

**City of Hallowell  
Planning Board Meeting  
City Council Chamber  
June 18, 2025, 2025  
6:00 pm**

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Feinstein called the meeting to order.

**2. Roll Call / Quorum**

Ms. Feinstein took the roll call and established a quorum.

Present: Judith Feinstein (Chair), Richard Bostwick, Darryl Brown, Andrew Landry, Richard Seymour, Keith Taylor (1<sup>st</sup> alt.)

Melanie Weston, Community Planner; Sarah Moore, Code Enforcement Officer

Excused: David Gilbert (2<sup>nd</sup> alt.), Melvin Morrison, Lisa Rigoulot

Mr. Taylor will be voting.

**3. Public Comments** (The Board has agreed to limit the time allotted to Public Comment to fifteen minutes.)

None.

**4. Approval of Minutes of the April 16, 2025 Planning Board Meeting**

Ms. Feinstein pointed out a typographical error under Item 3.

Motion to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2025 meeting with the correction of a typographical error.

Moved: Landry

Seconded: Brown

Unanimously approved.

**5. Application for Subdivision Revision for Stevens Commons Subdivision/Ledge Pointe Condominiums, Map 6 Lot 27 and Map 6 Lot 27-10**

Matt Morrill represented Mastway Development in presenting an application for a change to the Stevens Commons Subdivision.

Ms. Weston noted that the plans for Overlook Subdivision were included in error. Mr. Morrill noted that the final three plans in the packet were the pertinent documents.

Mr. Morrill explained that the original subdivision plan included Acorn Lane connecting Beech Street and Coos Lane. They want to straighten Acorn Lane as shown in the third plan. The yellow shading on that same plan indicates the four condominium units to be added. He explained that Acorn Lane will eventually connect to Coos Lane. It will not affect access to the F. E. Berry Conservation Area, but eventually a road will be constructed at the trailhead. Ms. Feinstein asked about the parking area at the Conservation Area; Mr. Morrill said there will be no effect on the parking. The road will eventually connect to the existing portion of Coos Lane.

Mr. Bostwick asked if the straightening of Acorn Lane was esthetic. Mr. Morrill said that it is, but it also avoids blasting through ledge. He added that Acorn Lane will climb over the ledge and then flatten out, but the steeper section will require a waiver. There was discussion of authority to grant a waiver. Mr. Seymour questioned whether the Board could approve the plan without input from Public Works. Ms. Moore suggested seeking input from the Fire Chief as well.

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Mr. Morrill told the Board he has received approval from the Hallowell Water District for the proposed fire hydrant near the top of Acorn Lane.

Ms. Feinstein invited comments from the Public.

Judith Graber, 76 Middle Street, represented the Hallowell Conservation Commission in asking if there will be any impact on the F. E. Berry Conservation easement. Mr. Morrill said there will be no impact on the Conservation Area at this point. He noted that the deed reserves an easement for a road.

Ms. Feinstein pointed out that the Board is considering the extension only, not the eventual construction of another road. Mr. Seymour suggested that the Board could approve the application contingent upon Public Works' approving the steeper grade. Mr. Brown noted the difference between approving a dead-end road and accepting a connecting road; he pointed out that the steep section of the proposed Acorn Lane is in the middle, not at the intersections and that acceptance as a city street must be through the City Council. He asked if the straightening changes the grade; Mr. Morrill said it did, 15% versus 12% with original curve, and that the grade will start at 3%, rise to 15% and then return to 3%.

Motion to find the application complete with the removal of the information regarding the Overlook Subdivision.

Moved: Seymour

Seconded: Landry

Unanimously approved.

Motion to approve the modifications to the road contingent upon approval by Public Works and to approve the four additional condominium units.

Moved: Taylor

Seconded: Seymour

Unanimously approved.

## 6. Subdivision Application for Max Ross, High Street, Map 6 Lot 15

Max Ross, developer, and Randy Butler of Dirigo Engineering, presented a preliminary application for a Single-Family Residential Subdivision – Cluster Development.

Mr. Ross explained that this is a back lot which has right-of-way connections to both Winthrop Street and High Street. They are opting for Cluster Development, which allows a 40% reduction in lot size [§9-276 (1) C]. They propose 13 lots of just over one acre each, though the residential area would allow 16 lots. He said there seems to be a discrepancy between the Cluster Development provisions [§9-276 and the 50% Open Space requirement [§9-608 (2) ]], so they are seeking guidance. He said they prefer access to Winthrop Street, but the right-of-way to Winthrop Street is only 35' instead of the 50' required for acceptance as a city street. It is possible to have an access to High Street, but that would put the intersection slightly shy of the required 150' distance from the intersection of High Street with Winthrop Street. Ms. Feinstein noted that the sight lines for that option are terrible.

Mr. Bostwick asked if the dotted lines were building envelopes; Mr. Butler said they were setbacks, noting that cluster development allows reduce setbacks. Ms. Feinstein asked if this meant that houses might be only 20' apart; Mr. Butler said it did.

Mr. Seymour asked if the buildings would be built on a slab; Mr. Butler said that would be up to the purchasers of the lots. He said they will install sewer and water service before selling the lots. Ms. Feinstein asked if the lot was wooded; Mr. Butler said parts of it were wooded and most of the woods would be preserved.

Mr. Bostwick noted that the definition for Cluster Development specified 5 acres or larger. Mr. Butler agreed that they were slightly under and said they were seeking a waiver for .2 acres. Mr. Taylor said there seemed to be two issues: whether the Board could waive the right-of-way width and how to interpret the requirements for open space in a cluster development. Mr. Brown said he felt there were too many questionable issues to approve waivers.

Mr. Bostwick asked if the plan was impacted by the Affordable Housing changes; Ms. Weston said it was not because no ADUs were proposed.

Ms. Moore noted that her biggest concern was the utility easement and the roadway. The number of units or lots was neutral for Code Enforcement.

Mr. Brown recommended access from Winthrop Street but noted that it would probably not be acceptable as a City street. Mr. Butler said that was acceptable to the developer.

Ms. Weston reminded the Board that the project would have to be reviewed under the Subdivision Ordinance requirements. Mr. Landry suggested that the waiver for the reduced acreage would have to be approved by the City Council. Mr. Bostwick pointed out that the Board will have to review both the Cluster/Planned Unit Development and the Subdivision simultaneously under §9-608 B.

Ms. Feinstein invited comments from the Public.

Katharine Mann, 66 Winthrop Street, an abutter, asked if the tax map is drawn correctly. It was pointed out that the tax maps are not survey maps and are for tax assessment purposes only. Ms. Feinstein noted that the applicant's plan is now on the website. Ms. Mann also asked if water pressure had been considered. Mr. Butler said that he had consulted Mr. Lovely at the Hallowell Water District who said that pressure is low but should be acceptable.

There was additional discussion of the right-of-way to Winthrop Street, and Ms. Weston pointed out the street requirements for Cluster Developments in §6-236.

Deborah Poulin, 64 Winthrop Street, an abutter, expressed concern about water runoff. She said she already has runoff problems and a wet basement and is concerned about how the proposed project might affect her. Mr. Seymour noted that the catch basin behind her home does not work. Mr. Bostwick noted the stormwater detention pond in the plan; Mr. Butler said it was a placeholder and that they know runoff is a problem. Ms. Poulin asked if there would be individual septic systems. Mr. Butler said the development would be served by city sewer.

Mr. Butler asked if they should stick with the 50% Open Space requirement; Mr. Landry said they should. Mr. Butler noted that conservation maps indicate that the area is poorly drained and they will have to have soil tests performed. Mr. Brown asked about vernal pools, and Mr. Butler said there are not any evident ones. Mr. Seymour noted that there is a possible one on the south side of the lot. There was discussion of ledge and soils. Ms. Mann noted that there is a layer of clay about 8" down.

There was discussion of the 35' right-of-way, and Mr. Landry said that a waiver would also probably require approval by the City Council. There was a general discussion of right-of-way issues. Mr. Bostwick pointed out that access from Winthrop Street would require an entrance permit from MDOT.

Ms. Feinstein asked Mr. Ross and Mr. Butler if the discussion had been helpful. They said it had.

## 7. Other Business

Mr. Brown asked if anything has been heard regarding the Dummer House, which is owned by Linda Beane's estate. Mr. Seymour said there is a rumor that the heirs are offering it to Row House, but Row House is declining it. There was general discussion about the condition of the house. Ms. Moore said she will start looking into the issue. She noted that it is in a gray area as far as being a dangerous building and that she has noticed homeless people scoping it out. Mr. Taylor observed that the present owner is responsible for the condition of the house. Ms. Moore noted that the CEO must work with the current owner and said she will send a letter.

There was general discussion of subdivisions and possible statutory changes.

## 8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

Moved: Bostwick

Seconded: Brown

Unanimously approved

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

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