

**CANDIA PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 20th, 2025  
APPROVED MINUTES**

PB Members Present: Tim D’Arcy, Chairman; Brien Brock, BOS Representative; J. Lindsey; Kevin Coughlin; Linda Carroll; David Labbe

PB Members Absent: Mark Chalbeck, Vice Chairman, Excused; Michael Santa, Alt.

T. D’Arcy called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30PM, followed immediately by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**New Business:**

- **Informational Hearing**

**Applicants:** Jim & Terri George, 858 North Road, Candia, NH 03034 & Matt Philips, 440 North Road, Candia, NH 03034; **Owner(s):** Unknown, 74 High Street, Candia, NH 03034; **Property Location:** North Road, Candia, NH 03034 Map 403 Lot 9; **Intent:**  
*Discuss the purchase of land what would benefit the town and the environment*

One of the applicants, Matt Philips, presents a proposal concerning two town-owned lots totaling approximately 56 acres. The applicants are seeking to acquire these lots, which abut their properties, to consolidate them and prevent future development, effectively preserving the land for conservation. He highlights that much of the surrounding land is conserved, part of a large contiguous forest and wetland area. The land's strategic location prevents future development and connects to a large area of already-protected land, increasing its long-term preservation chances.

Mr. Philips explains that the town acquired the land via tax deed a few decades ago, but the ownership details have since become unclear, with most of the land unaccounted for in modern maps. The discrepancy between the historical and current maps indicates a need to investigate the town's handling of these properties and to research older records. State statutes allow towns to dispose of tax-deed properties in ways other than auction if it serves the public interest, such as selling undeveloped parcels to abutters for consolidation. The town's plan to auction the land presents challenges: the town must first determine ownership, potentially requiring research into old tax records. The town can retain auction proceeds up to the amount owed in back taxes, interest, and fees. Excess funds require tracing heirs of the deceased owner, a complex process likely involving the state, potentially leading to further costs and delays for the town. There are also potential legal challenges from heirs if the auction price undervalues the land. Another concern is that the auction might yield less than the town is owed, or that a buyer might be unaware of development difficulties on the lots, due to significant wetlands, leading to undesirable outcomes. The applicants state they are willing to pay the back taxes and cover the

cost of surveying the property, helping the town avoid those costs.

According to Mr. Philips, the Candia Conservation Commission enthusiastically supports the proposal due to its potential to protect a significant area connected to other conserved lands on the Canda-Hooksett border. It's clarified that the intended action is a lot line adjustment, not a subdivision, to avoid creating a non-conforming lot and simply clean up the property lines. The Planning Board members agree that the proposal is beneficial, as it would eliminate a non-conforming lot and clean up a potentially problematic situation. The proposal also aligns with the town's Master Plan by preserving the land as open space. They acknowledge that the decision ultimately rests with the Board of Selectmen and the town voters via a warrant article. The board agrees to send a letter to the Select Board expressing their support for exploring the proposal.

K. Coughlin: **Motion** that the Board is amenable to the suggestion as stated and authorize the Chair to send a letter to the Board of Selectmen as such. L. Carroll: **Second**. All in favor. **Motion passed**.

#### **Other Business:**

- **Approval of Minutes: 8.6.25**

L. Carroll: **Motion** to approve the minutes of 8.6.25 as presented. D. Labbe: **Second**. J. Lindsey: **Abstains**. All else in favor. **Motion passed**.

- **Town Planning:**

- Adoption of modified Planning Board application fees per Appendix C of the Subdivision Regulations.

Continuing the May 21<sup>st</sup> and June 4<sup>th</sup> meetings, the Planning Board reviews and updates the town's fee schedule for various planning and development-related activities. The goal is to consolidate fee information into a single appendix to ensure consistency and ease of updating in addition to updating the costs to reflect the rising third-party costs. The board discusses the various fees, including minor and major subdivisions, lot line adjustments, driveway permits, gravel pits, and fire inspections. The board debates whether the application fees for subdivisions and site plan reviews are adequate compared to neighboring towns. Ultimately, the board approves the updated fee schedule with minor edits.

K. Coughlin: **Motion** to accept the changes made and remove any fees from regulations and say, "see appendix C". D. Labbe: **Second**. All in favor. **Motion passed**.

- Any other matter to come before the Board.

Board members discuss the possible selection of a new town engineering firm. The chair reports reaching out to several knowledgeable individuals who all recommend Keach-Nordstrom

Associates, an engineering firm located in Bedford, NH. He presents a packet that highlights Steve Keach's extensive experience and qualifications, including his service on the State of New Hampshire Housing Appeals Board and his involvement in numerous town planning boards. The firm also represents several nearby towns, including Atkinson, Deerfield, and Hampstead. The chair notes that Keach-Nordstrom does not directly provide GIS services, like Stantec does, but could potentially subcontract with Southern New Hampshire Planning for that work. The board members are impressed with Keach's qualifications and the firm's proposed process for reviewing applications, which includes a preliminary summary review within two days. The board agrees to invite Mr. Keach to a meeting for further discussion.

Planning Board Member Judi Lindsey shares information about the impact of white lighting on night pollinators, particularly moths. She notes that regular white lighting can significantly reduce night pollinating insects and suggests encouraging the use of yellow lights as an alternative. The board discusses the possibility of adding language to the town's regulations about minimizing lighting and promoting pollinator-friendly options. Motion-activated lights were also suggested as a way to improve pollination and reduce unnecessary light pollution.

The Chair entertains a motion to adjourn.

K. Coughlin: **Motion** to adjourn. L. Carroll: **Second**. All in favor. **Motion passed**. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:37pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Ross

Land Use Coordinator

cc: file