintenance manual dated February 19, 2025 shall be completed and submitted to the
401 Town engineer annually on or before January 31st. This requirement shall be an ongoing condition of
402 approval.
403

404 5. All applicable state permit approval numbers shall be noted on the final plans.
405

406 6. All applicable fees to be paid including, but not limited to sewer/water connection fees, impact fees
407 and inspection fees (including third party inspection fees) prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
408

409 7. All landscaping shown on plans shall be maintained and any dead or dying vegetation shall be
410 replaced, no later than the following growing season. as long as the site plan remains valid. This
411 condition is not intended to circumvent the revocation process set forth in state statutes.
412

413 8. All outdoor lighting (including security lights) shall be down lit and shielded so no direct light is visible
414 from adjacent properties and/or right of ways.
415

416 9. The applicant shall submit the land use and stormwater management information about the project
417 using the PTAPP online municipal tracking tool. The PTAPP submittal must be accepted by DPW prior to
418 the preconstruction meeting.
419

420 ***Vice-Chair Brown motioned that the request of Dade Auto Holdings, Planning Board Case #25-2 for a***
421 ***minor site plan be approved with the conditions read by Kristen Murphy. Ms. English seconded the***
422 ***motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.***
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424 IV. OLD BUSINESS

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426 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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428 February 27, 2025
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430 Ms. English, Mr. Grueter, Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Hubbard recommended edits.
431

432 ***Mr. Grueter motioned to approve the February 27, 2025 meeting minutes, as amended. Mr. Kennedy***
433 ***seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.***
434

435 March 13, 2025

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437 Ms. English recommended edits.

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439 ***Ms. English motioned to approve the March 13, 2025 minutes, as amended. Mr. Grueter seconded the***
440 ***motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.***

441

442 **V. OTHER BUSINESS**

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444 • Master Plan Discussion

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446 • Field Modifications

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448 • Bond and/or Letter of Credit Reductions and Release

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450 **VI. TOWN PLANNER'S ITEMS**

451 **VII. CHAIRPERSON'S ITEMS**

452 **VIII. PB REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT ON "OTHER COMMITTEE ACTIVITY"**

453 **IX. ADJOURN**

454 Vice-Chair Brown motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:34 PM.

455 Respectfully submitted.

456 Daniel Hoijer,

457 Recording Secretary (Via Exeter TV)