

**City of Hallowell
Planning Board Meeting
City Council Chamber
July 16, 2025
6:00 pm**

1. Call to Order

Ms. Feinstein called the meeting to order at 5:59 pm.

2. Roll Call / Quorum

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

Present: Judith Feinstein (Chair), Richard Bostwick, Darryl Brown, David Gilbert (2nd alt.),
Andrew Landry, Melvin Morrison, Richard Seymour, Keith Taylor (1st alt.)

Melanie Weston, Community Planner

Excused: Lisa Rigoulot

Mr. Taylor will be voting; Mr. Gilbert will not be voting.

Ms. Feinstein informed the Board that an application had been overlooked in creating the agenda. Since it seemed to be a straight-forward project she suggested taking it up prior to the application from Eric Perry. The Board agreed by consensus.

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 June 18, 2025 Planning Board Meeting

Ms. Feinstein pointed out two typographical errors: in the third paragraph under Item 6 it should be “reduced setbacks,” and on page 3 it should be “septic systems.”

Motion to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2025 meeting as corrected.

Moved: Landry

Seconded: Brown

Yea: Brown, Feinstein, Landry,
Seymour, Taylor

Abstaining: Bostwick, Morrison

Motion carried.

Certificate of Appropriateness Application for 4 Middle Street LLC, 4 Middle Street, Map 5 Lot 58

Walter McKee, owner of 4 Middle Street LLC, presented an application for replacement of existing vinyl and wood siding with new vinyl siding. He explained that the front portion of the house has vinyl siding that is in poor condition and the rear portion has wood clapboards that are also in poor condition and have some rot. The new siding will be white and will look exactly the same as the existing siding.

Mr. Landry asked if there would be any changes to overhangs and trim; Mr. McKee said there would not. He added that there will be no changes to any windows. Mr. Bostwick asked about the boarded-up window shown in the photographs; Mr. McKee said it was once a door to a second-floor apartment that no longer exists. They have ascertained that it was properly blocked up so they can simply cover it with the siding and get rid of the frame.

Motion to find the application complete.

Moved: Landry

Seconded: Bostwick

Unanimously approved

Motion to find the application in harmony with Historic District standards and grant a certificate of appropriateness.

Moved: Landry

Seconded: Seymour

Unanimously approved

5. Certificate of Appropriateness Application for 16 Central Street LLC, 16 Central Street, Map 9 Lot 54

Eric Perry, owner of 16 Central Street LLC, presented an application for renovations to the house. The new windows will match what are presumed to be original windows. They are two-over-two. They will also replace the deck and outside stairs at the rear with a new first-floor entry addition. They will side the building with Hardie-plank siding to match the existing wood siding and will provide emergency egress by installing a standard steel fire-escape on the south end of the house. The new entry vestibule is necessary in order to satisfy code because the new inside stairs will be too long to fit without it.

Mr. Seymour asked if the work had been started; Mr. Perry said it had. Mr. Seymour noted that this is an after-the-fact approval.

Mr. Taylor asked if the existing second-floor door will be changed to a window; Mr. Perry said it would.

Mr. Bostwick asked what the dimensions of the addition were; Mr. Perry said it will be 13' wide and 7½' deep. It will face Franklin Street and will not be clearly visible from Central Street.

Mr. Seymour asked if there would be any change to the chimneys; Mr. Perry said they want to rebuild the chimney that was removed on the south side, but it is not part of this application. Ms. Feinstein observed that Mr. Perry will have to come back to the Board for approval when they do that. Mr. Perry said he understood.

Ms. Weston said she had no major concerns with the application. She asked for a reason for replacing the windows. Mr. Perry said the old windows have aluminum storms and single-pane glass. Mr. Brown asked if Mr. Perry had a photo or sketch of the proposed addition; Mr. Perry said he did not, but said that it would have a simple shed roof.

The Board asked Mr. Perry to provide a sketch or plan for the vestibule. He said he could bring one in before the end of the meeting.

Motion to table the application until later in the meeting.

Moved: Morrison

Seconded: Landry

Unanimously approved

6. Subdivision Application (Cluster Development) for Max Ross, Map 6 Lot 16, Preliminary Presentation

Max Ross, developer, and Randy Butler of Dirigo Engineering, presented a revised preliminary plan for a Single-Family Residential development. They presented two options: one for cluster development and one for a traditional subdivision.

Ms. Feinstein explained that this is not a public hearing for the application but she would invite members of the public to speak regarding issues they wanted addressed.

Mr. Butler told the Board that the revised plan for a cluster development provides open space at 52% of the parcel. They have reduced the number of house lots to nine on both plans. They want to use the access to Winthrop Street because it provides better sight lines and shorter utility connections. Sewer will be connected to the line crossing the lot. Both the street and the utilities will dead-end. There was discussion of the water line being extended to the main at the south end of the property to close the loop, but Mr. Butler pointed out that ledge may make that too costly.

Mr. Butler told the Board he had consulted with the Fire Chief regarding hydrants. The plan provides one hydrant for the cluster development option and two for the traditional subdivision option. He noted that the lots for the cluster development plan are 7,500 square feet. The traditional subdivision plan has larger lots

which would accommodate larger houses. The developer will build streets and utilities; the purchasers will construct the houses.

Ms. Feinstein asked if the utilities would be underground. Mr. Butler said they plan to put them underground but may not be able to.

Mr. Bostwick asked if the setbacks were less for the cluster development plan; Mr. Butler said the front and side setbacks were. He noted that for cluster development the side setbacks are based on building height. Mr. Bostwick asked if they had done a wetland survey; Mr. Butler said they had not yet done so.

Mr. Seymour observed that there is no detention pond on the traditional subdivision plan. Mr. Butler said there is not one currently, but it will be required.

Mr. Taylor observed that they are requesting waivers for parcel size, poor soils, and right-of-way width. Mr. Butler said a waiver for poor soils would be required for a cluster development but not for a traditional subdivision. There was a brief discussion of the issue of soil types.

Mr. Landry observed that for both options a waiver for right-of-way width would be required, and it was the Board's opinion that they did not have the authority to grant it, that the City Council would have to do it. Ms. Weston pointed out that the Board can grant waivers for design criteria. Mr. Landry said he preferred a legal opinion. Ms. Weston said that the Board could request an opinion from MMA if they voted to do so. Mr. Butler said they were not necessarily asking for acceptance of the street.

Mr. Brown asked if they would construct sidewalks. Mr. Butler said they would not. Mr. Brown pointed out that sidewalks are required in growth areas as designated in the Comprehensive Plan. There was discussion of the need for a sidewalk for a short cul-de-sac. Ms. Weston informed the Board that the parcel is in a designated growth area. Mr. Seymour asked if the Board's approval of a street without sidewalks and a right-of-way width waiver would create legal problems if the City Council were to deny acceptance of the street. Discussion followed. Mr. Bostwick observed that the required 24' street width fits within a 35' right-of-way.

Motion to request an opinion from MMA legal regarding potential waivers for parcel size, right-of-way width, soils, and sidewalk requirements.

Moved: Landry

Seconded: Taylor

Mr. Bostwick asked if the waivers would be for both options. Mr. Taylor said they would. Mr. Brown pointed out that a traditional subdivision would only require waivers for right-of-way width and sidewalks. There was further discussion of street acceptance. Mr. Gilbert maintained that waivers by the Board would not affect any City Council decision.

Vote on the motion:

Unanimously approved

Ms. Feinstein invited members of the public to bring up other issues.

Mr. Butler noted that he did locate an area that could be a vernal pool but may not be classified as significant. At Ms. Feinstein's invitation, Peter Schumacher located the area of a possible vernal pool on Mr. Butler's plan. He said he will investigate it.

Deborah Poulin, 64 Winthrop Street, an abutter, mentioned poor drainage on her property. She explained that a drain installed by the Michaud family doesn't work and after a significant rain it actually spews water and floods her back yard. She expressed concern that development will increase the hardship. Mr. Landry pointed out that approval of the project would require remedial work. There was further discussion of the drain problem.

Peter Schumacher, 3 High Street, an abutter, also commented on poor drainage. He told the Board that his sump pump runs hourly from April to June. He added that detention ponds are often not well maintained and become inadequate. He informed the Board that he was not notified about the Site Inventory pursuant to §9-814 2 B.

Ms. Feinstein explained that this is not a formal public hearing but more a discovery process. If the project goes forward there will be a Site Inventory and there will be a properly noticed public hearing.

Mr. Schumacher also mentioned the traffic on Winthrop Street and advocated for constructing sidewalks. He asked if there had been a traffic analysis. Mr. Butler said there had not but statistically a development of nine homes would generate 80 to 90 trips per day.

Katherine Mann, 66 Winthrop Street, an abutter, showed the Board a photograph of standing water between the two houses. She said that Greater Augusta Utility District had investigated the drain and found no obstruction. There was speculative discussion about the drain’s malfunction.

Ms. Feinstein stated that the Board will wait for a response from MMA before committing to any action.

Mr. Bostwick asked if the standing water on the Mann and Poulin properties covers part of the parcel under consideration; Mr. Butler said it does.

5. Resumption of the Certificate of Appropriateness Application for 16 Central Street LLC, 16 Central Street, Map 9 Lot 54

Motion to take the application from 16 Central Street LLC from the table.

Moved: Brown Seconded: Bostwick Unanimously approved

Mr. Perry provided elevations of the vestibule addition to the Board. He noted that the building ell is not drawn to scale. Mr. Brown commented that you would have to be looking for it to see it from the street. Mr. Morrison observed that it was an improvement over the deck and outside stairs. Ms. Feinstein noted that the drawings show some windows being one-over-one. Mr. Perry said it was his error with the drawing and that the windows will all be two-over-two. Mr. Bostwick observed that the siding was being replaced with Hardie-plank and asked if the doors in the addition will match other doors in the building. Mr. Perry said they will match the door on the north (Central Street) side of the building.

Motion to find the application complete with the additional information and photos provided at the meeting.

Moved: Brown Seconded: Landry Unanimously approved

Motion to find the application in harmony with Historic District standards and grant a certificate of appropriateness.

Moved: Landry Seconded: Brown Unanimously approved

The Board briefly discussed the issues of street requirements, the proximity to the school, and the prevalence of speeding on Winthrop Street. There was also general discussion of the background of the drainage problem at 64 and 66 Winthrop Street.

Mr. Brown called Ms. Weston’s attention to the requirements for local streets in the ordinance. There was a brief discussion of the advisability of reducing the right-of-way width.

7. Other Business

None.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

Moved: Seymour Seconded: Bostwick Unanimously approved

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Accepted as Presented on August 20, 2025, by a vote of 6 Yea to 0 Nay.

Attested: _____
S/
 Judith Feinstein, Chair