

**CANDIA PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 3, 2025
APPROVED MINUTES**

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

PB Members Absent: Michael Santa, Alt.

M. Chalbeck calls the meeting to order at approximately 6:30PM, followed immediately by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The board agrees to change the order of the agenda due to the Chair being late for the meeting.

Other Business:

- **Approval of Minutes: 8.20.25**

J. Lindsey: **Motion** to approve the minutes of 8.20.25 as presented. L. Carroll: **Second**. M. Chalbeck: **Abstains**. All else in favor. **Motion passed**.

- **Review of the 2025 & 2026 Planning Board Budget**

The board begins with an overview of the current budget and potential areas for adjustment. The goal is to maintain the current budget if deemed sufficient or to adjust it by subtracting funds as needed. Line items discussed include Mileage, Legal Notices, GIS System Annual License/Update, Books Periodicals and Documents, Law Lectures, and Conferences/Seminars. The consensus is to reduce the Legal Notices budget, due to the discontinuation of regular newspaper notices, and reallocate some of the money to Books Periodicals and Documents. Concerns are raised regarding potential changes the Chair may mention due to additional information, but it is clarified that the decision tonight can be changed if necessary.

K. Coughlin: **Motion** to accept budget with the small modifications made. L. Carroll: **Second**. All in favor. **Motion passed**.

New Business:

- **Discussion with developer Kevin Landry requesting permission to use an outside engineering firm throughout the construction phase of PB #24-009 Diamond Hill Major Subdivision**

Kevin Landry, the developer for the major subdivision, begins by stating the project is almost ready to begin the construction phase and aims to begin this month. He explains his negative experiences with Stantec, the current engineering firm used by the town, citing excessive costs, delays, and billing disputes for his projects in other towns. He wishes to use a different engineering firm, Keach-Nordstrom Associates, to monitor construction for this project under

Senate Bill 188, which allows independent or third-party inspections throughout project development. The firm has an excellent reputation and has been involved in many successful projects throughout the area.

Chairman T. D'Arcy joins quorum at 6:58pm.

Board members express concerns about potential conflicts of interest if a developer hires an engineering firm with whom they have a close relationship. They acknowledge that this is not the case for this project, but the board agrees it is something they should be mindful of in the future. Mr. Landry states that he wants to ensure a trusting relationship between him and the town through the third-party channel to ensure everything is done correctly, avoiding any conflict of interest by having his engineer check his work. He seeks the board's approval for this approach. The board acknowledges Mr. Landry's concerns about Stantec's performance and the potential cost savings of using an alternative firm.

K. Coughlin: **Motion** to accept Kevin's request. B. Brock: **Second**. L. Carroll: **Abstains**. All else in favor. **Motion passed**.

- **Review of possible new Town Engineer**

Steve Keach from Keach-Nordstrom Associates introduces himself and his firm. He provides an overview of the firm's experience, qualifications, and approach to municipal engineering projects. He emphasizes their commitment to communication, collaboration, and providing timely and accurate reviews. His firm provides services to many surrounding and abutting towns and has an excellent reputation with the towns and developers. Mr. Keach also emphasizes the decision to keep the firm small, with only 24 employees (22 of which are engineers), as it allows them to focus on engineering rather than extensive people management. He also provides his well-rounded personal background, with experience as an applicant, as a planning and zoning board member, and serving as a temporary board member of the Housing Appeals Board. He emphasizes the value of this experience, stating it has made him a more complete consultant, allowing him to better tutor his office staff, advise land use boards, and assist planning staff by helping them avoid pitfalls.

Mr. Keach describes his typical work process: he receives applications and provides cost estimates for review services. Upon receiving payment, he proceeds with the review guided by a deadline provided by the client to align with their Planning Board hearing. He further describes his approach to reviewing applications, which involves citing specific sections of plan regulations to justify the identification of missing information. He emphasizes the importance of providing clear citations to avoid ambiguity and ensure that his assessment is not merely based on opinion. He also expresses his desire to avoid wasting time and money reviewing incomplete applications, highlighting the importance of clear communication with applicants and consultants to facilitate efficient plan review and approval. This aims to provide the best possible plan to the board as quickly as possible to expedite the board's review process. His process aims to address

potential issues early rather than later through extensive correspondence. T. D'Arcy states that this proactive approach is key to improving efficiency, and the goal is to significantly reduce the number of items needing review in meetings. Once the final plans are signed and projects enter the pre-construction and construction phases, his associates step in. They oversee the construction of the projects and send updates to the municipal staff throughout.

The board agrees that Keach-Nordstrom would be an excellent engineering firm for the town and asks the Chair what the next step in the process is. The Chair states that the contract with Stantec must be reviewed to ensure the town follows their agreement. He also states that it would be wise to contact the references as part of due diligence.

D. Labbe: **Motion** for a consensus that we continue down this path of looking at replacing Stantec with Keach-Nordstrom. M. Chalbeck: **Second**. All in favor. **Motion passed**.

After a brief discussion about the GIS Updates, the Chair entertains a motion to adjourn.

K. Coughlin: **Motion** to adjourn. J. Lindsey: **Second**. All in favor. **Motion passed**. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:53pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Ross

Land Use Coordinator

cc: file