

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

**I. PRELIMINARIES:**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT BY ROLL CALL:** Chair Langdon Plumer, Vice-Chair Aaron Brown, John Grueter, Gwen English, Nancy Belanger, Select Board Representative, Alternate Marty Kennedy, Alternate Sam MacLeod.

**STAFF PRESENT:**

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

**III. NEW BUSINESS:**

1. The application of J. Caley Associates for site plan review and a Shoreland Conditional Use Permit for the proposed redevelopment of the property at 97 Portsmouth Avenue. The developer is proposing to demolish the existing Blue Ribbon Dry Cleaners building on the site and construct a multi-use building to include commercial space, amenities, and 14 residential units with parking and associated site improvements.

C-2, Highway Commercial zoning district

Tax Map Parcel #65-125

PB Case #25-3

Chair Plumer read the public hearing notice out loud. He noted that Mr. Sharples indicated the case was ready to be heard.

***Vice-Chair Brown motioned to open Planning Board Case #25-3. Mr. Grueter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

Vice-Chair Brown read out loud the Town Planner's memo (dated July 1, 2025) to the Planning Board. He noted the applicant has submitted site plan review and Shoreland Conditional Use Permit applications for the redevelopment. The applicant provided plans and supporting documents on April 29, 2025 and there was a Technical Review Committee meeting on May 22, 2025. The applicant submitted revised plans and documents on June 9, 2025 and there was a second TRC meeting on June 18, 2025. He referenced the town engineer's letter, dated June 23, 2025 with comments. The applicant submitted revised plans and supporting documents on June 24, 2025 addressing the comments. He noted the abutter list was revised upon request by abutters who are not direct abutters. Two waivers

are requested in the letter dated June 24, 2025 of Beals Associates. The Shoreland Conditional Use Permit application was heard by the Conservation Commission on June 8, 2025 and they had a site walk.

Christian Smith of Beals Associates presented the application and noted developer Jeff Caley was present. He noted that the applicant received relief from the Zoning Board of Adjustment in the form of a variance and a special exception however, the building height is covered by the MUND, which allows the 50' high building. There will be 14 residential units, and 1500 SF of commercial/retail, such as a coffee shop on the first floor, a three-season outbuilding with glass enclosure and sink and about 5-6 seats. There will be 14 parking spaces at the rear of the building. Since the paved parking drains in the direction of the reservoir a pervious pavement system will be in the front of the building and patio and behind the espresso bar. He noted the roof will drain to the pervious pavers which will be capable of treating the 50-year storm without over topping. There will be six parking stalls for commercial use. 24 spaces are required and 19 will be located on site. He described the parking easements out behind the bank property and the requirement for 1 space per 300 SF of commercial area. In worst case scenario, with 30 seats, ten spaces would be required. He noted the recommended conditions of approval in the Conservation Commission memo: soil testing upon removal of the building and the deconstruction and reconstruction of monitoring wells from the spill back in the 70s. He noted that Mr. Caley contacted NH DES and they will have a contractor on site.

Ms. English asked why the pervious paver area was chosen and Mr. Smith indicated due to the direction of water runoff.

Ms. English asked about the reason for the location of the dumpster and Mr. Smith indicated for ease of access.

Mr. Grueter asked about there being any separation from the bank parking and Mr. Smith indicated a landscape island. Mr. Grueter asked about the connection road to the condos and Mr. Smith noted it has been used for decades for access and egress.

Chair Plumer asked if the spaces in the back are marked and if these units will be apartments or condominiums. Mr. Smith indicated condominiums.

Mr. Grueter asked if there would be doors in the front and back -yes.

Chair Plumer opened the hearing to public comment at 7:29 PM.

Michael Mayer of McLane Manor asked who owns the gray area shown on the plan, and Chair Plumer indicated the condominium association.

Scott Anders indicated he appeared on behalf of Attorney Chris Hilson of DTC Lawyers. He noted a letter was submitted and requested a decision be put off until August.

Gary Daddario of Marcus, Errico, Emmer and Brooks indicated he is an attorney representing McLane Manor and has been speaking with developers. He noted concerns with traffic entering and existing,

87 with the parking easement which he noted was no longer part of the easement and described parking as  
88 tight. He expressed concerns with only requiring one space per unit as likely there will be two cars per  
89 unit and doesn't want the overflow parking coming to McLane manor. He requested a temporary fence  
90 to enclose the construction zone and to prevent nails and screws, reasonable hours and noise during  
91 construction and keeping night lighting off the McLane Manor buildings. He expressed concerns with  
92 separation of the grass hill and some form of privacy separation, foot traffic control and noted the  
93 association would rather not have the stairs on the hill due to liability and upkeep.

94  
95 Ms. English noted some form of vegetative buffer would be nice. Chair Plumer recommended the  
96 parties work together.

97  
98 Leanne Corning noted the represented BankProv and expressed concerns with parking, and overflow.  
99 Chair Plumer asked if there were any signs for bank customers only and she indicated no.

100  
101 Mr. Grueter asked Ms. Corning about the cross easements, and she noted she would have to ask their  
102 attorney.

103  
104 Vice-Chair Brown recommended a site walk and noted he is a customer of the bank. He noted the Board  
105 could not prevent someone from illegally parking in someone else's spot.

106  
107 Chair Plumer asked about the footprint of the building and Mr. Smith indicated it is the same.

108  
109 Michael Siegal of McLane Condominium noted he was blindsided a couple of months ago about the  
110 effluent spill at the former cleaners. They hired an environmental attorney. Wells were put in 50-60  
111 years ago and they were supposed to be notified of testing every five years and heard nothing until  
112 2024. He is concerned with what may be underneath the building and had their attorney ask the state  
113 to do their job concerning notification. He noted behind McLane Manor is the backup reservoir. He also  
114 expressed concerns with one space per unit when there will likely be two cars per unit.

115  
116 Ms. English asked if there are parking issues now and Mr. Siegal indicated yes, each unit at McLane has  
117 designated spots and visitor parking and it is well signed and very tight.

118  
119 Christian Smith showed the location of the monitoring wells and agreed there was a big lapse in testing  
120 between 2016 and 2024. He noted the solvents were cleaning products, of which, all but one are  
121 showing less than detectable in the well monitoring. They will be doing soil sampling but typically these  
122 solvents dissolve into water.

123  
124 Mr. Smith indicated there will be a retaining wall with 30" reveal and that they did not want to plant  
125 trees on the slop with a parking lot in front of it because trees could fall on cars. He noted lighting will  
126 be dark sky compliant with zero lumens beyond the property line.

127  
128 Chair Plumer read a letter from Tom Fahey of Upton and Hatfield on behalf of the bank concerning  
129 parking.

Chair Plumer noted the meeting would be continued until August 28<sup>th</sup> because the next meeting is for the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Mr. Smith asked about the two waivers, 5' from property line and sidewalk width. Ms. Belanger indicated she would like to hear from DPW and the Fire Department first.

The Board agreed to schedule the site walk on Wednesday, August 13, 2025 at 8 AM and noted the site walk will be posted but not noticed.

***Ms. Belanger motioned that the application of J. Caley Associates, Planning Board Case #25-3 be continued until the August 28, 2025 Planning Board Meeting at 7 PM in the Nowak Room. Ms. English seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

#### **IV. OLD BUSINESS**

##### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

June 12, 2025 - ***Tabled***

June 26, 2025

Ms. English recommended edits.

***Mr. Grueter motioned to approve the June 26, 2025 minutes, as amended. Ms. Belanger seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

#### **V. OTHER BUSINESS**

- Master Plan Discussion

Vice-Chair Brown noted that with Mr. Sharples absent, the three Planning Board members who are on the Committee need to step up to set their own agenda and also to have someone reach out to Rockingham Planning concerning the status of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Mr. Kennedy indicated he is willing to take a more active role. Ms. Belanger noted the Committee should give Pam McElroy 24 hours to post the meeting and someone should take minutes.

- Field Modifications

- Bond and/or Letter of Credit Reductions and Release

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

173 **VII. CHAIRPERSON’S ITEMS**

174 **VIII. PB REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT ON “OTHER COMMITTEE ACTIVITY”**

175 **IX. ADJOURN**

176 *Vice-Chair Brown motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM. Ms. Belanger seconded the*  
177 *motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.*

178

179 Respectfully submitted.

180 Daniel Hoijer,

181 Recording Secretary (Via Exeter TV)