

We've heard you loud and clear.

We will be the first to admit that the Zoning Ordinance, State Statutes, Case Law, and other building regulations are a confusing challenge, as they are in all towns in New Hampshire. Some residents have negative impressions today of our work, the Zoning Ordinance, or the motivations of the Planning Board members, your neighbors, who donate their time and energy to our town's work. Rather than argue or complain, there is a better remedy - please come join us.

The Planning Board needs Alternate Members. Become familiar with what we do and how we do it: how we manage applications, why we may ask for outside engineering review, why we may plan a site walk, and the considerations in the design and maintenance of our Zoning Ordinance. We hope with exposure and understanding, you may come away with a different opinion. And if there are changes that need to be made then help us to make those changes.

The Public is always welcome to make comments to the Planning Board at the opening of every meeting. All meetings, all discussions, and all votes are held in full public view, live-streamed on the internet, and recorded for viewing later by any member of the public. Business Meetings are the first Tuesday of every month when we review applications and hold Public Hearings. Workshop Meetings are the third Tuesday of every month to manage maintenance of the Zoning Ordinance and other town regulations whose management is given to the Planning Board. Subcommittees can be formed to study specific issues – like maybe septic systems, or, how to navigate Conditional Use Permits, Site Plan Reviews, Subdivisions, or variances. One goal for 2024 is to develop a User Guide and flow diagram to help property owners navigate the Zoning process, or you could help start a subcommittee on a topic of interest to you.

The Town has an even greater need for new members on the Zoning Board of Adjustment, and for members on an off shoot of the Planning Board, the New Durham Development Committee which evaluates residential, commercial, economic, and historic development in our town. New development seems inevitable, based on the phenomenal rate of development in Rochester, Dover, and other towns. The NDDC will make recommendations to the Planning Board who will pass those along to the voters.

We all agree that this town is one of the most beautiful places in the world: mountains, rivers, lakes, ponds, forests – much of it open to the public to enjoy. Our Master Plan states that the New Durham Mission is: “(To be) a dynamic New Hampshire town focused on excellence by balancing the interests of all in the community through managed growth, fiscal responsibility, and stewardship of our natural resources and environment.” Planning

Board members believe in that mission, have done what is possible to make it real, and we invite you to join us, to do better, together.

If you are interested in becoming an alternate or wish to request a topic to be discussed with the Board please contact Land Use Clerk, Susan Stillwell at 603-859-2091 x7.

Thank you,

New Durham Planning Board Members