

Plainfield Planning Commission Public Hearing Minutes

Monday March 16th 2026

Present: Will Colgan, David Scheckman, Karen Storey, Nicko Rubin, Paula Emory, Rose Paul and George Springston

Will opened the hearing with a brief description of the proposed changes that will make the subdivision process a bit easier to administer and asked for public comment.

George and Rose expressed difficulty in locating the proposed changes in the draft zoning document on the town website. David clarified that the track changes feature needed to be enabled in Word format rather than PDF. George said not having the changes obvious makes it difficult for the public to review the changes. Will said he would try making a PDF of the markup changes to be easier to access in the future.

George expressed concern about a significant change in slope requirements, noting that engineers would now need to design for steeper slopes up to 25% with engineered stormwater retention systems and highlighted the challenges of ensuring proper construction and maintenance of such projects without dedicated compliance oversight. That would be difficult a small town like Plainfield without a professional staff.

George said caution was needed when implementing changes, particularly for steep driveways. David suggested limiting the slope to 20% for buildings. For roads, he said VTRANS standards cap slope at 15% unless in a mountainous area. The group agreed to strike out "roads and infrastructure" from the proposal and focusing solely on buildings, with a potential 20% slope limitation. Nicko said the 25% slope for buildings seemed reasonable with engineered designs. The requirement and expense to build from 15% to 20% is significant so allowing it to be up to 25% made more sense for a building site.

It was suggested to maintain a 15% minimum slope threshold for roads with engineered designs required for slopes between 15-25% for buildings. There was debate whether to set the upper limit at 20% or 25%.

There was a decision to set the slope threshold at 25% instead of 20% after George expressed concerns about the additional engineering requirements for steeper slopes.

Paula asked about the change particularly lot size density for PUDs. David clarified the specific language and definitions in Article 6.1, confirming that the 50% bonus applies to overall density in the village district. The group agreed that minor changes, including removing quotation marks from cited text, should be reviewed at the next meeting on April 2nd before sending the document to the Select Board, rather than requiring an additional 30-day hearing.

The Planning Commission discussed two candidates for the zoning administrator position: Walter Hope and Kaylee Hope. Will mentioned that Walter had submitted a letter of interest and resume to the Planning Commission, while Kaylee was being considered based on her local experience as a lister and knowledge of properties. The commission discussed the responsibilities of the zoning administrator role, including serving as secretary to the DRB and handling certain clerical duties. Karen said that these tasks would need to be reassigned if a new zoning administrator is hired. The group briefly discussed updating fees for different types of permits, particularly the discrepancy between subdivision and PUD fees.

Karen discussed the handling of a PUD (Planned Unit Development) plan submitted by Frank Mitchell, noting that it would require more sophisticated handling than typical subdivisions due to common land and conservation requirements. They agreed that charging \$100 per dwelling unit for the PUD was appropriate, similar to their standard \$100 per lot fee for subdivision permits.

The hearing adjourned at 8:18